

“You ignored the Rock Who gave birth to you, and forgot G-d Who brought you forth.” (32:18)

Every faculty with which man is endowed can be used positively or negatively. Certainly, Hashem's desire is that we use these G-d- given faculties for a positive goal. The *Kotzker Rebbe, z.l.*, says that the ability to forget is a perfect example. *Shikchah*, forgetfulness, is a gift, a vehicle through which we are able to proceed beyond our past troubles. If we do not forget the unpleasant occurrences in our lives, they will gnaw at us, wreaking havoc upon our emotional stability. Regrettably, some of us use this gift to forget Hashem's beneficence and patience with us.

The *Dubno Maggid, z.l.*, explains this with a parable: There was once a man who was deeply in debt, able to pay his many creditors only a fraction of what he owed. One creditor, out of concern for his own debt, gave the hapless debtor an idea that would dissuade his other creditors from bothering him. He said, "When the creditors come to you, act foolish and silly, so that they will think you are insane and will leave you alone. Afterwards, you can pay me what you owe me."

It was a great idea. One by one, the creditors came and left, some in disgust, others in sympathy. The pressure of the many debts must have gotten to him. When the man who had given him this advice came to collect his debt, he was met with the same response as the other creditors. This was just too much. "Whom do you think you are fooling?" he asked. "Did you forget that it was I who advised you to act insanely? Do not try to use my own idea against me!"

Hashem *Yisborach* tells us the same thing. He gave us the faculty to forget, so that we would not be overwhelmed by destructive memories. We function because we are able to forget. What do we do in gratitude to Hashem? We forget Him! It is one thing to neglect to think of Hashem, but to use an instinct with which He has endowed us against Him, is the height of audacity. But, is that not what forgetting is all about?