

בס"ד
כ"ב כסלו תש"פ
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פרשת וישב

After Yosef's second dream is told over to his family, his brothers continue to harbor negative feelings towards him, as the Torah says,¹ "וַיִּקְנְאוּ-בּוֹ, אָחָיו; וְאָבִיו, שָׁמַר אֶת-הַדְּבָר". Several *mefrashim* observe that after Yosef tells over his first dream to his family, the *pasuk* says "וַיִּסְפוּ עוֹד, שְׁנָא אֹתוֹ". Why is there a different language used here? What exactly is the difference between the two synonyms? Rabbeinu Bechaye² answers that before the dreams, the brothers only hated Yosef because Yaakov loved him, not because he was a level above them. However, once the brothers heard the dreams, they were wise enough to interpret it and understood that this meant Yosef would eventually rule over them, which led to an enveloping of jealousy.

The *Or HaChaim*³ remarks that after Yosef recounted the first dream, the brothers were left with a doubt as to whether it was a legitimate dream or just the thoughts of Yosef's heart traveling up and seeping into his brain; if it was the latter, they simply decided to hate him for these thoughts. However, once Yosef had the second dream where Yaakov was bowing, there no possible way that Yosef would ever think that he would ever control his father, so this clearly was a dream from Heaven; the jealousy from the brothers emanated soon thereafter as a result.

The *Midrash Sechel Tov*⁴ gives the most fascinating answer of all, explaining⁵ that any mention of the word קנאה juxtaposed to a ל in the next word is בלשון חיבה, and cites several *pasukim* as examples of this.⁶ However, any mention of the word קנאה juxtaposed to a ב in the next word is בלשון תחרות (competition), and there are several examples for this concept as well.⁷ This mention of קנאה in this context is followed by the word בו, so clearly it is not the most tender mention of envy; from here, it seems that jealousy, not hatred, was the root of the negative feelings against Yosef, as well as the main motive that went into all of their actions.

In a famous Mishnah in *Pirkei Avos*,⁸ R' Elazar HaKapar says that envy is one of the things that drives a person from this world, and in *Orchos Yosher*, Rav Chaim Kanievsky has an entire chapter dedicated to the pitfalls of jealousy. While there *are* good forms of envy, such as the famous maxim "קנאת חכמה",⁹ it remains vital to ensure that even the positive manifestations of envy will not create a destructive culture replete with jealousy and full of people harboring resentment towards each other. We should try our best to only hope for the best for our peers, and hope that they reciprocate in an attempt to provide Hashem with a tremendous sense of pride while bringing Mashiach and the *geulah* even closer.

¹ בראשית לז:יא

² רבינו בחיי בראשית לז:יא ד"ה ויקנאו בו אחיו

³ אור החיים בראשית לז:יא ד"ה ויקנאו בו אחיו

⁴ מנחם בן שלמה by written

⁵ מדרש שכל טוב בראשית לז:יא ד"ה ויקנאו בו אחיו

⁶ במדבר כה:יב, מלכים א יט:י, תהלים קו:טז, במדבר טז:י

⁷ תהלים עג:ג, תהלים לז:א

⁸ פרקי אבות ד:כא

⁹ בבא בתרא כא.