

## Insights from the Meshech Chochma

רב מאיר שמחה הכהן מדווינסק זצ"ל

### פִּרְשֵׁת וַיֵּשֶׁב תִּשְׁפֹּׁׁ

Shulie Plawes

וַיִּחְלֶם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם וַיַּגֵּד לְאֶחָיו וַיּוֹסִפוּ עוֹד שִׂנְאָה אֹתוֹ. וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שְׁמְעוּ נָא הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלַמְתִּי. (לד' ה-ו)  
*Yosef dreamt a dream which he told his brothers and they hated him even more. He said to them: "Hear, if you please, this dream which I dreamt."*

Many Mefarshim grapple with Yosef's mindset in revealing his incendiary dreams to his brothers. He surely must have realized that this would instigate them even more. Sforno does not hold back: "This too, disclosing his dreams, was an ill-advised move i.e., he acted with the inexperience of youth. And not only did he tell them the dream but he asked them to listen attentively and understand its significance?! In this manner he added to their animosity as indicated in their immediate response, וְהִמְלוּךְ תִּמְלוּךְ עָלֵינוּ / *Would you then reign over us?*"

The Ohr HaChaim asks it this way: "Why did Yosef add to his brothers' hatred of him by telling them of his grandiose dreams? Furthermore, knowing as he did that the brothers hated him fiercely, why did he accept his father's mission to go and visit them, לְמִיתָה, עֲצָמוֹ לְמִיתָה?" He answers that Yosef went to tell his brothers that they were wrong in ascribing his dreams to his ambitions, but that Hashem planned to elevate him to a high position and that Yaakov's agreeing to send him on this mission was a sign that all of this had been approved by Him. Yosef may have hoped to assuage their hatred of him by accepting the mission. On the other hand, Yosef may have warned them that the time would come when they needed him, and that they might do better to suppress their hatred of him pending further developments; otherwise, they would expose themselves to retaliation on his part when the time came. He was convinced that the brothers would accept what seemed to them a Heavenly decree."

Rav Meir Simchas's approach to these pasukim hinges on the words of Midrash Rabba: שְׁמְעוּ נָא / *Hear, if you please*-Yosef was saying to his brothers: 'In this manner, the Prophets will (later) reprove you,' as in ו' א' מִיכָה: אֲמַר: מִיכָה ו' א' / *Hear, if you please, what Hashem says.*" Rav Meir Simcha feels that שְׁמְעוּ נָא is in fact Yosef's response to what the pasuk earlier told us: וַיִּרְאוּ אֶחָיו כִּי אֹהֵב אֲבִיהֶם מְכַל אֶחָיו וַיִּשְׂנְאוּ אֹתוֹ / *His brothers saw that it was (Yosef) whom their father loved most of all his brothers so they hated him, and* וַיּוֹסִפוּ עוֹד שִׂנְאָה אֹתוֹ i.e., their increased hatred of him *after* they heard his first dream. שְׁמְעוּ נָא, just as the Prophets would later give *Klal Yisrael* rebuke, so is Yosef giving them about their שִׂנְאָה towards him, both before and after the dream: "Why do you hate me? Our relationship, as depicted in the dream i.e., your sheaves bowing to mine, (and as Rav Meir Simcha puts it) הֲלֹא נִחְרָץ עָלֵיכֶם עַל / *is a judgement already 'carved into stone' by Hashem. If you accept it, douse the flames of your anger and do תִּשְׁוּבָה; Hashem will take you back.*" This did not work, as the Torah tells us וַיּוֹסִפוּ עוֹד שִׂנְאָה אֹתוֹ עַל חֲלֻמֹתָיו וְעַל דְּבָרָיו / *And they hated him even more because of his dreams and because of his talk.* And yet Yosef continues to relay to them the particulars

of his *second* dream. Why? Because in the second one, Yaakov-יַעֲקֹב-is also bowing down to him. And Yosef knew that in no way did that mean that he was greater than his father. Similarly, his brothers should not think they are more important than their father. Rather, again, he was imploring them to look at the situation with clear eyes and was trying to make them appreciate that Yaakov's involvement meant that there was a Heavenly purpose in his becoming king and that they should comply with what he felt was a prophecy. Interesting that, as opposed to Sforino and more like the Ohr HaChaim, Yosef, by disclosing these dreams, was not trying to antagonize his brothers but rather wanted them to understand that this was not a personal *kavod* issue, but rather an attempt on his part to diffuse an ominous situation. He felt that remorse over their attitude towards him was essential for the future of *Klal Yisrael*-as Rav Meir Simcha tells us-כִּי אָז יִנָּחֵם עֲלֵיכֶם ה'. But it was to no avail. The brothers would/could not see it that way: וַיִּקְנְאוּ בֹאֲחָיו וְאָבְיוּ נְשִׂמָר אֶת הַדָּבָר / *So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind*. Their feelings towards him now included קִנְיָה. And Yaakov's reaction? Rav Meir Simcha tells us it supports the words of R' Yosi bar Honi who says in סנהדרין קה: "A person is jealous of everyone except for his son and his student."

According to Rav Meir Simcha, like the future Prophets of *Klal Yisrael*, Yosef's *mussar* to his brothers was done in their best interest, desiring only good for them. He felt that telling them these alarming visions was the most certain path to bring about that good. They could not see it that way though and it resulted in a relationship that continued to spiral dangerously downwards. And yet via this potential tragedy the seeds of what would be the future גְּאֻלָּה for *Klal Yisrael* were planted!

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לזכר נשמת אמי מורתי רחל בת ר' אלחנן אביגדר ע"ה  
לזכר נשמת חמי מורי ר' יעקב נתן בן ר' ישראל שלמה ז"ל  
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