

HAVE A

# NAGEELA SHABBOS

A Kid Friendly Torah Magazine by Nageela West Coast

DVAR TORAH

Are kids a distraction from serving God?



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manded the Jews leave.

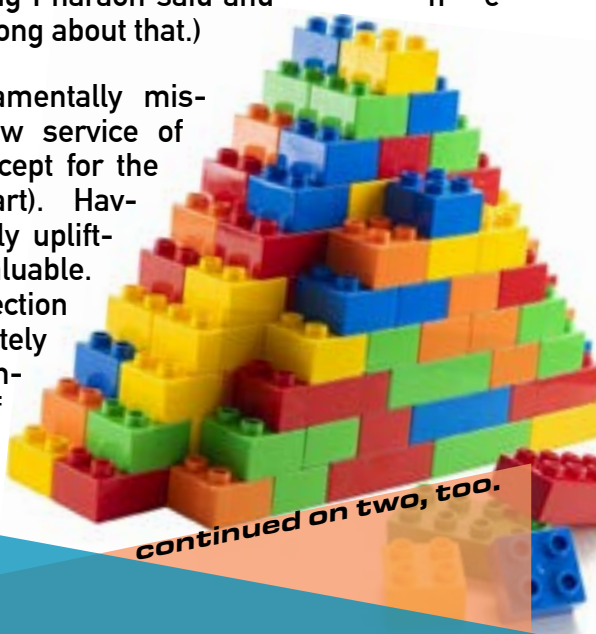
True Focus by Rabbi Dani Locker

There's a funny conversation that goes on between Moses and Pharaoh. OK, maybe that's an exaggeration. I don't think many of their conversations were very funny. Except the ones about frogs; that does sound a bit humorous, but that's not the one I'm referring to. Pharaoh is finally getting softened up enough to possibly allow the Jews to leave, but he insists that the children stay in Egypt. If I was a king of a nation, the last thing I would want is to have a few million crying children without their parents. That could have been an 11th plague itself! Moses insists on bringing the children along, and Pharaoh says, "Will God give you grace if I send you with your children?" Which is a long winded way of saying, "Moses, I don't think you should bring the kids."

he was asking for us to go serve God in the desert. Pharaoh, of course, was suspicious that it wasn't about serving God at all, but was just an excuse to leave the country (which it partially was). Pharaoh, in considering the request, has a really practical thought. "If you're going for a spiritual retreat, you can't do that with your kids tugging at your pants, making messes, screaming and requiring attention. If you insist upon taking your children, there's no way you're going to get God's grace, because your prayers and services will be extremely distracted. Also, you can't bring your smartphones into your service because that will distract you even more!" (This is definitely something Pharaoh said and he sure wasn't wrong about that.)

Why does Pharaoh care so much? Alright, maybe he just wants to keep the kids as a guarantee that the Jews would come back, but then why the whole speech about not having God's grace if they would bring the children? Like I said, funny conversation.

Pharaoh fundamentally misunderstood how service of God works (except for the smartphone part). Having a religiously uplifting prayer is valuable. But true connection to God absolutely requires the involvement of our children. Having the



continued on two, too.

There's a beautiful interpretation, which I guess makes it less funny, but I think makes more sense.

When Mo-

You can sponsor an episode of Nageela Shabbos in honor or in memory of a loved one. Also, you can sponsor an episode in honor of your spouse.

won from page one

kids stay home with the local taskmaster ("You must gather straw to make your own lego bricks!") while the parents would have a spiritually uplifting experience undermines a key component in our Jewish observance. That's why Moses insisted on bringing the children, too. Involving our children might distract us somewhat- maybe that's an understatement- it will distract us considerably. Yet it's worth it.

Of course children should learn to be respectful of prayers and sacred spaces. They should avoid play

ing volleyball during the Torah reading, or soccer during the chazzan's repetition. Yet they can't be left out. And if having children around somewhat detracts from the air of focus, that's OK. Within reason.

Hey, kid, stop bothering me, I'm trying to write a dvar torah here! Why don't you go gather some straw!

Sorry, I got distracted.

### QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Can you think of a location where it's forbidden to sit or to stand, but it's OK to run?

Answer is on page 5.

DON'T CHEAT!

We have a lot of fun making the Nageela Shabbos for you each week.

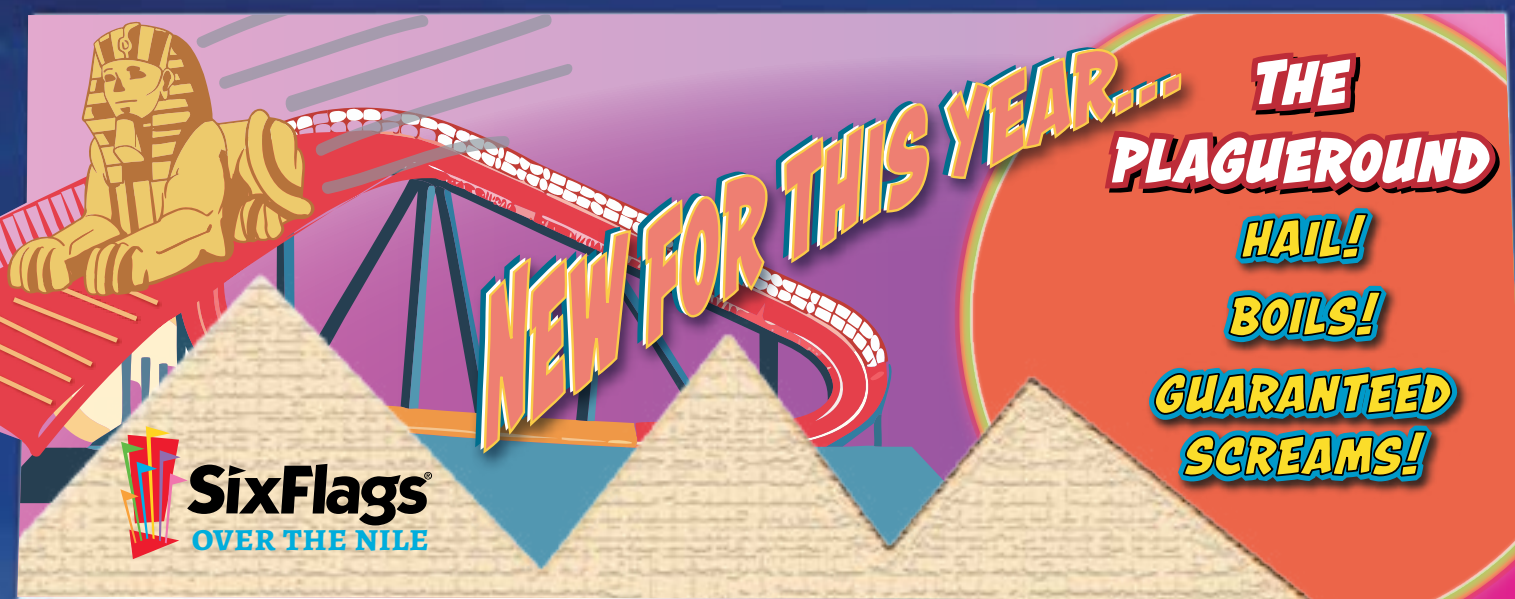
We'd love to get this publication more consistently into more homes and synagogues. You can help by:  
1. Volunteering to print and distribute in your synagogue or Community Center  
2. Sponsoring a week so we can send it to more places!  
3. Signing up to join our email list by emailing info@nageelawest.org

# PICKLE JEWS

GALACTICALLY SYNDICATED COMIC STRIP

by Dani Locker, 2023

## THEME PARKS IN ANCIENT EGYPT BE LIKE...



LOCKER

## PARTIAL PARTIA

The Torah is the Jewish book of everything. For thousands of years, we've been dividing the Torah into smaller bitesized portions, each called a 'Sidra' or 'Parsha' and reading a portion or two each Shabbos. Most of our Dvar Torah articles are based on the weekly Parsha, so we're thinking about including this as a weekly segment, giving bullet points of what happens in the Parsha of the week. With some side comments thrown in. Please give us feedback!

### PARSHAS BO

#### 3RD PORTION OF THE SECOND OF THE TORAH'S 5 BOOKS

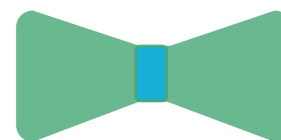
#### THE JEWS LEAVE EGYPT! WOOHOOOOO!

- What a packed Parsha this is! Buckle your safety belts and hang on!
- God instructs Moses to stand before Pharaoh, so that the remaining plagues can be performed.
- Moses warns Pharaoh that he would get a swarm of locust, at no cost.
- Pharaoh agrees to allow only the men to leave, leaving the children behind. There is a shortage of babysitters, so Moses declines the offer. The locust completely devours all the produce left in Egypt, like a hungry teenager at a buffet.
- The next plague is one of extreme darkness that is so bad people can't even move around. Pharaoh is willing to allow the entire Jewish nation to leave, even the children, as long as they leave their animals behind. Coincidentally there is also a shortage of pet-sitters.
- Moses warns Pharaoh of the upcoming grand finale, when the first born children in each household would die. God toughens up Pharaoh's heart and he refuses to let them leave.
- At this point, God decides to give the Jewish

people a few commandments, cuz we were probably bored.

- We are commanded to establish a lunar calendar, using the month of Passover as the head month.
- The Jewish people are commanded to acquire sheep, 5 days before they are leave Egypt, and tie the sheep to their bedpost. It's safe to say that in those days everyone slept very baaaadly.
- Moses teaches all the rules of Passover, including sacrificing the sheep, smearing the blood on their doorposts, eating the lamb with matzah, avoiding leaven (as in "We're leaven' Egypt!") and covering your couch with foil.
- The Jews are also instructed to ask for silver and gold from the Egyptians before they leave.
- At exactly the stroke of midnight, all the Egyptian firstborns turn into pumpkins. Dead pumpkins. Minus the pumpkin part. Pharaoh runs to find Moses and Aaron, and insists that the Jews leave Egypt immediately.
- Because the Jewish firstborn are saved, God commands us to treat the firstborn as sacred. We must redeem firstborn humans, and gift firstborn animals to God.

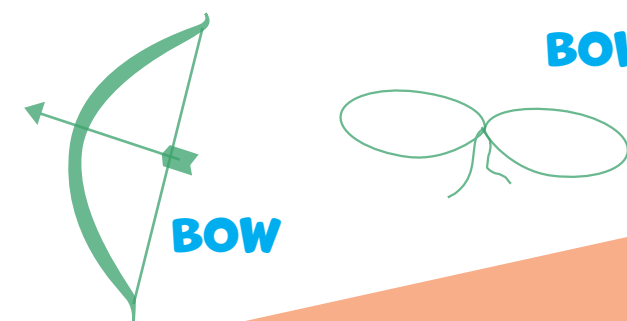
BOW



BEAU



BOW



BOW

#258

Too much charity?



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.

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.

Hi Rabbi,

Is there such a thing as too much charity? Like, if people have needs, should I give everything I have, or is there a limit?

Thanks,  
Tzvi Daka

Dear Tzvi Daka,

Helping others is one of the most important Jewish values there is. We have always put a premium on the ideals of tzedaka (charity) and chessed (kindness), and historically, Jewish people have given (and still do give) a disproportionate amount of charity. However, there is indeed a limit. Kind of. Lemme explain.

The Talmud gives us a guideline that one should not give more than 20% of their money to charity. The reason for that is so that you should be able to take care of your own needs, and not have to ask for charity yourself. I think a lot of kids who hear this think, "Well, I can give most of my money away, and just keep a bare minimum for myself." First of all, if you think that, you're a uniquely kind and generous person who thinks about others. You are awesome. It's important to realize that until you get older and start having to pay bills on your own, especially once you have children, piano lessons, a mortgage, soccer, car payments, health insurance and other things you never imagined you'd need (yes, earthquake insurance is a thing) like HOA fees and sewer payments, you might not realize just how much it costs to live. If you give away too much to charity, you may not have enough for your family.

The 20% rule is a generalization, and there

are actually a

10% is usually

few exceptions to the rule. Here they are (as listed in Ahavas Chessed, Section 2, Chapter 20):

1. An extremely wealthy person is not bound by the 20% rule. Yes, we have to make sure we don't end up penniless, but if you've got millions in the bank, you can safely give much more than 20% without risking your financial stability.
2. Giving in a will. When a person distributes money in their will, there's no worry about not having enough for themselves, so they're allowed to give as much as they want to charity (some authorities say that there's still a limit of 50%).
3. Some authorities say that the 20% rule only applies if you're looking for charity opportunities. But if someone comes to you with a need, it's appropriate to give, even if you've surpassed the 20% limit.
4. Some say that if you have a steady income, it's OK to give more, because you can safely expect your next paycheck and so won't impoverish yourself.

5. There is an exception when it comes to supporting those who study Torah, which is the backbone of our nation. Two of Jacob's sons, Issachar and Zevulun had such an arrangement. Zevulun would give fully half of his income to his brother who would then be able to study Torah without distraction.

Since you're a kid, it's important that you discuss with your parents how much of your income you should give to charity. If you babysit or get money for your birthday, some amount of that should absolutely be given to charity.

keep it alive on page 3

Here's some more. Continued from 4

considered the minimum amount a Jew should give, but there are exceptions to that, too.

What happens if you really, really need the money? What happens if someone gives you a gift and wants you to use the money for something specific? What kind of charity should you give to? Many questions come up, and you should ask a Rabbi personally for guidance on individual questions. As always, please don't use the answers I give here as a 'halachic ruling', rather it's just info to help you understand the topic.

I'll leave you with one beautiful thought. I once heard a speech from a billionaire who invests in many businesses and also gives a ton of money to charities. There is one particular town where this man lost a lot lot lot of money on his business. He said that it was worth losing a billion dollars in this town because of the positive charitable works he had been involved in while doing business in the city. What we gain from giving to others is far more valuable than whatever we could get by keeping the money for ourselves.

Have a Nageela Shabbos,

The Rabbi

ANSWER OF THE WEEK QUESTION ON PAGE 2

pleasing, doing not of the peeking. first, the thinking.

There's something called an Ashera tree, which is a tree that is worshipped, and therefore is forbidden to derive benefit from. If an Ashera tree is hanging over a road, it is forbidden to sit or walk beneath it. If, however, there is no other way to arrive at your destination, it's permitted to RUN by the area.

Let us know what you'd like to see!

We'd like to add more classes for middle scholars and teens: Locally or on ZOOM? What topics? What days and times? Hebrew Reading? Parsha? Stump thre Rabbi Live? Different content in Nageela Shabbos?

90%

of statistics are made up and just added to look cool

60%

of Jews have never heard of Camp Nageela West. OK, maybe even more.



please email us at info@nageelawest.org and tell us what you want!

**KEEP DEEP THOUGHTS**

The first time you eat daily is breaking your fast. So technically, it's impossible to skip breakfast!

**LOLZ**

*WHEN DOES A JOKE BECOME A DAD JOKE?*

*WHEN THE PUNCH LINE IS APPARENT*

THINK YOU CAN DO BETTER? YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT. SEND YOUR JOKES IN TO DLOCKER@NAGEELAWEST.ORG

**JEWNIOR REGIONAL SHABABTON RECAP**

Last week (in case you were pained by the lack of a Nageela Shabbos publication, this is why), 50 middle schoolers from 8 West Coast cities gathered for the Jr. NCSY regional Shabbaton!

Spending a beautiful weekend at a hotel in California, these kids really got to know each other and the inspirational staff. From the musical havdallah, to the engaging, live 'Stump the Rabbi' session, the Scavenger hunt at Universal City Walk to the Escape room and ice cream bar, every aspect of the Shabbaton was designed to bring maximum fun, education and inspiration.



**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- Sunday, Jan 21: Regional ZOOM meetup
- Jan 21: Camp Nageela West Info Session
- Monday Jan 22: Las Vegas Jewnior TNT is OFF
- Jan 28: Camp Nageela West info Session
- Jan 31: LA Jew-niors Event

**ITINERARY REVEALED. INFO. QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

**NAGEELA SUMMER CAMP INFO SESSION**



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 6PM PACIFIC**  
**ZOOM ID: 580 485 3200**  
**PASSCODE: NAGEELA**

**REGIONAL MEETUP**

**SUN JAN 21 7PM PACIFIC**

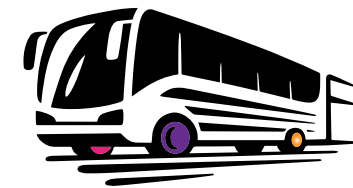
**SCAVENGER HUNT WINNERS**

**BRING A FRIEND**

**UPDATED RECAP VIDEO**

ZOOM ID: 317 427 7225 | FOR QUESTIONS: RABBI LOCKER 917-613-1037

password: JEWNIORS



**CAMP NAGEELA WEST 2024**

**PREMIER JEWISH TRAVEL CAMP- AGES 9-15**

\*MAP REPRESENTS APPROXIMATE ITINERARY. SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**SESSION 1: JUNE 26- JULY 16 [GIRLS]**

**SESSION 2: JULY 18- AUG 7 [BOYS]**



**OUR 15TH SUMMER!**

**NEW FOR '24:**

**NAGEELA TASTE TEST- 6 DAY CAMP FOR 2-3 GRADERS**

**NAGEELA VIP OPTION**

**LAKE TAHOE**  
**CALIFORNIA GOLD MINES**  
**SAN DIEGO RENO**  
**YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK**  
**BIG BEAR LAKE**

**HBD**

Tanner Eckmann  
 Mordechai Shirit  
 Yaron Weiss  
 Jacob Sundberg  
 Mathan Ben yehuda

Happy Birthday wishes to the following Nageela family members:

Ariella Bernheim-Perez  
 Sam Leytes  
 Sofia Hafter  
 Ari Freeman  
 Hinda Gross



Nageela Shabbos is a weekly publication of Nageela West Coast, Joyfully Jewish Experiences.  
[www.nageelawest.org](http://www.nageelawest.org)  
 801-613-1539

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**DAYS UNTIL CNW GIRLS 2024**

**180**

**DAYS UNTIL CNW BOYS 2024**