

HAVE A NAGEELA SHABBOS

KID FRIENDLY TORAH MAGAZINE
A PROJECT OF NAGEELA WEST COAST,
JOYFULLY JEWISH EXPERIENCES

.....
SEASON 9, EPISODE 30
.....

PARSHAS CHUKAS
5785



Disclaimer: These AI generated images are NOT meant to portray actual people or events from the Torah. They are simply hints to get you thinking.

DVAR TORAH

IT'S LOGICAL

.....

Dammah was a pretty important guy in Roman society right around 2,000 years ago. One day he was at his Ashkelon home and was surprised by a visit from some of the great Jewish sages, who wanted to do some business with him. There was a rumor (a true one) that Dammah possessed a beautiful gem, and the sages wanted to buy it from him. Dammah would normally have been quite happy to sell, but he had a problem. This gem was kept in a safe, and the key was under the pillow of his sleeping father. This was an important purchase, as they were going to use this gem in the special clothing used for the Temple service, but Dammah really respected his father and refused to wake him up. Even after the sages offered him 600,000 coins for it, which was a price well above market value, he let his father sleep in, and gave up this huge profit.

The Talmud tells this story and is so impressed by this man, who wasn't Jewish, yet showed a truly incredible dedication to respecting his parents (there is another story in the Talmud about his incredible respect for his mother as well). One year later, Dammah had something incredible happen to him. One of his cows gave birth to a red calf. As we read in this week's Torah portion, truly red cows are extremely useful

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You can sponsor a week of Nageela Shabbos in honor of a special occasion or in memory of a loved one.

Help us reach more Jewish kids with interesting Torah content!

Torat Scene-A-Eye

This features an AI generated picture that has numerous hints to the weekly parsha. This week's is about Parshas Chukas



Deep Thoughts

.....

***We have fingertips
but not toetips.
So why can you
tiptoe, but not
tipfinger?***



LOLZ

.....

**Why did the spy use
a quilt to sleep?**

**Because he wanted to
go under cover!**



camp Nageela West is gonna make some

illi-NOISE

DVAR TORAH

CONTINUED

.....
in the Holy Temple service. This could potentially be an even greater profit than the gem! The sages came to him once again, and thankfully, his father wasn't sleeping on the cow, cuz that would've been awkward. They offered him a huge sum of money and he agreed to sell it without a big profit, as long as they gave him the amount he lost by not waking his father the year before. Great story, inspirational guy!

But hold up a second. Let's think about this. Dammah cared so much about the mitzvah of respecting his parents that he was willing to give up 600,000 coins. Why wasn't the idea of the red cow, which is also a mitzvah worth just as much? If he was willing to give up a profit to do one mitzvah, why wasn't he willing to give up a profit for another mitzvah?

There are two very different types of commandments in the Torah. Some commandments are extremely logical, and people might even do them well without any instructions from the Torah. Commandments like "Don't steal" and "Honor your parents" simply make sense. A deeply moral person might do these commandments without a true commitment to Torah. However many commandments only make sense if you believe in the Torah as our guide to life. Mitzvahs like Tzitzis, prayer, or eating matzah on Passover aren't things that some moralistic philosopher would come up with on their own. One of the boldest examples of this is the red cow. It makes some people spiritually clean, and others spiritually unclean, and really defies logic. Even the wisest man, King Solomon, declared himself baffled by this mitzvah.

Dammah was super into respecting his parents because that was logical to him. But the red cow? He would do it for money, being a nice guy and all, but he wasn't willing to take a loss. As Jews, we are fortunate that we don't



PICKLE JEWS



only have the life rules that are fairly obvious, but God has given us more pathways to elevate ourselves by listening to the Torah and connecting to him.



ONGOING!

DAYS TILL NAGEELA WEST GIRLS SESSION



16

DAYS TILL NAGEELA WEST BOYS SESSION

STUMP THE RABBI

StumptheRabbi is a forum where kids can ask
ANY Jewish question.

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

(Most) questions here are real. Names and some wording have been
changed.

..... OUTSOURCING A CLASSIC STUMP THE RABBI FROM 2019

Dear Rabbi,

We have a family friend who was born Jewish but converted to Christianity. Are they still Jewish? If you can convert in to Judaism, can you also convert out of it?

Thanks,
Gerald T. Zedek

Dear Ger Tzedek,

Let me tell you a story about someone I know named Jayden. Jayden is a completely real person who I made up. It had been a long, hot bus ride home, after a tough day at school, and Jayden was looking forward to some ice cold gatorade that his parents always kept in the fridge. As he walked in the front door to his house, he discovered he was no longer walking, because he had tripped over a skateboard (that he had left that morning) and was now floating through the air, on his way to a happy reunion with the tile floor. Ouch.

When he finally reached the kitchen, somewhat worse for wear, he opened the fridge to find the gatorade was warm! Everything in the fridge was warm, including his favorite pickles (oh, come on, you knew pickles would get into this story somehow). Jayden eventually realized that there was no electricity anywhere in the house. He panicked! Picking up the phone (a landline, believe it or not- they actually still had one), he tried to call his Dad, but there was no dial tone. Just then his parents walked in the door, with slurpees in hand, and laughing uncontrollably.

"Mooom, Daaad! There's no electricity or phone service! Also, nobody walked the dog, or cleaned up. My teacher said you ditched conferences. What's going on?"

"Oh, Hi honey. Everything is fine. We just quit."

"Quit what, exactly?"

"Oh, we quit adulting."

"A-what-ing?"

"We decided we're not interested in being responsible adults anymore. We're just gonna chill. We're not gonna do things like pay bills or speak with teachers. We hope that's cool with you."



"But
y o u ' r e
my parents!
There are things
you HAVE to do! It's your
responsibility! You've got to take care of me!"

Back to answering your question, Gerald. As Jayden experienced the hard way, when you have a responsibility, either one you chose, or one that you have because there's no choice, it's not always possible or right to give up that responsibility. We view the idea of being Jewish as a very special privilege which comes with a higher level of responsibility. God loves us in a special way, and He has given us guidelines for how we should treat the privilege and the responsibility. Someone MAY volunteer to take on the responsibility and 'join the club' by converting and becoming a committed Jew. Yet once you have that responsibility (either because you converted in, or because you were born to it), opting out isn't possible. It would be like letting those pickles spoil. And nobody wants that. It would be a sour thing to do. And yes, it's a big dill.

It's cool that you asked this question around Purim time. Near the end of the Megillah- the Purim story, Mordechai and his fellow Jews had become rather popular, so many people wanted to become Jews. Some even pretended to be Jews without proper conversions. Nobody was trying to convert out. Unfortunately, throughout history this has not always been the case. As we've spent hundreds of years being mistreated, and unable to live our lives as comfortably as our gentile neighbors, there have often been Jews who have thought the grass would be greener on the outside. They wanted to leave Judaism and join other religions. They are still our people, and we're one family. A child may run away from home (never a good idea) and betray his family, yet when he wants to come home, the family will always be waiting with open arms. We're waiting, too.

Have a Nageela Shabbos,

The Rabbi



Note & Disclaimer: 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. The answers here should not be taken as halachic decisions. You should always ask a competent Rabbi personally.