

## **Yosef called the name of the firstborn Menashe, for “G-d has made me forget all my hardship and all my father’s household.” (41:51)**

Is forgetting one’s youth, his home, his parents, something to be happy about? Yosef seems to have emphasized “forgetting” to the point that he named his firstborn Menashe. *Horav* Yosef Nechemiah Kornitzer, zl, *Rav* of Cracow, explains that educating children is not about rebuke and pointing out what to do and what not to do. Children learn best when they have a positive role model in their parents. Seeing how a father speaks, his choice of words, how he interacts with others, his total demeanor, is probably the most effective manner of teaching a child how to act. Our actions speak to our children. They teach them the way we want them to act and live. Thus, we must take great pains to see to it that the lessons we teach are worthy of emulating.

Yosef *HaTzaddik* was musing: “During all this time away from home, I was compelled to constantly reiterate the lessons of my youth in my mind. In order to protect myself from the vile Egyptian influence, I was not allowed for a moment to forget who I am and my background. Growing up with my brothers in my father’s home kept me spiritually alive – because I never forgot my home. Now that I have my own home, my own son, I have my personal responsibility to imbue my family with the proper values. I have to serve as the example. I finally can ‘forget’ my home, because, *Baruch Hashem*, now I have a home of my own. This will be my motivation.”

This is a powerful lesson which we should all take to heart. Growing up, many of us do not pay heed to the lessons we learned at home, the lessons imparted to us by determined parents, hopeful that their children will follow suit. It did not always work. We get a second chance when we marry and start a family of our own. Whatever we were able to get away with in our youth will not stand up to our children’s scrutiny. Indeed, the most powerful deterrent to negative behavior is when one sees his children mimicking him.