May 6th, 2017

## have a Nageela

A weekly publication of Nageela West Joyfully Jewish Experiences

### pairently...

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Nearly there! Just about a week before Lag Ba'Omer, let's reflect a bit upon the time period of the year known as Sefirat Ha'Omer. The talmud tells us of 24,000 great men, students of Rabbi Akiva who perished in a plague, just about 2,000 years ago. In mourning of their loss, we mark a period of sadness each year (see last week's edition of Nageela Shabbos). But the Talmud doesn't actually say "24,000 students." The precise words are "12,000 pairs of students." Yeah, I can do the math, but why word it in such a strange way?

The Talmud is teaching a valuable lesson. A person can not grow or achieve greatness alone. Whether it's study or any other part of life, human beings were built to function within a team. A pair. For Torah study, that means a study partner. No matter how brilliant you might be, you'll always understand things more clearly when discussing with another. For life, it's a good friend or spouse, who can work with you as a team to become better people.

This is emphasised by the reason the Talmud gives for their deaths; lack of respect for one another. Their success could only come about by working together with a great degree of mutual respect, and their demise came because they lacked it.

"Who is a wise man? He who learns from every person." Let's take this important concept to heart and listen to the thoughts and opinions of all our peers, even if we're wayyyyy smarter. 🦐

#### candle lighting:

Las Vegas 7:14 Los Angeles 7:22 San Diego 7:15 Phoenix 6:56

#### Mazel Tov!!!:

This week's edition of Nageela Weekly is sponsored with gratitude to Zvi and Betty Ryzman in recognition of your dedication to Harbotzas Hatorah

#### **WERY PUNNY**

WHO WAS THE GREATEST BABYSITTER IN JEWISH HISTORY?

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# Nageela



Hí Rabbí,

I've got a seríous problem

that I need your advice with. I have a great family (that's not my problem) and they are happy that I'm learning and growing in my Jewish identity. As I learn more about Judaism, I've started to realize that my parents do not keep many of the mitzvot the same way I would like to. I don't want to be disrespectful and start fights, but I also want to keep the Torah better. What should I do?

Tal Oren

Dear Tor(e)n

If it makes you feel any better, your question is thousands of years old and has been discussed by some of the greatest minds in history. As an extreme example, our great forefather Avraham, recognizing that there was only one God, had to deal with a father who manufactured statues for worship. "Please save me, O mighty Barbie!" was a common phrase in his house. He had no choice but to refuse his parents' authority. Bununut, it doesn't sound like your parents are genuflecting to GI Joe figures, so your solution is less obvious.

Honoring your parents made the top ten list. Literally. When God gave us the Torah on Mount Sinai, He presented the ten commandments, which are ten fundamentally important ideas that are highlights of the Torah. Not only that; did you notice that the commandments are on two separate tablets? The first tablet (yeah, the one on the right, I know it's backwards) deals with "God stuff" (ya know, like not worshipping Barbie, keeping Shabbat and avoiding swearing in God's name) and the left side is about "People stuff" (not murdering, kidnapping and stuff). Guess which side talks about honoring your parents. (No, there's no third side. What are Stump the Rabbi is a forum where kids can ask ANY Jewish question. 

important! It's also true that listening to God is more important, so if there's a direct argument like: DAD: Hey Tal. I want you to go murder Bob on your way home from school. OK?

GOD: Uh, murdering someone on the way home from school is totally not cool.

YOU: Maybe I'll just skip school.

DAD and GOD: No way are you skipping school! (I get way too carried away with my imagination. Did I ever tell you the story about the... there I go again)

In the above conversation. Listen to God. Find a new parent, or something. And warn Bob to stay away from your house. Sometimes children who learn new information about Judaism rush to criticize and fight with their parents. That's not cool either. Of course, every situation is different. Speak with your parents (but leave Bob out of it). Speak with a Rabbi. 90% of the time, you'll be able to come up with a plan that works if you approach it respectfully.

Your case brings to mind a student i had many years ago who decided to start wearing tzitzit every day. After a few months of tense fighting at home, his mother called, clearly upset. "Why does he have to wear those ugly strings down to his feet?"

He had gotten tzitzit way too big for himself and instead of calmly discussing whether he could get a better fitting pair and tuck them in, had insisted on wearing them, trailing on the floor. Don't be that kid. For Bob's sake, approach your parents respectfully, and I'm sure you'll all make yourselves and God much happier.

Have a Nageela Shabbat,

*Have a question? Please send it in to* stump@nageelawest.org

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

Live in Phoenix or Tucson? Email us to find out about THIS WEEK'S Nageela open houses in your city!

