

have a Nageela Shabbos

A Kid Friendly Weekly Publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences

Candle Lighting
 Scottsdale 6:09
 Henderson 6:22
 Las Vegas 6:23
 San Diego 6:30
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 Lake Tahoe 6:42

Season 3
 Episode 44

Bubbles and Roller Coasters and Wax Wings

by Rabbi Dani Locker



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“Well, if I had a roller coaster made of wax, I’d want to be in bubble wrap.” ~Nobody

If everything I just wrote above makes any sense to you, then you’ve got a wacky brain and I don’t know how to deal with you. For everyone else, I’ll explain, kinda.

Remember

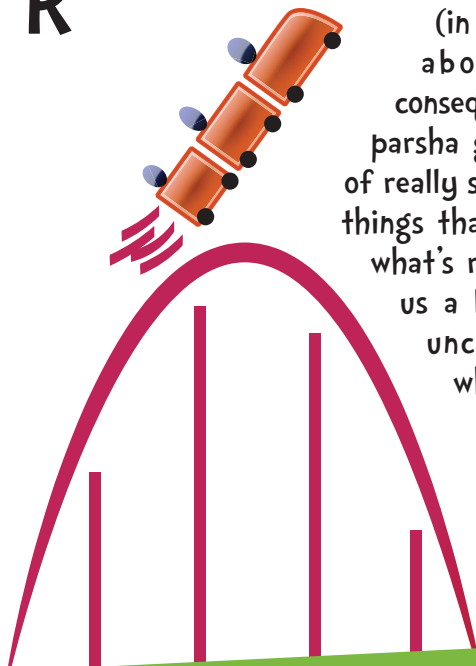
how we wrote last week (in Stump The Rabbi) about reward and consequences? This week’s parsha gives us a long list of really super cool, awesome things that happen if we do what’s right. It also gives us a list of some super uncool, awful things when times aren’t so good. Here’s one. “You will just be at the top, and not be at the bottom.” That’s

a blessing the Torah gives us. That sounds beautiful. Being at the top and not at the bottom sounds wonderful. Top of a mountain. Top of the food chain. Top of your class. Top of a super- tall, super- scary freefall drop... not so much.

The interesting thing is that when the Torah talks about the negative, it says, “You’ll sink to the bottom-bottom, and your enemies will be at the top-top.”

That’s odd. When describing negative events, it uses double wording. “Bottom- bottom.” Yet when it comes to the positive wording, it just says it once. “The top.” That’s not as high as the tippy top, is it?

Everyone knows the myth of Icarus. Wearing wax wings (which must have been amazing to light on Chanukah) he flew up too close to the sun. So they melted. He should have used super glue. The point of that story (aside from the scientific information it teaches about realistic aerodynamics) is that sometimes it’s not good to be at the very tippy top. It makes it easier to fall. Like a real estate bubble (for those interested in a more sophisticated example). Why? Roller coasters.



What came first, the sponsor or the publication?

The choice is yours!

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Cun-tin-yood from page 1

When you reach the highest point of a roller coaster, and it stops moving; that's when you know it's about to drop. It's not the top that is a problem, but when we've reached the absolute pinnacle of success and happiness, we stop moving and growing. We think we've 'made it.' That's what causes us to fall. So (says the Chida), the Torah does not bless us with the very top of success. Just 'near the top' of success, so that we're less likely to fall. When we're experiencing negative, though, the Torah promises us the very, very darkest rock bottom, so that we may rise again.

This idea can help inspire us to make sure we realize that there's always room for growth and improvement. As high as we are, we can get higher, so it's not yet time to fall.

PICKLE JEWS

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coming Soon!

IRVINE

Weekly Latte N Learn for Middle School Students!

**Kickoff LNL will be Thursday, Oct. 3rd, 6:15-7:15pm
at Coffee Bean @ Alton & Jeffrey**

THIS WEEK:

Las Vegas Summerlin 4-6 grade: Monday
5:45pm

Las Vegas Summerlin 7-8 grade: Monday
7pm

Tarzana: Wednesday, 6pm

LA City: Thursday, 6:30pm

Scottsdale: Thursday 6-8pm @ CrakerJax

Events:

SAVE THE DATE: Las Vegas Kickoff Event:
Sunday, Sept. 22nd @ Gravady
Regional Shabbaton Weekend: Jan. 17th
(MLK weekend)

Join your city's Junior Board: email
locker@ncsy.org

ASK US ANYTHING. REALLY!
GET YOUR QUESTION FEATURED IN STUMP THE RABBI
BY SENDING IT TO STUMP@NAGEELAWEST.ORG

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy Birthday to Nageela
family members celebrating
this week!

Ari Steinberg
Seth Goldklang
Avital Desmond
Ahmi Montoya
Rabbi Ari Strulowitz
Lian Bega

**HAPPY UNBIRTHDAY TO
EVERYONE ELSE!**

Slightly Irregular

Hi Rabbi,

At our recent study session, you introduced me to some unusual blessings. One of them is a blessing we make when we see strange looking people. Why would we do that? It sounds offensive to them. Also, why would we praise God for that? What greatness is it that God made strange people?

Thanks,

Sawyer F. Ace

Dear Sawyer Face,

Hey, I'm glad you were paying attention! There are a number of blessings we use to recognize God's hand in our world. We have a blessing when we see the ocean, lightning, great scholars and kings. There's a blessing to make upon seeing extremely beautiful people, and as you mentioned, a blessing for seeing odd looking people. That could include someone exceptionally tall or short, or someone whose skin color is vastly different than his or her parents'. On the surface, this blessing does seem weird. Why would we thank God for 'a mistake?' In order to understand why this blessing exists, let's try to understand why God makes people different.

In basketball, tall players have an advantage. Period. Sure, there have been a handful of short guys who have been pretty good, but had those same players with those same abilities been taller they would have certainly been better at basketball. So in the context of basketball, referring to Spud Webb's height, for example, clearly means that he was a good player **DESPITE** his diminutive stature. If I was a creator, making people for the sole purpose of great basketball, I would only make tall players. Any short player would be an accident.

Look online for irregular or defective clothing. You'll find huge discounts. Clothing is made to look a certain way, and if the factory messes up a batch by printing the logo slightly off center, botching the stitches or placing the hood on the pant leg (that would be a famous magician... Hoodie-

knee) they can't sell the item at the normal cost. That's an accident. A mess up.

But God doesn't do accidents. God doesn't do mess ups. That's not how God views the world. If a person is short or tall, very ugly looking or purple, it's because that is the exact body that person needs to live their life in the most meaningful way.

God didn't make perfect people and imperfect people, high quality models, and bargain, irregular versions. Every single human being is 'in the image of God.' If someone has an unusual body, that's not a case of "They can still be OK even though they're defective." Not at all! Every person is made the way they are because it's an important and integral part of who they are. It is no accident, and we recognize God's brilliance in making each person unique.

Sometimes we think it's good to pretend we don't notice when people are different. It's true that we should do our best not to make people **FEEL** different. But it's also important that we recognize that people really are different, and that is part of what makes them beautiful!

Have-A Nageela Shabbat,

the Rabbi



**stump the
rabbi**

*Stump the Rabbi is a forum
where kids can ask ANY
Jewish question.
Have a question? Please
send it in to
stump@nageelawest.org*

*Questions here are real. Names and
some wording have been changed.*

tree stump

an expansion on the Stump
The Rabbi topic



Here are some little known details about the blessing of 'meshaneh habriyos' mentioned in this week's Stump the Rabbi:

1. In addition to people, this blessing can be said when seeing apes, elephants, and according to some, owls or vultures, due to certain humanistic traits. So bring a prayerbook next time you go to the zoo!
2. Some say that this blessing can only be said the first time you see this type of animal or unusual person, because once you've seen it/ him/ her once, it's no longer surprising. After the first time, the blessing should be said without mentioning God's name.
3. If you live in a place where a certain condition is very common, then you wouldn't say this blessing (like if you live in a village of people with three arms, just sayin).

Jewnior NCSY INVITES YOU TO CRACKERJAX Scottsdale



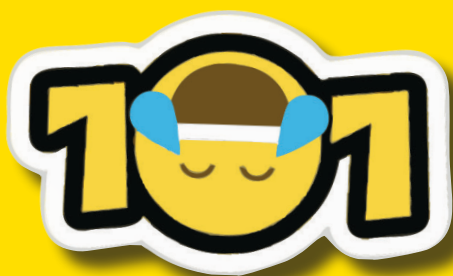
Thursday, September 26th
6-8pm
5th-8th graders



Photos of the Week

Game On!

San Diego Middle Schoolers enjoying the Jr. NCSY Kickoff event with a gaming truck and Krispy Kreme!



What do you call a desert creature with a hump that blends in to its surroundings?

Camelflage!

OUCH! GROAN!

got a better joke? Email it to dlocker@nageelawest.org



Nageela West breaks the mold of old school Jewish outreach by providing out-of-the-box social and educational programs for Jewish children across the west coast. Through afterschool activities, weekend retreats and our signature summer camp, we engage elementary and middle school children in a fun and meaningful experience.

Our "questions encouraged" mindset makes Nageela a comfortable learning and growing environment for Jewish children of all backgrounds.

844-NAGEELA www.nageelawest.org info@nageelawest.org