



Yes! There were so many reasons why Yosef's brothers should hate him. For Yosef was a seemingly immature youth who pandered himself physically (cf. Rashi), and he would play with the handmaidens' children, but not with the children of Leah whom he held in disdain (Rashbam).

Further, Yosef brought evil tidings of his siblings to Yaakov. And Yaakov yet held Yosef - the son of his old age (BEN Z'KUNIM) - in the highest regard.

As such, Yosef was a favorite son to his father. Moreover, Yaakov made him a fine wool tunic - a symbol of leadership - that only exacerbated matters. And Yosef's dreams didn't help: His siblings now added hatred upon hatred.

Yaakov's behavior is surprising, especially because he, too, suffered from parental favoritism. So, we might better follow the Talmudic sages who held the term BEN Z'KUNIM to indicate 'the one who has acquired wisdom'. In this case, Yosef had acquired the wisdom of the 'Torah of Exile' that his father had learned in the Yeshiva of Sheim and

Eiver.

For Yaakov surely anticipated that Yosef needed to learn how to survive in a foreign land after he, Yaakov, had suffered for 22 years in the house of Lavan. No wonder then that Yaakov's attachment to Yosef was so intense and seemingly irrational.

Yes, that bond was part of an unfolding national saga; it was prophetic and it would shape the Jewish people's destiny.

As for us, we might just do well to imbibe from our sages not to favor any one particular child (Shabbat 10b)

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