

"And Yosef called the name of his firstborn Menashe, for Hashem has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." (41:51) - "And the name of the second he called Ephraim, for Hashem has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." (41:52)

In naming his two sons, Yosef reflects on the two reasons why a person abandons the faith of his people and his upbringing. One reason is because he is made to forget. He is forced to go to a foreign country, where he has no home, no money, no friends, where the language is a barrier. When he faces such circumstances he quickly forgets the teachings of his youth. He no longer has time to pray, to keep *Shabbos*, and to perform all the *mitzvos* he was taught. There is yet another reason why one forsakes his faith. One is exposed to a more affluent lifestyle. He finds a new society, new friends and a new standard of values. He no longer has time for the studies of his youth. The traditional *mitzvos* on which he was raised become "archaic", and are no longer in vogue with his present lifestyle.

It is difficult to determine which of these reasons have had more significant results. Many of our people have been made to forget due to the hardships they have confronted in foreign lands. There are also those who have assimilated as they searched for affluence and acceptance. Perhaps this is why the phrase "*Hashem shall make you as Ephraim and as Menashe*" has become the standard blessing with which a father blesses his son. The father says to his child "*Although life will impose on you obstacles such as suffering and prosperity, remember! in suffering don't forget, in joy don't abandon. Be like Ephraim and Menashe and maintain the heritage under all circumstances.*"