

have a Nageela Shabbos

A KID FRIENDLY WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF NAGEELA WEST COAST JOYFULLY JEWISH EXPERIENCES

SEASON 4
EPISODE 26

INFINITY PLUS ONE BY RABBI DANI LOCKER



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Hang around any family long enough and you'll eventually hear a conversation that goes something like this:

- “When I grow up, I’m going to be 10 feet tall.”
- “I’m gonna be 20 feet.”
- “Oh yeah? Well, I’m gonna be 20 hundred feet. And an inch.”
- “That’s no big deal. I’m going to grow to be as tall as the moon!”
- “I’m gonna be infinity feet!”
- “I’m gonna be infinity plus one!”

At least in most families that’s how it goes. In my family, they don’t really talk about height. Sore topic. People are extremely competitive, and always want to ONE UP each other. Sometimes this can be very helpful. A little competition can push us to greater heights (like being infinity feet tall). It helps us study harder, run faster and push ourselves to be better. Sometimes, though, our competitive spirit makes it challenging to remember our purposes.

Here’s what happened: Our great- great- great- great- great (you get the idea) grandparents were traveling through the desert (not through the dessert... that was last week’s joke), and built the Mishkan, a temporary (not templerary... that was two weeks ago’s joke) house of worship. During the celebration when the mishkan was completed, the leaders of all twelve tribes

brought

gifts to be used in the Temple service. They brought wagons, utensils and animals to be used, but there is something strange about their gifts. They all brought the exact. same. thing. Can you imagine going to a birthday party and every guest brings the same pack of Pokemon cards? Awkward. Well, not only did they all bring the same gift, but the Torah lists the entire thing, word for word, twelve times. That’s the reason this is the longest parsha in the Torah.

But why?

Why did they bring the same thing, and why does the Torah spend so much time and effort showing us that they brought the same thing? To be fair, there are a bunch of answers to this question. The 14th century French scholar Ralbag gives the following beautiful explanation.

It would have been natural for any of these leaders to have looked at the other 11 gifts and thought, “Y’know, I’ll just add a little itty bit. One more cow, or a taller wagon. I’ll just ONE UP the other guy a bit.” They brought the exact same gift because there was zero ego involved in their decision. Their only thought was, “Which gift is right for the Mishkan’s needs?”

It is inspiring for us to see what living without ego or competition can look like.

- “I need a better phone than she has.”
- “He can’t score more goals than I can.”
- “I need to get a better test score than my sibling.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Dear Rabbi,

Guaranteed Overnight Delivery

I know we're not supposed to erase God's name. If God's name appears on a computer screen, are you ever able to shut the screen or close the window? Doesn't that mean you're erasing God's name? Also, I noticed a lot of people write G-d, but you write God. I'd appreciate some explanation.

Thanks,

Gloria O'Donnell



**stump 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.*

Dear G.O.D.,

As we mentioned, God's name is extremely special, which is why we don't use it for no reason. There's a rule against erasing or destroying God's name, which makes sense. Take a look at this, from U.S. Code § 700:

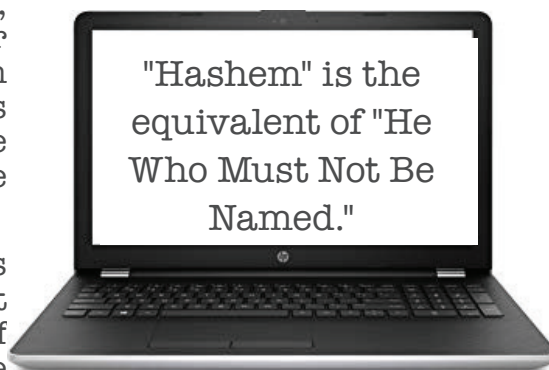
(1) Whoever knowingly mutilates, defaces, physically defiles, burns, maintains on the floor or ground, or tramples upon any flag of the United States shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.

(2) This subsection does not prohibit any conduct consisting of the disposal of a flag when it has become worn or soiled.

We treat any paper or book that has God's name on it with extreme respect, which is why (differing from the flag law) even when holy books are old or damaged, we don't throw them away, but bury them respectfully. For more info on how to treat holy books, look at our archives for Season 2, Episode 38 (Chukas). There are a number of questions that come up when God's name is used NOT in a book. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein talks about cassette tapes with recordings of blessings or prayers. What are cassette tapes? It's how

cavemen listened to music, and what cavemen children used to tie up their younger siblings. He rules that there's no problem of disposing of those tapes, because God's name isn't actually written on them. The same thing would apply to CD's, DVD's or digital files. In your question, there's no problem shutting the screen because first of all, it's not really written there, and second of all, the screen is constantly flickering on and off (really, really fast). When you shut the screen you're not actually erasing God's name, you're just stopping it from going back on. This is why temporary publications like the Nageela Shabbos are careful not to write God's name in the original Hebrew, at least, on pages that are likely to be thrown out, folded into paper airplanes, origami pickles (is that a thing? I feel like it should be a thing), or used as a fencing foil.

What about nicknames for God? It's completely OK to say or write things like 'Almighty' or 'The Merciful one,' 'Master of the Universe (no, not He- Man)' or 'Aibishter' (that's a Yiddish one). The word 'Hashem' which is commonly used, isn't actually a name of God. It's a nickname that literally means, 'The Name.' It's basically the equivalent of 'He Who Must Not Be Named.' It's therefore perfectly OK to say or write 'Hashem.' The word God is a bit more complicated. Some authorities rule that since it is the word used for God's name in English, it



therefore should not be spoken without a good reason. The same would apply to the official word for 'God' in any other language. So if you're Russian, this would apply to 'Bog,' or for other languages, 'Allah,' 'Diyos,' 'Deu' or 'Gut.' It's certainly better to use Hashem, or some other nickname if possible (another useful idea is to change the pronunciation of one of God's names, like EloKim, or AdoShem). This is also why some people write G-d. Since it's a divine name, they are worried about the page getting mistreated. Most Halachic authorities

are not worried about this, and say that there's no problem erasing or throwing away paper with the English word, 'God' upon it, which is why we write 'God' in Nageela Shabbos.

Have a Nageela Shabbos,

the Rabbi.



**TO YEHONATAN
EITAN WHO
CELEBRATED HIS
BAR MITZVAH THIS
WEEK!**

Important COVID-19 information:

Please see the website at nageelwest.org for up- to- date information on our response to the pandemic, and CDC, ACA guidelines for running camp

Quick Fix:

**A NAZIR
WAS
SOMEONE**

**WHO MADE A SPECIAL
PROMISE TO BE EXTRA HOLY BY STAYING
AWAY FROM WINE, NOT CARING ABOUT THEIR
LOOKS ☹️ BY GROWING HAIR LONG ☹️ AND NOT
ATTENDING FUNERALS. AT THE END OF THIS
PROCESS, HE BRINGS A GUILT- OFFERING TO**

**THE HOLY TEMPLE. WHAT DID HE DO WRONG?
THE WORLD IS GIVEN FOR US TO ENJOY. THIS
GUY MIGHT HAVE NEEDED TO DO THIS, AND
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE RIGHT THING FOR
HIM, BUT HE'S STILL LOSING OUT ON JOY AND
PLEASURE. THERE'S SOMETHING IMPERFECT
ABOUT HIS HOLINESS.**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Although these can be used to motivate us to get better, we should try our best to be the greatest we can be because it's what's right for us. Not because we win some imaginary points contest.

Except for my pickles. They're just better than your's.

DEEP THOUGHTS



**WHY DO WE SING 'TAKE
ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME'
IF WE'RE ALREADY THERE?**

DID JEW KNOW?

Although most of the world reads Parshas Nasso this week, synagogues in Israel are reading Behaaloscha (which we'll read next week).

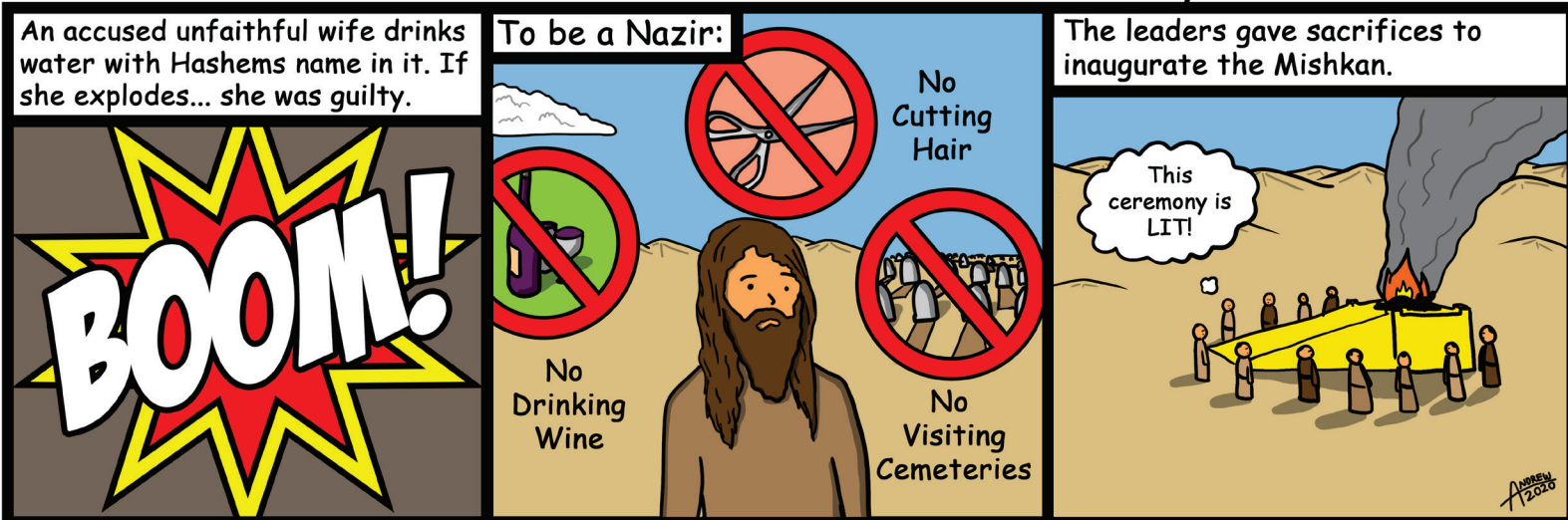
Can you guess why?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy Birthday to family members who have celebrated recently:

Solomon Peters
Zachary Sefia
Zachary Grey

Isaac Chapman
Akiva
Taubenblatt



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camp nageela west BIG BEAR 2020

~~Girls session: June 23-July 13~~
~~Boys Session: July 15-Aug 4~~

Girls session now
begins June 30
Boys session now
begins July 22

Registration is open now
nageelawest.org/apply

24 46

DAYS TO CAMP
NAGEELA WEST
GIRLS SESSION

|

DAYS TO CAMP
NAGEELA WEST
BOYS SESSION

Find out about our summer 2020 and see photos from GT2019 at
nageelawest.org

Want to sponsor Andrew's comic? Contact us!



Don't
hate me just because
I'm a little
cooler.

OUCH! GROAN!
got a better joke?
Email it to dlocker@nageelawest.org



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. Through

after-school 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.

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