

"Therefore the Bnei Yisrael are not to eat the displaced sinew on the hip socket... because he (the angel) struck Yaakov's hip-socket on the displaced sinew." (32:33)

Rashi attributes the name given by the *Torah* to the sciatic nerve, *Gid Hanashe*, to the fact that the nerve was "*nash'e*," "jumped" out of its place. When the angel struck Yaakov, he dislocated the sciatic nerve. Accordingly, the word *nashe* is defined as being removed from its original or usual place. Another meaning can be applied to the word "*nash'e*," which sheds light upon the actual damage that resulted when the angel struck Yaakov.

Horav Avigdor Tzvi Nebentzhal, Shlita, cites the *pasuk* in *Parashas Mikeitz* (*Bereishis* 41:51) in which Yosef, upon naming his son Menashe, says, *ki nashani elokim es kol amoli*, "*Hashem has made me forget all my hardship*." In this instance the word *nashani* is defined as "made me forget." Hence, "*nashe*" has something to do with forgetting. Essentially, both definitions coincide. One who forgets has a certain frame of reference removed from his memory. Hashem facilitated Yosef's ability to forget his affliction. How do we now reconcile our definition with the *gid ha'nashe*? Does it become the *gid ha'shikchah* the "nerve of forgetfulness"?

Horav Nebentzhal suggests that essentially this is the manner in which the angel impaired Yaakov and his descendants. *Shikcha* - forgetfulness - like most qualities, has its advantages as well as its disadvantages. The ability to forget can be an enormous gift that is necessary in order to maintain our sanity. The fact that Hashem has decreed that the memory of one who has passed on slowly slips away from us, is a blessing in disguise. If we would remember the death of a loved one many years later as if it had happened that day, we would go out of our minds! It is similar to our relationships with people. Imagine if we would continue remembering the humiliation we once suffered once at the hands of another person. We might never forgive him, if we had not been blessed with the ability to forget.

The *Orchos Tzaddikim* offers yet another "advantage" to forgetting - *Torah* study. If a person never forgets, he might complete the *Torah* and feel he has nothing more to learn. This is impossible, since there is no end to the length and breadth of the study of *Torah* with all of its commentary. A person might foolishly think, however, that he has learned it all and stop studying.

Obviously, there is also a downside to forgetfulness. We are obliged to remember certain things. We are to remember all of the trial and travail that has accompanied us as a nation, so that we, remember that Hashem has been with us throughout. We must remember that it is to Hashem to whom we owe everything. We may not forget *divrei Torah*, *Torah* lessons. We must review them constantly, for to forget demonstrates laxity and thoughtlessness. It shows that we do not take our *Torah* study seriously. We are not addressing the one who forgets because his memory fails him. We are, rather, criticizing he who desires to forget, who puts the *Torah* out of his mind because its *mitzvos* encumber him.

In light of the above, *Horav* Nebentzhal suggests that the "dislocation" that occurred symbolically represented the angel's dislodging the Jew's memory of Hashem, His *Torah* and mitzvos. This became the *gid ha'nashe*, nerve of forgetfulness, to signify the forgetfulness that Eisav's angel penetrated into our phsyce. Had the angel not harmed Yaakov, we would be as perfect in our belief in Hashem as Yaakov *Avinu* was before he was struck by the angel.