

Yisro
5780

February 14th,
2020

have a Nageela Shabbos

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

Candle Lighting:
Henderson 5:02
Las Vegas 5:02
San Diego 5:15
Reno/ Tahoe 5:16
Irvine 5:16
Los Angeles 5:18
Scottsdale 5:52

Season 4
Episode 13

Gentile by Choice

by Rabbi Dani Locker



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Torah for sale? I did an ebay search for 'authentic Torah' and it came up with an \$18,000 miniature Torah scroll from Poland. While that's pretty cool, I wouldn't recommend doing your holiday Torah shopping on ebay. Aside from buying a Torah scroll, printed torah books, and torah apps, can you actually 'own' the Torah?

Well, actually, God tried selling, or giving the Torah to lots of different nations, according to a well known Midrash. Before the Jews accepted the Torah on Mount Sinai, God offered the Torah to all the nations of the world. All of them first asked for a preview of what the Torah said ("Lemme check out the trailer before I download."), and then turned down the offer, unhappy with the rules.

According to this Midrashic text, God asked the children of Esav, the nation known as the Romans, whether they would accept the Torah. Like proper teenagers, their response was, "What do I gotta do?" When they heard that Torah observance isn't big on murder, they kind of lost interest. "Eh. Killing is like our deal, man! We're not gonna give that up just to get some special Torah. Anyway, we heard you can get it cheaper on ebay."

So let's get this straight. They didn't want the Torah because they wanted to be able to murder, and murder is forbidden by the Torah. OK. I kinda get that. Here's my question: **Murder was forbidden anyway!** Not just because of some social contract. The Torah gives 7 commandments to gentiles (that's the name for people who aren't Jewish) and one of them is not to murder. So why did they reject the Torah

for something they were responsible to do anyway? Speaking of gentiles, check out this real actual street sign I passed this week in Utah!



Here's what's up. We will always care more about things we agree to on our own, then things other people tell us to do. Our parents, teachers or bosses will always tell us their expectations of us. Sometimes we'll listen, and sometimes we won't (we SHOULD, btw). But when we commit on our own to do something, then we are so much more likely to do it, and do it well. The children of Esav knew that God didn't want them to murder, but they didn't much care. If they woulda accepted the Torah, then they would have actually felt like they had to keep what they committed to. That's why they didn't want it. This is also why you'll sometimes find Jews who did not grow up committed to the Torah, but accepted it later in their lives, or people who didn't grow up Jewish and joined later in life, often being super into following the Torah way of life. They feel like they accepted it on their own terms, so they may be more committed.

It's important for us to remember this point. We might not feel like we've personally accepted the Torah, because it happened so long ago. It's important for each one of us to think about our connection to God and the Torah, and make our connection and commitment personal, and on our own terms.

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NAGEELA GT

2020



Photos of the Week(s)

TWO WEEKS OF AWESOMETASTICNESS!

In the past two weeks, we've had two camp reunions, an LA paint night, San Diego and Irvine scavenger hunts, and record numbers at Latte and Learns all over! More than 40 participants signed up for this weekend's all nighter at Gravadly!

Now is a great time to contact us & find out more info about our incredible Grand Tour featuring Mount Rushmore!



DAYS TO CAMP
NAGEELA WEST GIRLS
SESSION

DAYS TO CAMP
NAGEELA WEST BOYS
SESSION

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy Birthday to family members celebrating this week!

Bennett Warnick
Gideon Peters
Tehilla Gross

Abigail Rivera
Sam Hodara
Alex Davidson

SAVE THE DATE

NCSY Jewnior Spring

Regional

May 22nd-25th
Mesquite, NV



How do you know that Yitro was tired?

He lived in mid- yawn!

OUCH! GROAN!

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