

VERY PUNNY

Why couldn't the animals on the ark play cards?

Because Noah was standing on the deck!

Ouch. Have a better pun?

Send it in to dlocker@nageelawest.org

UP N' COMIN

SATURDAY
NOV 4TH

HAVDALLAH
GAME NIGHT

7:30-9:30PM

ANISE TAPAS - LAS VEGAS

NEW YEAR'S
WEEKEND

ANNUAL LEADERSHIP
RETREAT

SEASON 2
EPISODE 7
NOV 4, 2017

Candle Lighting:

Phoenix 5:16

Las Vegas 5:24

San Diego 5:37

Los Angeles 5:40

have a

Nageela Shabbos

Parshas

Vayeira

5778

A Weekly Publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences

Kind of Hot

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Our great- great- great- great- great (keep going on your own time) grandfather Avraham is sitting outside his tent on a painfully hot day. Why was he outside? Avraham was known far and wide for kindness and hospitality. His startup business, chessed.org (because ChessEd.com was taken by a chess tutoring company) and his free hotel chain had become extremely busy and successful. His passion was helping all people, especially travelers. On the day our story takes place, he was waiting outside even though it was really hot, because his hotel was empty, and he really wanted to help people.

Avraham wasn't feeling well. He'd just had surgery and he'd run out of Advil. He could probably get a doctor's note. And did I mention it was hot?

Avraham's business manager, student and head servant, a man named Eliezer, had gone looking for guests. He'd stood at the side of the road spinning and flipping a large sign that said "Avraham's FREE Hotel. Rooms available!" After a while, though, Eliezer returned to Avraham and reported, "I couldn't find ANYBODY!" The roads are deserted. There are no

guests to be found!"

Avraham responded, "I don't believe you!" He then sat outside his tent for hours, in the sweltering heat (I'm not sure if I mentioned that it was hot), searching for some travelers to act kindly toward. First of all, why is Avraham driving himself nuts? If guests would come, he'd help them.. Isn't the idea to help people? If there's nobody to help, then surely he was exempt!

Secondly, why would Avraham have trouble believing Eliezer? Eliezer was extremely loyal to Avraham, and besides, it was a gagillion degrees out!

Avraham shared the attitude we find among great people. It's a drive, and a

passion to accomplish. If there were no travelers, he may have been exempt, but how could a day go by without acts of kindness? Avraham knew that we humans have a job to do, and that job is to perfect ourselves. To try and be more like God (I don't mean invisible). Travelers or no, Avraham needed to act with kindness, or he and his family would have been missing out.

Avraham also realized another important idea. If you truly want to do good... to be good, God will always help you get there. That's why Avraham could not accept that Eliezer had truly tried as hard as he could to find guests. If we really, really want it, there's no way God would prevent us from doing this mitzvah.

Avraham's attitude toward kindness and toward mitzvos is an amazing lesson for all of us. We don't just give charity because people need it, help out because there's a person or a group who require help. We do whatever we can, because it's what makes us become great. AND when we decide to do something right, we can't let an obstacle or two, like quadruple digit temperatures (now I'm prettttty sure you've figured out that it was hot) slow us down. If we want to do what's right, God will eventually help us accomplish our dream.



CANAAN
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATES

Dr. A. E. Mamre, MD

DATE: *Passover*

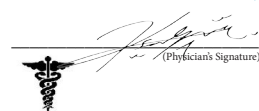
PLEASE EXCUSE: *Avraham*

FROM: (Patient's Name)

Having guests

REASON: ☒ PAIN ☒ ILLNESS ☒ INJURY

☒ BRIS MILAH ☒ OTHER: *A/C is broken. Heat Wave. Unbearable.*


(Physician's Signature)

M.D.

sponsorship

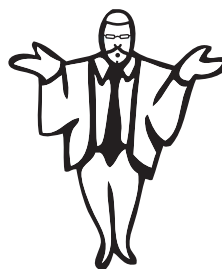
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Stump The Rabbi

Pray What?



Dear Rabbi,

I think I pulled a muscle trying to lift a siddur off the shelf last week! They're so big and bulky. Where did our prayer books come from? They're not in the Torah! And why are they so big? When did praying from a book become a thing? When did praying at all become a thing? Which prayer is the oldest that we have? Looking for some answers and I hope you can help.

Thanks,

Penina Raechel Mantis

Dear PRae,

People have been praying for a really long time. Perhaps in a different week's episode, we'll discuss why and how. For today, let's stick with where our current prayers come from.

In early times, people kinda just made up their own prayers. When our ancestors prayed, they spoke from their heart. There were no prayerbooks, or even prayer apps. They prayed when they felt they needed to.

Avraham was the first to set up a set time to pray. The words were still his own personal prayer, but he decided that it was appropriate to pray each morning. His son and grandson subsequently added prayers for the afternoon

and night. That's why Jews now generally pray thrice daily (thrice tastes great when topped by thmeatballs). The words were still not set.

Prophets and Rabbis steadily composed their own prayers, realizing that people just didn't have a good enough understanding to come up with their own words effectively. Little by little these prayers were written down. About 2000 years ago, the main parts of our prayer service were finally organized and put into THE SIDDUR, the official Jewish prayer book. Because the prayer services were created and organized over many centuries, there are a bunch of slightly different versions of it. Nowadays, you can easily find dozens of Siddur options on Amazon. There are even a number of Siddur apps. The reason a siddur is big is because it contains prayers for specific days, and a whole bunch of extras. The typical prayerbook has prayers both for weekday and for Shabbat. Prayers for holidays, blessings before and after food. It has the grace after meals (birkat hamazon or benching), partial Torah readings, and often the entire book of Tehillim, or psalms. Some have rules of prayers, and other Jewish texts. Basically, it has become a book with lots of stuff that's not purely prayer, but has been included so that it's easier to find (note I said easier, not easy.

You should learn how to use the table of contents in your siddur).

As far as the earliest prayer, the truth is that most prayers have parts of them that are quotes from the Torah. The oldest single section of our prayer service would have to be shema, which is a quote from the Torah, and is a mitzvah to recite twice a day. Perhaps you can argue that Az Yashir is slightly older, appearing earlier in the Torah, but that may not count as it's own section.

Everything I've just written is about the actual specific prayers found in a siddur. The truth is that if you pray using your own words, that works, too! In some ways it's even better because your own prayers mean more to you and you can put more feeling into them. Still, our siddur and the prayers in it are really important. Here's a cool trick, if you can swing it (I do this often myself): Try to say the traditional prayers (of course using a good English translation so you know what UR talkin about). Then at the end, add your own personal prayer in your own words.

Remember that praying is a beautiful way to connect to God, to feel in control and confident about the challenges in your life and to fix some of your problems. So make sure that you pray in an area where you won't be distracted. Also, try to make sure that you're not disturbing other people's prayers by praying loudly, or wildly. Remember, Say it don't (s)pray it.

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

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