



פרשת מקץ

The saga of Yosef continues. The Parsha tells of Yosef's release from prison and his dramatic rise from being a convict to the highest office of government in the land. (The opposite of what sometimes happens in this country.) He marries Osnas Bas Potifera and has two sons. He names the first born Menashe: כי נשני אלוקים את כל עמלי -ואת כל בית אבי Hashem has made me forget all my hardship and of my father's household. He names the second son Efraim:

Hashem has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering. The difficult one is Menashe; usually, when naming a child one expresses some kind of Hakaras Hatov, gratitude, thankfulness for the gift of the child. Mefarshim wonder as to how this name gives any kind of appreciation. (See Netziv 41:51, 39:6 in Harchev Davor). Our wonder grows as we see the Medrash (BRR 79:5) that compares Yaakov to Yosef. The Medrash teaches that when Yaakov emerged from his Galuos with Esav, he was שלם בגופו, שלם בבניו, שלם בממונו ושלם בתלמודו, his learning was intact. But not Yosef, אבל יוסף שכח, - he forgot his learning, as it says כי נשני אלוקים את כל עמלי. How could Yosef choose a name for his firstborn that highlights his forgetting the learning that he acquired in his father's house? A very difficult question that requires a journey into the Kochus Hanefesh with a touch of sophistication. I heard this idea once, long ago from Mori V'Rebbi Harav Elya Svei. That memory was revived by what I saw this year, in the Sefer of Harav Elya Boruch Finkel as heard from Rav Refoel Solevetchick, in the name his father the

Brisker Rav. There are times when it is in a person's best interest to forget the past, in order for him to be able to deal with the task at hand wherever life is taking him. We know from our own life experience, and observing others, some people cannot get past it. I always tell Talmidim: Don't let your yesterday rob you of your tomorrow. I tell them it does not matter if your second grade teacher punished you for something you never did, (you can fill in whatever MINOR trauma you think you had), just get over it! As adolescents in Yeshiva, we were inspired by the haunting tune and lived off the unforgettable lyrics of Harav Avraham Elya Kaplan in his Niggun Shokoh Chama; a laser-like strike at our Neshamos:

Should we forget everything and rejoice - האם לשכח כל ושמח

Or should we remember everything and weep. - או לזכור הכל ובכות

He then asks for a tomorrow so that אולי אפתר את maybe, maybe I will be able to interpret this dream. (See at the end of his Sefer היראה)

Being a child of Holocaust survivors, I saw that lesson first hand. Those that had the strength to rebuild, to make life livable had to, at some level, put the past on the back burner and only look forward. So sometimes, forgetting is in fact a Bracha and something to say thank you for. Some of you may be thinking: nice point, maybe even something I never thought about, but rabbi you are talking about forgetting Torah! A word about that too. The Gemara (Bava Metzia 85A) tells that when Rav Zeira was moving to Eretz Yisroel, he





fasted 100 days מנייה גמרא בבליא in order for him to fully understand Talmud Bavli in order for him to fully understand Talmud Yerushalmi. Rashi explains because they had a different style of learning, another Derech Halimud. Rav Simcha Zissel Brode, Chevroner Rosh Yeshiva explains that to learn in the house of Yaakov, with Yaakov as a Chavrusa, was the best Yeshiva in the world - Gan Eden Mamash. But now, thrown into a whole different set of circumstances and all the while realizing that it is Hashem's doing, he had to change his Derech Halimud (I see this as similar to leaving Kollel and going out in the workplace - different Nisyonos). Yosef is in the worst country, with that country's low-lives, in jail or on the streets, given a job that should take 100 men to do – he had to change his style. As such, we are not talking about forgetting, but rather using a different approach. Rav Simcha Zissel points out a fascinating idea, to which we should add something implied from the newly published Sefer on Chumash from Rav Avraham Ben Harambam. He seems to be saying that he described his Nisayon, to forget the house of his father and the Torah, but he overcame that Nisayon and got back on track. This is proven by Rashi (Shmos 1:5) on the Pasuk ונעשה מלך in Mitzraim, that Chazal say the היה indicates that the same Yosef that was his father's shepherd was the same one that was in Mitzraim ונעשה מלך. Yosef knew, that to convince his father he had to send wagons that were reminiscent of the last Sugya of עגלה ארופה which they learned. Therefore, Yosef named him Menashe, indicating the different Nisyonos that we all have when it comes to Talmud Torah. The Netziv, in fact, learns

that half of Menashe took their share together with the Bnei Gad U'Bnei Reuven on the other side of Yarden, EVEN THOUGH THEY DID NOT ASK TO GO THERE. They were sent by Moshe, because עבר לירדן also needs Talmidei Chachamim, so they were sent to teach them Torah. It seems they understood why they were named, and the responsibility to learn no matter what side of the Yarden you are on, or whatever country and circumstance you find yourself.

May we all be Zoche to continue to be מוסיף והולך in Talmud Torah and bringing Nachas Ruach to the Ribono Shel Olam.

Among those who are מצפים לישועה,

אמני דאנקה
חיים טובים איתן

