

VERY PUNNY

Mouthwash helps boost my self esteem.

It gives me encourage mint.

Ouch. Have a better pun?

Send it in to dlocker@nageelawest.org

SEASON 2
EPISODE 16

January 6th, 2018

Candle Lighting:

Las Vegas 4:22

Lake Tahoe 4:32

San Diego 4:38

Los Angeles 4:40

Phoenix 5:16

have a

Nageela Shabbos

Parshas

Shemos

5778

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

Just Another Guy

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Have you heard the word "Tzadik?"

It's the Hebrew word for a righteous person. Someone who is especially good. Great people throughout history have merited the title tzadik by living exceptional lives of purity, kindness or Torah scholarship. It's interesting that in the 24 books of the Tanach (the written portion of the Torah), there are very few people referred to with this appellation. Noah is called a tzadik by the Torah itself, and two other individuals are referred to as tzadik (although the Tanach itself doesn't call them "tzadik," Jewish tradition has assigned this label to these two great men).

Can you guess who they are?

One is Mordechai, of the Purim story. Mordechai was a great leader of the Jewish people who led them in fasting

and prayer, convincing them to improve, eventually avoiding Haman's evil decree.

The other is Yosef (Joseph), who saved Egypt from starvation, and started the Jewish community in Egypt.

Though Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Moshe and many more were undeniably great, they are referred to by other titles. "Our father" or "Our master." None of them are called "Hatzadik"

What is it that these three men, Noah, Yosef and Mordechai have in common that singles them out as "tzadikim?"

Noah lived his life among horrible people. He had no role models or guides to follow. He stood against the crowd, stood up to the pressure of what everyone else was doing.

of Achashveirosh, who certainly was no saint.

It's always an impressive achievement when a person can be good. It's an extra, super special feat of strength when a person can be good when surrounded by people who make those choices difficult. That's what makes someone a tzadik.

When we stand up to the negative influences of the world... when we can see our famous celebrities, politicians and athletes make terrible choices... when even our neighbors, classmates and friends don't always stand for what's good and right... that's what separates a tzadik from just another guy.

Don't be just another guy.

UP N' COMIN

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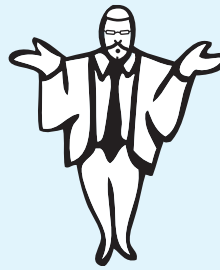
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Stump The Rabbi

The Best Intentions



Hi Rabbi,

Someone told me that if I try to do a mitzvah it counts as if I did it. Why is that true, if I didn't actually succeed? Also, if it's true, does it work the other way? If I want to play a prank on my friend and I fail, does it count as if I did it? Will God give me detention?

Thanks,

Sean Inten

Dear Inten, Sean,

The Talmud tells us (Kiddushin 40a) that God counts a good thought as a good deed, but does not count a bad thought as a bad deed. For example: You take a dollar bill out of your pocket to give charity, and right as you're about to hand it over, a powerful gust of wind blows it away. You might think, "Hey, it's not my fault! I tried!" You're right, it's not. The fact that you had planned to do the right thing means you get credit for doing the right thing. The result is not in your control.

Making poor choices is a different story. If you're planning on stealing someone's dollar, and then the wind blows it away, you've done nothing wrong!

How can this be? Are we responsible for our thoughts, or not?

Have you ever heard of the law of inertia? It's a principle in physics, where Newton (not the fig kind) taught that objects that are moving will keep moving unless something stops them (like gravity, a brick wall, or a "freeze" spell), and objects that are not moving (like a rock or a teenager) will stay that way unless

something moves them (like throwing the rock, or, for the teenager, well, nothing would really make a teenager move).

According to some interpretations of this quote of the talmud (see Meshech

Chachma), a Jew has the inertia of making the right choices. So if we think about making the right choice, it's likely we'll "stay in motion" and complete the mitzvah. So now, even if accidentally the action fails, we still get credit, because we would've done the right thing.

If we have a plan to do something wrong, inertia says we might not follow through... perhaps we'll change our mind. So if we don't actually complete the action, God does not count it as if we've failed, because we haven't yet!

This all changes, though for something we do wrong consistently. If I make a habit of eating too many pickles, and I decide to eat a pickle, I'm probably gonna eat that pickle. Because, you know, PICKLE!

It's important not to get into a pattern of consistently making the same mistakes, because, as the Talmud continues, once a person does the same thing wrong a couple of times, he looks at it as if it's OK to do.

I thought about explaining more, but I'm running out of space, so I'm sure God will count it as if I answered your question better...

Have - a- Nageela Shabbat,

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

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.

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

