

"For Hashem has made me forget all my previous misfortune and all my father's house." (41:51)

The usual translation for ohekt hbab is "*Hashem has made me forget, (all my previous misfortune and all my father's house).*" This notion engenders a distasteful feeling. It seems objectionable that Yosef would be anxious to disassociate himself with his elderly father and all of his family. *Horav S.R. Hirsch, z.l.*, notes that this would explain Yosef's deficiency in getting in touch with his family for such a long time. To state, however, that Yosef's heart was so cold is simply preposterous! The various commentaries imply justifiable reasons for Yosef's inaction.

Horav Hirsch cites another interpretation for the word hbab. The word hbab also means "to be a creditor" and can, therefore, mean: "*Hashem has made my misfortunes and my family into creditors.*" Hashem had transformed what had formerly seemed to be calamity into the medium for attaining the greatest joy. The realization that one is deeply indebted to his misfortune and family is the hallmark of greatness. One's objective should be to pierce through the veil of ambiguity that clouds various life situations in order to vividly see Divine Providence directing every step. Yosef *Ha'tzaddik* was not only righteous in his own right, he was also able to see the "righteousness" of Hashem's guidance in everything.

We may suggest another thought. Sometimes it is good to forget! Imagine that Yosef went through life with bitter animosity, loathing his brothers for what they had done to him. He would calculate and add every bit of misery to his hatred, until it became insurmountable. This obsessive hatred would have eventually destroyed him. How many individuals and institutions have fallen prey to the effects of hatred? In due time a simple offense can be blown out of proportion. This occurs because we refuse to forget yesterday's offense which blatantly glares us in the eye many years later, demanding revenge. Yosef thanked Hashem for giving him the ability to open his arms to his brothers and view their actions in the proper perspective.