

VERY PUNNY

What do you call a row of rabbits hopping backward?

A receding hare line!

Ouch. Have a better pun?

Send it in to dlocker@nageelawest.org

UP N' COMIN

SATURDAY
NOV 18TH

HAVDALLAH
GAME NIGHT

7:30-9:30PM

ANISE TAPAS - LAS VEGAS

NEW YEAR'S
WEEKEND

ANNUAL LEADERSHIP
RETREAT

SEASON 2

EPISODE 8

NOV 11, 2017

Candle Lighting:

Las Vegas 4:18

San Diego 4:32

Los Angeles 4:34

Phoenix 5:10

have a

Nageela Shabbos

Parshas
Chayei Sara

5778

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

Aye, Aye, Captain

by Rabbi Dani Locker

What is the president's approval rating? I don't mean our current president, who has not yet finished his term and career averages can not be compiled). According to Gallup Polls, John F. Kennedy enjoyed the highest average approval rating (since they started keeping track of these things, anyway) with 70.1% on average approving of the job the President is doing, with Dwight Eisenhower a close second. Truman and Carter had the lowest, at around 45%. Of course, in 2017, Hamilton is the most popular president.

It ain't easy for a world leader to be popular. And good. It's not hard to be one or the other, but not both.

Avraham was not extremely popular. He was arrested and imprisoned for ten years, as a young kid, simply because of his beliefs! He was known as Avraham Ha'Ivri - Abraham "on the other side" because he was completely against the entire world, with the exception of a few dedicated followers. What was the world's reaction when, at the ripe old age of 175, he passed away (y'know, I've always wondered why we call it a 'ripe' old age. Why are we comparing

old people to fruit?)?

They were devastated! The Talmud (BB 91) describes what happened. All the world leaders formed a line, and said, "Woe!" Not like "whoah!" which is what you tell a horse right before you slam into an electrified fence. Not even like "Wow" which can easily be mispronounced. They said "Woe" which basically means, insert crying emoji. "Woe is to the world which lost its driver. Woe is to the ship which lost its captain."

Why did they mention a driver and a captain? Aren't captains basically just water drivers (except captains with large stars on their vibranium shield)?

A driver navigates on land. Giving direction for land travel involves looking down. Check the road, the hills and valleys, rivers and streams. If you have a good picture or map of the land, you should be able to find your way.



Navigating the sea is a completely different activity. There are no roads or hills. Everything looks the same! The only way to tell where you're going is by looking up. A skilled captain can tell his position, direction and more by looking at the stars.

Avraham led the world in two important ways. He taught the world how to treat other people. You do that by "looking down", by seeing what people need and how you can be kind to them. He taught them about hospitality and chessed.

Avraham also introduced the world to a wealth of understanding of God and how He runs the world. Avraham, by "looking up," helped the world navigate the ocean of theology and philosophy, leading it in the direction of monotheism and morality.

"Woe is to the world which lost its driver. Woe is to the ship which lost its captain."

We may not have racing licenses or the proper training to be a ship's captain, yet Avraham's mission is our mission. To lead the world by looking down, by seeing what people need and doing our best to help. And by looking up. Understanding life according to the values of the Torah and showing those values to the world through our example.

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Stump The Rabbi



From the Heart?

Hey Rabbi,
I read your answer last week explaining how our modern prayerbook evolved [to see this referenced answer, visit the Nageela Shabbos archives at nageelawest.org]. I understand how our prayers have developed into their current form, but I still don't understand why we have a prayer book at all. I mean, seriously, shouldn't prayers come from the heart? Why would I want to read bunch of words. I mean a whole lot of words, that I may or may not understand, when I can just talk directly to God in my own words? Can't I?
Thanks,

Eli Bookman

Dear eBook,

Yup yup yup! I'll say it again. Yes, affirmative, definitely, certainly, absolutely, 100%. Prayer is about connecting God. It's about talking to him from your heart and accomplishing three main goals:

1. Praising God, which means saying he rocks and talking about the great things he does.
2. Thanking God, which includes recognizing all the awesome things he does for us every day has done and will do in the future and saying thank you.
3. Asking for stuff. We all have needs and God wants us to express those needs to him. As a part of the prayer service we ask him for the things that we need now or might need in the future like health, money, pickles, happiness, Moshiach, more pickles, brains, salvation Israel and of course

pickles.

As long as you're accomplishing these three things and you understand what you're saying, you've prayed. Oh, there's one more thing. You've got to know that you're talking to God. If you just reciting these things as some kind of story or poem and you don't realize you're communicating with God, then it's not prayer. That means you can stand for six hours on Yom Kippur, read e-v-e-r-y s-i-n-g-l-e l-o-n-g w-o-r-d a-n-d p-a-r-a-g-r-a-p-h and if you haven't thought about God, you haven't prayed at all.

So back to your question. Why all the printed blessings? Why the long long services in the synagogue where we read, read, read? Why don't we all just come pray for the things that we want, praise God go home to our cholent and Shabbat naps?

You've probably never been to court. That's good, I'm proud of you. Keep it up. When a person has a serious trial and needs to defend himself, there are two options he could use.

Option 1: Speak to the jury from his heart. Plead with them and explain his situation.

Option 2: Hire a lawyer who understands law. The lawyer may be able to argue for you better than you can because he understands how these things work. He knows what kinds of arguments, stories, questions and statement will help you win. Yet the lawyer can not argue with as much emotion as you can.

Which brings us to the third option. Hey, you didn't say there was a third option!

Sorry, my bad.

Here's the third option. Having a

lawyer prepare your arguments for you. This way the words you are saying are well constructed, and the arguments are the most likely to work. Then, use the lawyer's statement yourself, so you can speak to the jury emphatically and emotionally. From the heart.

The best way to pray is using option 3. The Men of the Great Assembly [a really smart group of ancient Rabbis] put together the text of our prayers because they are experts! They know exactly what is a good thing to say and what isn't. They understand the best words to use, and how to organize the prayers in the way that will get us the best results. But they should be said with understanding and heartfelt emotion. It's important to learn to understand the prayers, so you can speak them with meaning and feeling. Get yourself a prayerbook with an English translation, and study it, it will completely change your prayers (I recommend the Artscroll Siddur. Good translation, and interesting notes. But any English prayer book should help).

One more point. Even if you're using the prayer book and you understand every word, I recommend adding your own requests, in English at the end. Anything that was not specifically mentioned in your prayers can be included. Your sick cousin, important soccer game, or your Dad's job; whatever it is, you can take the opportunity to pray from the heart, in your own words.

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.



LOS ANGELES
Shabaton

THANKSGIVING
WEEKEND 2017

SIX FLAGS!
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CRAZY GAMES
AMAZING FOOD
AWESOMETASTIC NAGEELA
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