

"And lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright, and behold your sheaves came round about, and bowed down to my sheaf. And his brothers said to him: 'Shall you indeed reign over us, or shall you indeed have dominion over us?' And behold the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me." (37:7,8,9)

At first glance, Yosef's second dream is a repetition of the first. This design, which emphasized Yosef's superiority, effected a response of hatred from his brothers. When he related the second dream, however, his brothers seemed to have reacted with silence. Indeed, their loathing of him increased in intensity. This hatred festered and developed into a state of physical violence. Yet, the *Torah* does not record any semblance of protest toward the second dream. Why were they so passive in responding to this second dream?

Horav Moshe Swift z.t.l. offers the following rationale. There is a marked difference between a dream which suggests material superiority and a dream which implies spiritual superiority. In the first dream, Yosef tells his brothers of his vast material abundance. The sheaves of corn symbolize material wealth and personal success. Yosef's "sheaves" will stand upright, and all will bow down to him. His fortune will captivate the entire world, and everyone will be beholden to him. He will prosper, while others will capitulate and perish. Such a dream speaks of power and glory, wealth and subjugation. People respond to such designs with suspicion and skepticism. The brothers must denounce these evil aspirations, for they are dangerous.

The second dream is of an entirely different nature. This time the sun, the moon, and the stars bow down to Yosef. The focus is not his sheaves or possessions, it is Yosef himself, his personality. Yosef, as an individual, will become the envy of the world. His moral rectitude, his ethical values, his passion for justice, his unbounding kindness to others, and his unshakable belief in the Almighty will inspire humanity. True, such a claim arouses envy, but it cannot be challenged. No one can protest or defame the individual who is truly devout, whose sense of dignity is unimpeachable, whose faith in Hashem is unswerving. The world admires the man of G-d. To him the world must bow, for he towers above them. Yosef's brothers realized that his second dream reflected the Jewish ideal, a mission they must not thwart.