

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש


Mincha Erev Shabbos & Candlelighting	4:28 PM
Daf Yomi - By Pinchas Friedman	7:30 AM
Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush 	8:30 AM
-Sof Zman K"SS- גר"א 9:25 גז"א 8:43	
Mincha	2:15 PM
Mincha - Followed by Shalosh Seudos	4:25 PM
~ Special Guest Speaker R' Yaakov Berkowitz	
Maariv -	5:37 PM
Avos U'Banim	6:30 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Sunday & Thursday

Shacharis I	6:50 AM
Daf Yomi- By R' Teichman	7:30 AM
Shacharis II	8:30 AM
Mincha / Maariv	4:35 PM

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

Daf Yomi- By R' Teichman	5:45 AM
Shacharis:	
Monday	6:40 AM
Tues., Wednesday	6:45 AM
Friday 	6:30 AM

Mincha (Mon-Fri)	1:45 PM
Daf Yomi -Take II (Mon-Thurs.)	9:00 PM
Maariv (Mon.-Th)	9:45 PM

FRIDAY NIGHT LEARNING



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מזמרים

Avos U'Banim

Motzei Shabbos 6:30PM

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Special guest story teller, R' Moshe Grossberg

For more information and sponsorship opportunities
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Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@hotmail.com

Gabaim:

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Issue# 311

RABBI'S MESSAGE

It's Greek to Me!

“Haaapy Birrrthday, Deear Phaaaraohh!”

(בראשית מ ב) ויהי ביום השלישי יום הולדת פרהו וישע משתה לכל עבדיו... *And it was on the third day, Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants...*

One can only imagine the “absolute” joy this despot’s loyal “subjects” were expressing as they all participated in Pharaoh’s birthday party.

A king who claimed to have created himself throws a party, not to celebrate his good fortune and appreciation of life, but rather to bask in the adoration and devotion of his vassals who are so “fortunate” to serve him.

This seemingly inconsequential detail, Pharaoh’s birthday party, is the setting for the restoration of the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers to his previous position of stature and for the dispatching of the Chamberlain of the Bakers to the gallows.

Why is the nature of the feast so significant to the story line?

Rashi goes to great lengths in dissecting the exact meaning of the phrase used here to describe a “birthday”. He points out, bringing several proofs, that the unusual form הולדת (הפעל) accents not simply the birth, but his being born through the actions and agency of others i.e. a midwife.

Oddly, Rashi deems it necessary to reference a *greek* expression of this idea, where they refer to celebrating a king’s day of birth as a *Day of Genusia*, perhaps related to the Greek word genesis, meaning origin, creation or generation.

What does this lesson in Greek language add to our understanding of this concept?

Immediately following this episode the verse reports that despite Yosef’s request of the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers, whose dream was so favorably interpreted by Yosef, to intercede on Yosef’s behalf once he is freed, he nevertheless forgets to.

(שם שם ב) ולא זכר את שר המשקים את יוסף וישכחו (שם שם ב) *Yet the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers did not remember Yosef, and he forgot him.*

Rashi here intimates a possible problem in that the verse seems to be repetitive. Isn’t “not remembering” the same as “forgetting”? Rashi therefore elucidates; *did not remember*, that day, *and he forgot him*, later.

How are we to understand this two step process of forgetfulness?

The Talmud Bavli (ע”ז י:) explains that the *Day of Genusia* that Rashi referred to earlier, which echoes the celebration in the verse by Pharaoh, is actually a day that celebrates the anniversary of the king’s ascension to the throne, not his birth.

The genesis of a king’s reign is contingent on the joining of forces pledging allegiance to the king and his rule. The anniversary of that event is a reassertion of his dominion. In the same vein that a birth of a child is a product of being born by others, a king too is “born” into his rule perforce the existence of subordinates.

Rashi was not as concerned with describing the precise event that was being celebrated as much as he was interested in defining the implications of this party.

In the land of the Pharaohs the king was “it”, his subjects were to be expected to feel privileged to be part of this deified leader in serving him unconditionally. From the perspective of Pharaoh, he was the center of the universe, with his successes and stature a honor to those who were favored to be part of his destiny.

This attitude filtered down unto Egyptian society where each subsequent substratum within the social order of the land grasped desperately to hold on to their position of privilege, with all those beneath them compliant and deferential to them.

In this egocentric civilization, where the philosophy of the survival of the fittest reigned supreme, an environment of privilege and entitlement bereft of any responsibility towards others would breed neglect. The Chamberlain of the Cupbearers who was so self absorbed could never find fertile ground on which to grow a favorable attitude of gratitude towards Yosef.

The Torah goes on to teach us precisely how the evolution of apathy develops.

On the day the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers was restored to his position of power, he was so enveloped within himself, that Yosef’s previous kindness simply didn’t register amply in his distracted psyche.

When we don’t allow something to impress us it quickly fades and is eventually totally forgotten.

This is Rashi’s lesson: If he didn’t allow the role Yosef played in his return to stature on the day he was freed, it was inevitable that he would forget it completely later. When we choose not to remain conscious of an event it will recede naturally.

Indeed Rav S.R. Hirsch here teaches that שכח means *forgetting through being taken up by other matters*. The preoccupation with one’s own interests saturate our mind leaving no room for anything else.

Such is the mindset of Pharaoh on his birthday, whether contemplating his existence or his rule, and so is that attitude echoed in the self-engrossed Chamberlain who has no room in his soul for anyone outside of himself.

In marvelous counterpoint, Yosef is the diametric opposite of this poisonous attitude. He never lapses in the consciousness of who he is and what he stands for. His focal point is a ever-consciousness of G-d at any given moment in his experience. He is so suffused with acknowledgment of G-d’s presence he never leaves any room for his self and its needs to interfere.

(שם שם ב) ויהי ד' את יוסף *G-d was with Yosef*. Everything about Yosef reflected this awareness.

There is one day a year when we put every personal need aside and focus solely on G-d and His will alone.

Rosh Hashana is indeed the *יום הזכרון*, a Day of Remembrance, nay a Day of Consciousness.

We are taught that on Rosh Hashana Yosef was released from prison. The Midrash states that Yosef was sentenced to precisely two more years in prison prior to that release, because he relied on the Chamberlain to intercede on his behalf rather than placing absolute faith in G-d.

(רש"י שם מ ב)

It would then come out that the incident of the restoring of the Chamberlain to his position took place on Rosh Hashana as well!

This would answer a famous question that is raised; Was Yosef expected not to exert *השתדלות*, human effort coupled with total faith, in seeking an escape from his predicament?

Perhaps on any other day of the year it would have been appropriate, but on Rosh Hashana, the ultimate *Day of Consciousness*, we set aside all personal requests to submit ourselves to bask in His will alone.

This day was indeed another birthday of sorts, that of the universe, the day man, Adam, was created and expected to submit his will totally to G-d.


The Baalei Tosafos state that this day was indeed Rosh Hashana. (תוספות השלם)

If we backtrack the timetable of events in Yosef’s life we will discover that the episode that led to his imprisonment took place on Rosh Hashana as well. Tradition teaches that Yosef was imprisoned for a total of twelve years. (תנחומא וישב ט)

Assuming they were complete years, then twelve years prior to his release, when the incident with the wife of Potiphar, who attempted to seduce Yosef unsuccessfully, transpired on Rosh Hashana as well.

The Torah immediately prior to that event states, *ויהי בבית אדוני המצרי (שם שם ב), and he remained in the house of his Egyptian master.*

The Holy Imrei Chaim of Vishnitz points out that the *גמטריא*, numerical equivalent of



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ראש השנה, 1861 is "ויהי בבית אדוני המצרי" this sentiment

The legacy of Yosef was that “he remained”, ever-conscious of G-d, even in the house of “his Egyptian master”, never allowing a lapse of consciousness in allowing “his personal needs or instincts” to abide within him.

Perhaps Rashi in making reference to the “greek” word *genusya*, in this portion that precedes the holiday of Chanuka, was to subtly equip us against the dangers of the influences they sought to corrupt us with.

The Greeks created all sorts of earthly goals and distractions, creating objectives that would tempt us to be totally absorbed in them, disallowing any room for a consciousness of G-d and our responsibilities to Him.

Might this be the deeper idea behind their plan *להשכיחם תורתך (על הנסים), to make them forget Your Torah.* ? They would inundate us with activities that would fill our minds and our time leaving no room to remain conscious of our special relationship with G-d.

May we absorb the legacy of Yosef HaTzadik, in remaining mindful of who we are and from where we come and defeat the forces of *Yavan* once and for all in bringing back G-d and the consciousness of Him completely to our lives.