

CURRENT TALMUD PASSAGE

Posted September 14, 2006, by Rabbi Judy Abrams. Please refer to Maqom's home page for information about previous passages.

BH

A NEW YEAR ... A TRUE RENEWAL ... A PERPETUAL "SHEHECHEYANU" MOMENT

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There seems to be a blessing for just about everything in the Talmud, especially when life returns or even when the lowly act of purchasing something becomes an expression of hope; a benediction you likely know:

One who built a new house and one who bought new vessels says, "Blessed be the One who has kept us alive and preserved us and brought us to this season."...

Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said, "One who sees a friend after a lapse of thirty days says, 'Blessed be the One who has kept us alive and preserved us and brought us to this season.'" (B. Berachot 54a, 58b)

For however long or short a time, this year, God has granted me a return to myself. I do not dare presume to pass on medical advice to you...I will simply tell you what has worked for me.

Two simple steps have dramatically improved my health, both of which are based on solid medical research.

1. Listen to an hour of music a day to decrease pain and the depression associated with it. Here's a medline link (there are many more if you go to www.pubmed.com and search for "pain" and "music"):

Siedliecki SL, Good M. Effect of music on power, pain, depression and disability. J Adv Nurs. 2006 Jun;54(5):553-62.

2. Take 1000 units of Vitamin D a day. Note that you should do this after consulting with your physician as the optimal dose and effects may vary based on your location, diet and lifestyle. Here's a link to an article about the importance of vitamin D and pain management.

<http://www.webmd.com/content/article/78/95751.htm>

I would never have believed that these two simple things would have reduced my pain so much, but they have. And I am so very grateful for every moment of reduced pain.

So for now, I come into this new year with a daily-if not hourly-thanks to God that I could feel like myself again after all these years. Every moment in which pain is not at the forefront of my mind is a shehecheyanu moment.

Discussion Questions:

1. Think about the wording of this blessing: what are the three separate things for which we're giving thanks? How is each essential? How does God do each of these things?
2. How will you face the new year renewed? Depleted? For what renewal will you pray?

May it be a sweet new year for us all!

September 14, 2006

P.S. I am now available to be a Scholar-in-Residence. Please contact me at maqom@compassnet.com if you are interested.