



After the first dream of Yosef the Torah relates, "And they hated him even more, because of his dreams and his words" (Beraishis 37:7). After his second dream the Torah says, "So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father pondered the matter" (37:11)

The Brisker Rav points out that the first dream invoked increased hatred, while the second dream invoked jealousy. He explained that the first dream, which was out in the field and contained sheaves of produce, seemed to reflect material wealth. The brothers were all righteous people who were 'content with their portion' (see Avos 4:1) when it came to material prosperity. Their lack of love for their youngest brother began with Yaakov's giving Yosef a unique garment, and the void of love allows hatred to fill its place. The first dream only added to these negative feelings. However, the second dream with the heavenly bodies, as interpreted by their father, indicated that Yosef would be elevated spiritually over the brothers and even Yaakov himself. It was this spiritual elevation that created jealousy within the brothers, who did not want to be cut off from the line of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, the way that Yishmael and Eisav were.

Another difference between the two dreams is that in the first dream all the brothers are depicted as sheaves and Yosef is depicted as one sheaf standing in the center. In contrast, the second dream has Yosef depicted as himself, while the other characters are portrayed as heavenly bodies. The Midrash (Beraishis Raba 84:11) states that when Yosef related the word 'sun' in his dream, Yaakov responded, "Who revealed to him (Yosef) that my name is 'Sun'?" This might imply that Yosef did not actually see the sun, but he saw Yaakov and related that it was the sun. Similar to Paroh, who changed certain details of his dream in next week's Parsha when relating them to Yosef, perhaps Yosef also envisioned his actual father, mother and brothers bowing to him – just as he was in human form – but out of respect related that it was the sun, moon and stars. This might also make sense since the sun, moon and stars are essentially orbs that do not have joints and it would be difficult to envision them as 'bowing', in contrast to the long bundles of tied grain stalks. This may be why Yaakov, who himself had one dream in Beit El and one dream in Charan, took this dream very seriously.

Later in the Parsha, the brothers put Yosef in a pit. The Gemara (Shabbos 22a), cited by Rashi, points out the redundancy of 'the pit was empty, no water was in it', and explains that the pit was empty of water, but contained snakes and scorpions. Reuven instructed them to throw Yosef into "this pit in the Midbar" (Beraishis 37:22), a very specific pit, with the intention to come back later and save him. Shimon (see Midrash Raba 84:15) placed him into 'the pit' (37:4), seemingly the same pit as instructed by Reuven, which the Torah testifies was empty and without water. When Yehudah suggests that they sell Yosef he says, "What gain will there be to kill our brother" (37:26), seemingly, even in the pit Yosef would die according to Yehudah, but Reuven's intention was to save Yosef (see 37:22). The question remains: Were the brothers aware of the danger inside the pit or not.

The same Gemara (Shabbos 22a) is part of the Chapter of Bameh Madlikin and is contained within the section that discusses the laws of Chanukah. In fact, the previous statement in the Gemara teaches that the Chanukah candles placed 20 Amos high are unfit and one does not fulfill their obligation, similar to Schach on Sukkos, because it is beyond the normal line of sight of a person. Accordingly, none of the brothers could see into the deep pit to determine what was on the bottom. All they could do is test if it was dry or full of water by dropping something in. Seemingly, Yosef's life was in fact in danger from the snakes and scorpions, but none of the brothers knew. Reuven certainly thought he could come back in time to save Yosef. If Yehudah thought Yosef would die in the pit it would be due to dehydration or starvation and not poisonous snakes and scorpions, otherwise a dead or poisoned Yosef would not be fit 'for sale'.

This also solves an apparently difficulty at the end of the Parsha, where Yosef's prison term is extended two years by Hashem for asking the Sar HaMashkim for help in getting him out of prison (see Rashi to 40:23). It would seem Yosef was performing the same normal Hishtadlus that would be expected of any person. We can suggest that after Hashem saved Yosef's life from the snakes and scorpions, provided him with pleasant smelling fragrances on the way down to Mitzrayaim (see Rashi to 37:25), and made him Matzliach both by Potifar and the warden of the jail, that all was being prepared for him from Hashem. Up until that point, Yosef did not ask for any external help. He served 10 years in prison for the "evil reports" (37:3) regarding his 10 brothers (Shemos Raba 7:1). For Yosef, it was a lack of Emunah to start asking for help from the Sar HaMashkim to help him get out of prison.

May our trust and faith in Hashem merit that we should see the light of the Menorah emanating from the Beis HaMikdash in the Geulah Shlayama, speedily in our days.