

Yosef Dreams Fulfilled But Yosef Remains Compassionate by Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

In Bereishis 42:6-8 we read that when Yosef saw his brothers coming down to Mitzrayim he recognized them and remembered the dreams that he had regarding them many years earlier. Both dreams, the dreams of his brother's sheaves bowing down to him and the dream of the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowing down to him suggest his brothers being totally submissive to him. Now that Yosef was in a position of power, he saw his dreams fulfilled.

Rashi, based on the Gemara, explains when he left his brothers twenty-two years earlier, were already mature men with beards but Yosef had no beard yet. Now, Yosef had a beard as well so his brothers would not readily recognize him. The Kedushas Levi asks why Yosef did not reveal himself at this point. He could very easily have told them that he was Yosef and that this situation of his brothers needing him was the fulfillment of his dreams of many years earlier. The Kedushas Levi answers that Yosef, even in his present position, was extremely concerned for the feelings of his brothers. If Yosef would have revealed himself at this point now, there would have been much more hurt on the brothers' part over the situation of being at Yosef's mercy. It would have been a terrible reminder of past events and the fact he finally did overpower them. As all Tzaddikim, Yosef weighed and measured very carefully how to orchestrate events so that everyone's feelings should be hurt as little as possible.