



**NAGEELA
GRAND TOUR
2018**



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**SEASON 2
EPISODE 32**

May 12th, 2018

Candle Lighting:

Phoenix 7:00
Las Vegas 7:19
San Diego 7:19
Los Angeles 7:27
Lake Tahoe 7:44

have a

Nageela Shabbos



Parshas
Behar/
Bechukosai

5778

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

Do Not Pass GO

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Jason was instantly jealous. As a pizza delivery guy, he got to see all kinds of homes, but he'd never seen anything like this. As he biked up the long winding driveway of the mansion, he saw tennis courts, a massive pool and even a zipline. Off to the other side of the estate, he could make out what looked like a half-pipe made for skateboards. Whatever kid lived here sure was lucky. As he approached the front door, he caught a glimpse through the window of majestic staircases, a grand piano, and the largest television screen he'd ever seen. He rang the bell and

waited for the door to open...

Now, I'm going to be annoying and interrupt the story for a moment. Oh, come on, be patient.

“If you will go in my laws, and guard my commandments... then I will provide peace in the land... and you will be my nation.” This quote is from the first few sentences Bechukosai, the second half of this week's double Torah portion. It promises all kinds of awesome blessings for people who will follow G-d's laws. However, it can't just mean to follow the laws, because that's the same as “guard my commandments” and the

Torah never repeats itself unnecessarily. The authorities agree that it refers to Torah study. So basically, we can paraphrase these sentences as “If you study Torah, and keep the mitzvot, good stuff will happen.” Cool.

One thing, though. Why does it say “go” when referring to Torah study. It's a weird verb to use. Why would it say “go” in Torah study instead of “learn” or “study?”

Jason craned his neck to see more of the home as he waited for the door to open. He could see all kinds of wonderful facilities here in this house, a dream for any kid. The door opened, and Jason stared, confused, because he didn't see anyone. Then

continued on page 3

*In honor of the Bar Mitzvah
of Moshe Smolyanskyy*

to sponsor an episode
of Nageela Shabbos,
please contact ygelb@
nageelawest.org



844-NAGEELA
www.nageelawest.org
info@nageelawest.org

Stump The Rabbi

Mitzvability

Hi Rabbi,

Are there any Jews who are exempt from the mitzvot? I mean, at school, kids who have broken arms don't have to do homework. So are there any conditions that would make it too difficult for someone to keep some or all mitzvot?

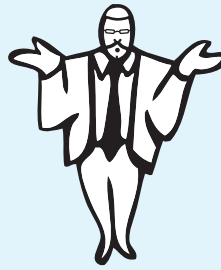
Thanks,

Abraham I. Litty

Dear Abe I. Litty,

We all know that trick. Pretending to have a broken arm to get out of homework. Or forgetting to tell the teacher, when you've broken your right arm that you're a lefty. Kids, don't try this at home. It's not worth it. I know someone who once lied about breaking his arm. The first person he met was an orthopedist.

Now, to your question. The mitzvot of the Torah are there to help us become the best people we can. It's important to do the best we can, yet God understand our limitation, because He gave those limitations to us! Imagine if I asked you to bake me a cake in a kitchen without an oven. That would be unreasonable, right? God does not expect, for example, a person with no arms to wear tefillin. He does not expect someone who is completely deaf to hear the shofar. Similarly, someone with learning disabilities that prevent him from studying Torah, may be exempt from studying, depending on how severe those



disabilities are (although in many cases, it's a matter of finding out the way that person learns).

There are a few groups of people who are not fully obligated in the mitzvot. The truth is that every kid begins completely exempt. Obviously, a baby has no need to fulfil any mitzvot. As children become older, it is appropriate for them to learn, but they're not fully obligated and can't fully participate until they reach the level of maturity that we call bar or bat mitzvah. Only at that time can they recite kiddush for someone else, read the Torah or join a minyan.

People who are mentally incapable of understanding (the Talmud uses the word "shoteh"), do not need to keep the mitzvot. I can't give you an exact medical determination of how capable a person has to be in order to become a "mitzvah man." A Rabbi would need to be asked about each specific case.

The Talmud also discusses someone who can neither hear nor speak. Before modern innovations in sign language and education for the hearing impaired, and of course, before the invention of hearing aids, people who were deaf and mute together had very little ability to learn and truly join society. In many ways, people with these conditions, during ancient times, were not able to develop mentally, without appropriate educational techniques. It would have still been appropriate for them to join in as much as they were able (like a pre- bar mitzvah child), but they would have had no strict obligations. However, with modern



technology and innovations, this has changed. Nearly all hearing impaired individuals can now learn to speak, and through hearing aids and cochlear implants, many people can regain hearing as well. It's very clear in Jewish law that someone who can either hear or speak is completely obligated as a full fledged adult Jew. In a very rare case when an individual can't hear or speak at all, it's debated whether use of sign language is good enough to consider them "speakers."

Please keep in mind, this whole discussion is only about obligations in mitzvot. It goes without saying (but hey, I'll say it anyway) that every human being deserves complete respect, care and love.

Take a look around you. People are so drastically different, and every person has his or her challenges. Hopefully we've all learned by now that being more physically, mentally or monetarily capable than someone else doesn't make us any better. Every person has their own path to walk, and every person deserves friendship and respect to help them get there.

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

continued from front

he lowered his gaze a bit, and saw a boy about his age... in a wheelchair. The boy, whose name was Tim, invited Jason to come in, as he explained his situation. Tim loved sports. He was an avid swimmer and skater. But a car accident had severely injured his legs, and he would be wheelchair bound for many months. "Now I can't even climb the stairs. Someone has to carry me up."

Jason finally realized what he had been missing. Having something is only useful if you are able to use it.

Studying Torah is one of the most important things we can do. It teaches us how to live, helps us think and reason, and makes us better people. Yet it can't do these things simply by living in our heads. In order for the Torah we've studied to be meaningful, we

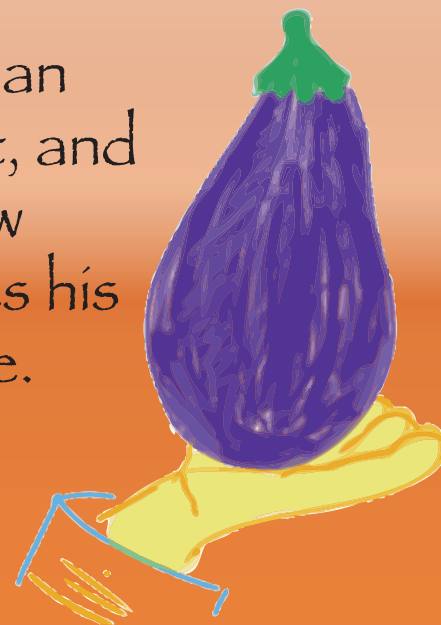
have to "go" in the Torah. We must walk in the path that it teaches us. If we don't use the moral and spiritual legs the Torah helps us gain, then the knowledge we have is a cool looking, unused skatepark, or a tall but unclimbable spiral staircase.

Let's shift from being "in the know" to being "in the go!"



Give a man
an egg and
he'll have an
omelette for
a day

Give him an
eggplant, and
he'll grow
omelettes his
whole life.



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G.O.A.T.

Greatest Of All Time

Quote

*The punishment of
a liar is that he's not
believed, even when he
speaks the truth*

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SAVE THE DATES:

MON, MAY 14
FINAL
SUMMERLIN
NAGEELATTE

THURS, MAY 17
FINAL GREEN
VALLEY
NAGEELATTE

SUN, JUNE 3
TAHOE/ RENO
YEAR END
EVENT

SUN, JUNE 10 LAS VEGAS YEAR END BOWLING EVENT

**Happy
Birthday!**

to Nageela family members
celebrating their birthdays this
week!

Zeidy Locker
Manny Rosen
Gabriel Hafter
Gabby Rivera
Ashley Sellen
Rivkie Wyne

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.

