

NAGEELA SHABBOS

Have-a

Ki Sisa 5781
March 5th, 2021

SEASON 5 EPISODE 20

a kid friendly publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences



My Name is the Count Because...

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Did you notice how the Jews were counted?

I imagine the planning meeting might have gone something like this:

"Ok, Moses. As the official Israelite PR director, I will now instruct you on best practices for counting the Jewish people."

"Why can't I just count them normally?"

"Define normally."

"One Mississippi. Two Mississippi..."

"Ummm... who's Mrs. Tzipi? Oh! You mean your wife, Tziporah?"

"No. no. Mississippi is a river that hasn't been discovered yet. But you're not a prophet, so how would you know? Maybe would try one

Uphrates,
two Uphra-

tes..."

"We actually can't count the Jews directly. God does not want us to count them by heads."

"Why not?"

"Hmmm, that sounds like a great question to submit to Stump the Rabbi and read about in the Nageela Shabbos."

"Any-

way, we're going to post QR codes all over the camp, and

ev-
everyone
will scan



Candle lighting

Henderson	5:21
Las Vegas	5:22
San Diego	5:31
Irvine	5:33
Reno/ Tahoe	5:38
Los Angeles	5:35
Oakland	5:49
Park City	6:04
Scottsdale	6:09

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them. Then they'll fill out their info."

"If we haven't discovered the Mississippi river, we're not using QR codes."

"Can we use drones to count from above?"

"Negatory."

"What about Dominion vote counting machines?"

"We want the Jews to get along. So... no."

"How about coins?"

"Why coins?"

Yeah, why coins? I'm going to interrupt the above [very accurate] conversation with this thought. God could have chosen so many different possible methods of counting the Jews. Yet the method we used was by contributing coins. Specifically, each

person gave a half-shekel coin.

Do you know what message I learned from that? Giving. Giving is the way a Jewish person makes him or herself special and significant. The idea of counting is to show that each person... wait for it... COUNTS. What makes you count? Generosity, giving, being like God who is the ultimate giver.

Giving has always been in the spiritual DNA of the Jewish people. I'm not sure if Moses considered using rivers' names or not. He did impress upon us this valuable message. To really matter, it can't be all about yourself. Be a giver. Matter.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Best wishes to our friends and family members celebrating this week...

Sofia Leos
Roni Facher
Aviv Kohen
Tal Kohen
Jacob Lev
Lilah Todd
Jacob Zalk
Menachem Roberts
Rabbi Michah Greenland
Saadia Simon
Chana Adlerstein
Judah Haffer
Sarah (Locker) Silver

deep thoughts
YOUR FIRST BIRTHDAY WAS ACTUAL YOUR SECOND BIRTHDAY



This amazing, free event is for middle school students all around the west coast! RSVP by Monday! →

MAZEL TOV!

to Asher Oresntein who celebrated his Bar mitzvah last week!



CAFE
NAGEELATTE

JEWNIOR NCSY LATTE & LEARN. MONDAYS AT CAFE EXPRESS- 2521 S FORT APACHE.
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6 PM - 7 PM FOR GRADES 7-8
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THE JEWISH LIFE OF .PETS

TUESDAY MARCH 9th
5th-8th graders & pets of all ages

7:00pm PT RSVP REQUIRED
<https://tinyurl.com/ncsynpets>
If you don't have a pet, you can still join the fun!

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.

Note: We call this 'Stump The Rabbi' for fun, but that's not really the point. The goal is to learn something important in an interesting way.

Stump the Rabbi



#162 A Part, not Apart

Hi Rabbi,

In today's Dvar Torah you wrote about counting Jews. You mentioned that we don't count Jews 'by their heads, whatever that means. Why don't we count Jews? Why were they able to count with coins? Is there a legal way that it's OK to count? I mean, how can you figure out if you have a minyan without counting?

Thanks,

Ian Minn



Dear Minn Ian,

That is impossible! What? Now I'm the confused one. How could you possibly have read today's dvar Torah, thought of a question, sent me the question, all on time to be published in the same episode of Nageela Shabbos? Time machine? Or maybe you're actually me. Hmmm, I'll have to think about that one. And now to your question.

God tells Moshe that he should count the Jews by using coins so that there should not be a plague. Not having plagues sounds like fun. Do you remember those pre-plague days? Could you imagine all the Jews walking around in the desert with masks and hand sanitizer? Here's the reason I remember for not wanting to count Jews 'by their heads' meaning, directly counting each person.

Sometimes we are worthy of blessing. However, not all of us always live up to the high, high standards God has for us. In case we are not 100% up to standard, it's a good idea to be included in the group called "The Jewish People." I like to think of it like flower

paintings. If you paint a landscape with thousands of flowers in it, it's really fine if not every flower has every detail perfectly painted. In fact, most painters of landscapes don't add much detail to the individual flowers, and like to step back and admire the complete work. But if you're painting a 12 foot portrait of a single rose, you best be making sure that every single inch of that flower is done with precision and beauty. We are all a part of the Jewish people. And it's better to be a part than apart. When we count people 'by the head', God looks at them as individuals. In that case, they don't get the benefits of being part of the greater Jewish nation. How did coins help? There are two opinions. One possibility is that since the count was indirect, counting coins instead of people, there's no problem. In the Holy Temple they did something similar, counting fingers instead of people. Another possible explanation is that giving coins, because it's generous and counts as charity, cancels out any badness that would come from counting in person. So according to this idea, it would be ok to count people

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1

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9

DAYS TO CAMP NAGEELA WEST
GIRLS SESSION

1

3

5

DAYS TO CAMP NAGEELA WEST
BOYS SESSION

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Stump the Rabbi^{continued}

directly if it's for a mitzvah purpose.

When it comes to counting people for a minyan, there are usually three ways to get an accurate count without counting the people directly:

It's OK to count in your head, without speaking them out loud (which ironically means we can't count heads, but we can count in heads).

Each person gives a million dollar donation, and you just count how many million you have (a million minyan).

You can find a sentence with ten words and use that to count. This is the method I prefer. Some people like to use the blessing for bread which has ten words: Baruch Atah Hashem, Elokeinu, Melech Haolam, Hamotzi Lechem Min Haaretz. You can also use this one: Scintillate, scintillate, diminutive

asteroid; how I ponder your true identity, or "I will never say never, I will fight till forever." Maybe just stick with the bread blessing. Regardless of the details, the message for all of us is that in order to get the most blessing out of life, we should stick together with the rest of the Jewish people. A part, not apart.

Have a Nageela Shabbat,

the Rabbi

PICKLE

JEW S

GALACTICALLY SYNDICATED
COMIC STRIP

**WHAT A
WEEK**

THIS PAST WEEK, WE
HAD OVER 100 MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
AT IN PERSON EVENTS...

MONDAY- Las Vegas (Jewnior Latte N' Learn)

TUESDAY- Orange County (Beach Party)

WEDNESDAY- LA Valley

WEDNESDAY- LA City (PICO scavenger hunt)

Nageela West Coast

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. Through afterschool activities, weekend retreats and our signature summer camp, we engage elementary and middle school children in a fun and meaningful experience. Our "questions encouraged" mindset makes Nageela a comfortable learning and growing environment for Jewish children of all backgrounds.



I have an old friend I haven't spoken to in ten years because he's obsessed with counting.

I wonder what he's up to now!

OUCH! GROAN!

Have a better joke and want a shoutout in Nageela Shabbos? Just email it to dlocker@nageelawest.org



www.nageelawest.org

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