

Parshas
Behaaloscha
5779

June 21st,
2019

have a Nageela Shabbos

Candle Lighting:
Scottsdale 7:22
San Diego 7:41
Henderson 7:42
Las Vegas 7:43
Los Angeles 7:50
Tarzana 7:51
Reno/ Tahoe 8:11

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

Season 3
Episode 37

Awfully Awesome by Rabbi Dani Locker



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Things were getting heated. Moshe had finally had the last straw. He had led the Jewish people out of Egypt quite spectacularly, and the story would be told until, well, 'till 2019, at least. Miracles, freedom, more miracles, a divine encounter when God Himself appeared to the entire Nation... I mean, Moshe's list of top ten moments were pretty awesome! The highlight video would totally trend on YouTube.

But the Jewish people weren't happy. After all Moshe had done for them, they kept complaining, and kvetching, and crying, and moaning, and complaining some more. If they were hungry, they cried, so Moshe got them the best food on the planet. What did they do?



They complained that they wanted meat. Moshe got them quail. They still complained. At this point, Moshe had enough.

The Talmud (Sotah 12b) tells us that Moshe said, "It was because of me that you were all saved!"

Whoa. Hold your horses! What does Moshe mean that they were saved because of him? Actually, he's the one who put them in danger! Okay, the slavery wasn't exactly fun. But do you remember at what point in the story Pharaoh started killing Jewish children? It was after he found out Moshe would rescue the Jews. Pharaoh's astrologers told him a savior would be born who would take the Jews out of Egypt. Pharaoh wanted more than anything to stop that from happening, so he first tried to get the Jewish midwives to do the job (is a midwife a wife who is neither a righty nor a lefty?). When that failed, he ordered his army to find and kill all of the Jewish boy children. All because he was afraid of Baby Moshe.

That does not sound like Moshe saving the Jews.

To answer this question (which by the way is asked by the commentary, Tosafos), we've got to ask ourselves. "What would have happened

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if Moshe would not have been born.”

One thing is that Charlton Heston would be out of a job (if you got that joke, you're too old to be reading this). Another thing is that the Jews would not have been saved. I don't mean that nobody would have performed the plagues. Maybe someone else coulda done that. But without Pharaoh's panic, fearing the Jewish savior, things wouldn't have been so desperate for the Jews. They would have suffered through their slavery in silence, but as long as nobody tried to kill their children, they might not have turned to God the same way they did. They might have remained slaves forever! In a way, Pharaoh's brutality was a catalyst (which is just a fancy word for 'cause') for our salvation! So, Moshe's claim that he saved everyone is true, just not in the way you might have imagined.

What does this teach us? Come on Rabbi, it's gotta teach us something, or else you wouldn't have put it in this fine publication... Here's what I take out of it. At first glance, nothing could possibly be worse than Pharaoh trying to kill Jewish babies (BTW, I use the word trying, because Toasfos concludes that none of the babies were actually killed from that decree). But once you know the whole story, it was the cause of everything good that's ever happened to us! Freedom, getting the Torah, Israel, the Holy Temples.. Sometimes something looks so bad, but the result is incredibly good. We can't predict it. Of course we have to try our best to do what we believe is right. But if something goes wrong, **DON'T PANIC!** We really, really don't know God's plan. Who knows. It might be the start of something awesome. Look for the story corner in this edition for a great example of this.

**Wait! What?
You guys have a
camp? No way!**

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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MAY 22-25 (MEMORIAL)
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Jew^{nior}
NCJ



After all the voting, here is the (nearly) finished product, front & back.
Let us know what you think!



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It's not a contest

Dear Rabbi,

Why do religious people sometimes act bad? Doesn't the Torah tell people to do the right thing? I've read stories about religious Jews who have done all kinds of crimes, and I've met people who aren't very nice. Yet I've also met people who aren't religious who are really good people. Why does that happen?

Thanks,

Diana S. Poynt



**stump the
rabbi**

Dear Di S. Poynt,

Let me start by saying that it's never OK for people to be dishonest, disrespectful, or commit crimes. The Torah does indeed teach us to avoid all these things. But something funny happened... You see, when Moses was about to receive the Torah to give it to the Jewish people, the angels wanted to keep it. They argued that the Torah is too holy for the imperfect human to possess. Moses argued (and won) that their point is exactly why humans need the Torah. Angels are perfect and do not need a guide to help them fix their flawed lives. Humans on the other hand have all kinds of challenges. People can sometimes be selfish, angry, thoughtless, jealous, greedy, lazy... The Torah is there to help us become better, but WE ARE STILL HUMAN.

Raise your hand if you've ever made a mistake you regret. Now I know who you are. Seriously, everyone has challenges. If you see someone commit a crime or do something wrong, that's because they're human. Even the greatest people have challenges and make real mistakes.

I would not argue that that purpose of the Torah is to make you better than someone else. The purpose of the Torah is to MAKE A PERSON BETTER THAN THAT SAME PERSON WOULD HAVE BEEN WITHOUT IT. A specific individual who is not religious might very well be a better person than someone who is, but each of those two people are better off with the Torah in their lives than without it. If a person

REALLY allows the torah into their mind and heart, it will (nearly) perfect them as people. But for most of us, the goal isn't perfect, it's BETTER. Unfortunately, there are some people who study Torah and try to keep it, but who haven't really absorbed the Torah's teachings in the way they live their lives.

Now that I've said that, I will say that in my personal observation, I've seen, as a general rule, that people who use Torah values to guide their lives do tend to be more honest, generous and hard working than your average Joe. The Torah community has a RIDICULOUS amount of charity and kindness that is WAY out of proportion to its size and money.

I'll also add to religious Jews who might be reading this... as you can see, people really do notice. Our responsibility is to make sure the world sees how valuable Torah is in enriching our lives and making us better human beings.

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.

Story Corner

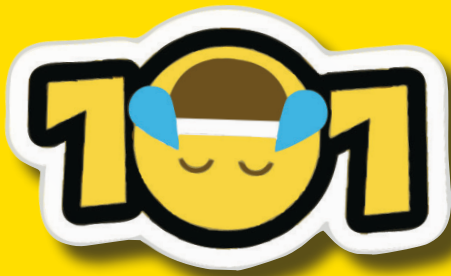
with Rabbi Locker

This is a true story about a family I know pretty well. I've told it a bunch of times, so if you haven't heard it yet, you're in for a treat. If you've already heard it, think about what it means, and try to really absorb the message. The names have been changed.

The Gold family had just moved in to town, and were nervous but excited about their new home, and were happy to be living on the West Coast. Then it happened. A drunk driver slammed into their car. It was a pretty bad accident, and the whole family was rushed to the hospital by ambulance. There's no doubt that during the next few hours there was anger. Anger at the irresponsible driver who had endangered their lives. Anger at God, who had allowed such innocent people to get hurt for no reason... 12 year old Natalie had the worst injuries, and she was taken to get a CAT scan of her brain, while her parents and sisters waited nervously outside. What they found was shocking.

Natalie had a brain tumor. They had never known, and if they had not detected it for a few more months, Natalie would not have survived it. Because of the accident, they were able to treat the tumor in its early stages, and save her life. It's now more than ten years later, and Natalie is leading a happy, healthy life. All because of... the drunk driver?

Well, who ELSE would YOU credit?



I couldn't remember how to throw a boomerang.

Then it came back to me!

OUCH! GROAN!

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

Awesometastic birthday wishes to our friends celebrating their birthdays:

Meira Borsody

Abby Boyd

Ben Pheibush

Mimi Kurtz

Aviel Ben-Yehuda

Bar'el Gazala

Leedor Bobli

Joe Perry

HAPPY UNBIRTHDAY TO
EVERYONE ELSE!



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