

NAGEELA CHANUKAH

a kid friendly publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences

Mikeitz- Chanukah 5782

December 3rd 2021

SEASON 6

EPISODE 9

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DVAR TORAH



Rust-Eze

by Rabbi Dani Locker

“OK, Prince Martin. It’s time for the big ceremony. The people of our nation have waited for you to come of age and be crowned. Millions will be watching, and we need to make sure it’s perfect.”

“I understand, mother. Will you be the one placing the crown on my head?”

“No, no. I have a more important job. Frankie the laundry guy will put the crown on your head. My job is to clean the crown before-hand and scrub out the rust. It’s gotten nasty since the last time it was worn.”

“Wait, your royal momminess... you’re doing cleaning duty and the laundry guy is crowning me? Isn’t that a little backwards?”

situation does sound a bit unusual, so let’s examine how things were done in our Holy temple- the Beis Hamikdash. Lighting the pure gold menorah was a special part of the temple service, and it was done every day. Aaron, the original priest, was given the mitzvah directly by God, and for hundreds of years, it was a treasured responsibility of the Kohen Gadol- the chief priest. Truthfully though, according to Maimonides (who wrote down the laws of the temple), even an ordinary Jew like you or I could light the menorah. Yup. If the menorah was carried out of its holy place (where mere regu-



Martin’s



- Henderson 4:07
- Las Vegas 4:07
- Reno/ Tahoe 4:17
- San Diego 4:24
- Irvine 4:24
- Los Angeles 4:25
- Oakland 4:31
- Park City 4:40
- Scottsdale 5:01
- Honolulu 5:30

Did you know you can sponsor a week of Nageela Shabbos for a birthday, anniversary, or just because you like Jews? Contact dlocker@nageelawest.org for details

continued on next page

lars were not allowed to step) we could light it. What then is the sacred task that ONLY the kohein could accomplish? Cleaning the menorah. What? Anyone can light the menorah, but only a special elite serviceperson could clean them? The opposite should be true! You can hire cleaning help from anywhere, but the honor of lighting the menorah should be left to the specials. Shouldn't it?

For many important things, there's a public action that gets lots of attention: The actor who dazzles with his performance, the athlete making the game winning shot. The author who writes the award winning novel or the explorer who discovers uncharted territory. A doctor advancing a new procedure or a chef presenting her signature dish. Yet in most of these cases, there are teams of people who have supported, promoted, prepared, coached, funded, plotted, chopped, written, edited and done a million other things. Background things. Important things, but not the ones that usually get the attention.

The Torah is teaching us this critical lesson. Sure, lighting the menorah is an important job (it IS usually done by the Kohein). But there would be no lighting of the menorah without someone first cleaning out the menorah, preparing the wicks, pouring the oil and watching acapella chanukah mash-ups on YouTube. These are the true heroes, the warriors of the shadows who create meaningful moments for everyone else. So when it comes to the menorah, the Torah wants to make sure WE know this, too. It's not the glamorous job that earns the points or is the most valuable contribution. It isn't the public speaker, the news anchor or the head of state who really deserves the credit. It's the ones who make it happen. This Chanukah, let's commit to not only step up in the forefront, but also to be those people who make stuff happen. Let's commit to being helpful in meaningful, private ways. To making things tick without public recognition, and to prepping the oil for someone else to fry those latkes.

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It's not the glamorous job that is the most valuable contribution. It's the ones who make it happen.



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.



#187 Branches of Knowledge

Hi Rabbi,

I understand that unlike our Chanukah menorahs, the menorah in the Holy Temple had only seven branches. Is there a significance to the seven branches? What did it represent?

Thanks,

Candice L. Light

Dear Cand L Light,

I took a poll of whether people prefer Chanukah themed ugly sweaters or tee shirts. It seems that the majority of people prefer sweaters, probably because it's cold out. That one other guy? He's in the menorah-tee.

That was terrible! But what do you want from me? This is a serious question, so I have to start the answer with a joke. The most challenging part of Chanukah is that Rabbis start jokes that should last only one minute, and before you know it... aaaaaanyway, back to your question.

Some people might not realize that there was a menorah in the Beis Hamikdash, long before Chanukah was a thing. For more on that, look at Nageela Shabbos Season 1, Episode 9. The menorah is considered the symbol of wisdom. The Talmud says that if you want to become wise, you should

pray facing south (which was the direction of the menorah in the temple). Fire represents understanding. In the simplest sense, fire creates light, which helps us see and understand stuff. But why seven?

Does the number seven sound familiar? Yeah. Shabbat. The week. Seven is the number that represents completion. Completion of what? Knowledge and wisdom. There are 6 branches of worldly knowledge. Some different books have slightly different lists, but basically, they are physics, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, music and mathematics. (or you can check out my fake list on the next page) The seventh branch is Torah knowledge, and the six outer branches actually were required to face toward the center branch. All knowledge is important, and it needs to be filtered through the prism of Torah. What I mean by that is knowing how science or math works doesn't actually help us understand how to be good people. We can still have tremendous confusion about life and the world. We can be smart and still be dumb. Using Torah to help us understand the other types of knowledge allows us to understand them and use them all properly.



Ancient coin showing a seven branched menorah

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DATES HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED FOR 3 CAMP SESSION OPTIONS!

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206

DAYS TO CAMP NAGEELA WEST GIRLS SESSION

220

DAYS TO CAMP NAGEELA WEST BOYS SESSION

Find out about our summer 2022 and see photos from 2021 at nageelawest.org

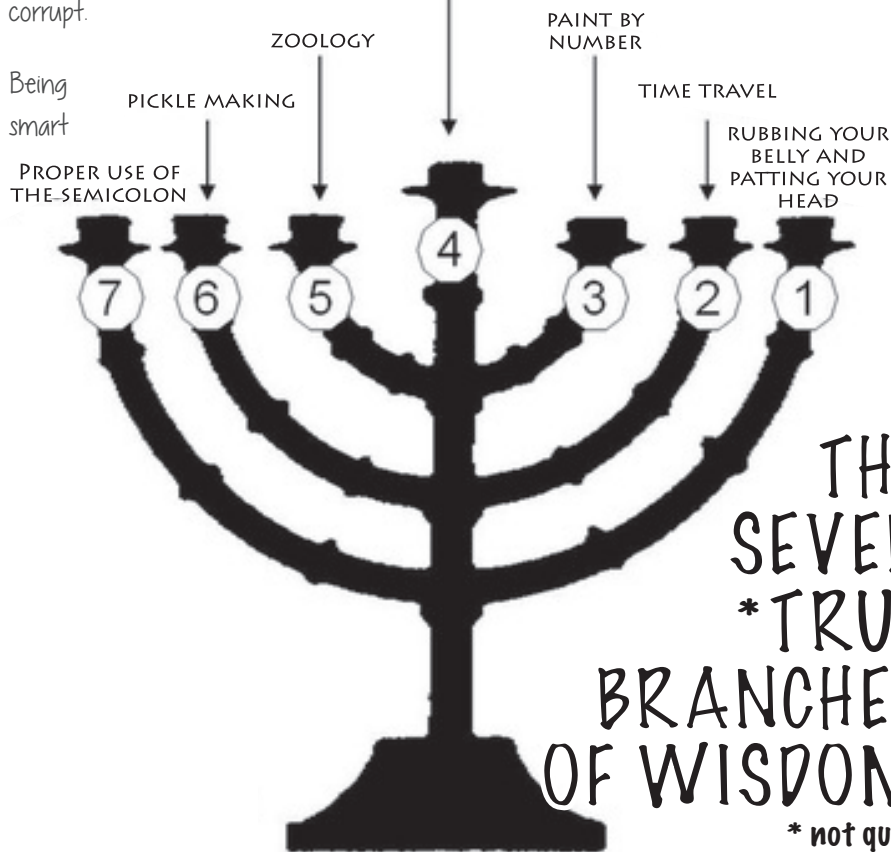
Learning all the six types of ordinary knowledge means you have achieved much comprehension. However, this does NOT mean you have achieved wisdom. Just look at the Greeks as a perfect example. They were super high tech for their time. The ancient Greeks actually had inventions like the odometer, alarm clocks (I'm not kidding, look it up) and democracy. Yet their empire crumbled because they were morally corrupt.

doesn't make you wise or good. So this is [one of] the lesson[s] of the seven branches. All knowledge needs to be connected to Torah's wisdom. Otherwise you just become a type of yogurt. Also, seven is a good number for horcruxes, but you didn't hear that from me.

Have a Nageela Shabbat,

the Rabbi

HOW TO DO THAT COOL SPINNING THING WITH PIZZA DOUGH



THE SEVEN *TRUE BRANCHES OF WISDOM
* not quite



What's the difference between Chanukah and a dragon.

Chanukah is always eight nights.

Dragons sometimes ate knights.

OUCH! GROAN!

Credit (or blame) goes to Yisroel Weiser for this one.

Which hand do you use to light the menorah?

Neither, I use a candle.

How do Timon and Pumbaa stay happy in the winter?

Hannukah Matata



DID JEW KNOW?

This week, in synagogues across the world, 3 Torah scrolls are read:

1. The weekly Parsha- Mikeitz
2. Rosh Chodesh- The reading for the new month
3. The reading for Chanukah

NAGEE LATTE ☺

WHERE
JEW
BEAN



LAS VEGAS

4-6 GRADE
MONDAY 5:30
7-8 GRADE
MONDAY 6:30

Ketchup Tsunami

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Hey, it may be Chanukah, but it's also Shabbos! This week we read the Parsha of Mikeitz, discussing Joseph's rise from Egyptian slavery to a position of power.

Tell me if you've heard this before: "Of course you have to finish your food! Don't you know there are starving children in _____

{insert name of country with tragic hunger, earthquake or disease}?" You might have wondered how taking another bite of meatloaf would help those children... maybe instead you could pop the leftovers in a fedex envelope and send it over there. That seems like it would be helpful. It would probably need ketchup though. Do they have ketchup in tsunami zones?

Hmmm, I wonder if the Torah tells us anything about that...

The story of Joseph is dramatic and so full of lessons about dealing with challenges. Here's one part that often gets overlooked. Joseph and his wife Osnat had two sons, Menashe and Efraim. Interestingly, the Torah points out (for no apparent reason) that they were born before the famine began. Why do we care? Though the Joseph family was clearly rich and had no problem with enough food, they thought it inappropriate to bring children into a world where there was so much suffering. The birth of children is a joy and a pleasure. It would be wrong to have children during this hunger.

There's even a hint that because of Joseph's attitude, he merited a blessed segment of land in Israel. When mentioning Joseph's



OUR
13th
SEASON!



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UTAH + TRAVEL



sons' births, the word "Uleyosef" is used. It's only used in one other place in biblical literature, when Joseph is being blessed with good land.

While I'm not sure what this tells us about children growing up in a war-torn developing country, it does help us appreciate how



A SPOON MADE OF
GOLD IS STILL CALLED
SILVERWARE

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!

Babbi Locker
Yaakov Polonsky
Zevi Frid
Rabbi Dani Locker





SHINE
A LIGHT
on Antisemitism

A day of skiing to raise awareness about the rise of antisemitism in America.

to show our sympathy for troubled people. If a fellow is suffering (and we see clearly from Joseph this does not apply only to fellow Jews but to all fellow people), we should share a bit in their pain. So maybe eat a little less of that meatloaf. Disclaimer: 1. You should always listen to your parents. If Mom says to eat the meatloaf, eat the meatloaf. 2. You should not starve yourself in sympathy for the starving children- that doesn't help anyone. The lesson from Joseph is simply to show some amount of empathy by limiting your own enjoyment. A bit. So don't eat all of your carrot, or people might think you just don't carrot all.

MORAL DILEMMAS

Scenario #3

MORAL DILEMMAS is a new feature for season 6. In it we'll bring up a real word question. It's our hope that you will discuss it with your family and friends and send your ideas to stump@nageelawest.org. We hope to publish great answers in next week's episode.

Your car breaks down in middle of an abandoned desert. There's no water for 100 miles around and you won't make it. You and your friend find an old vending machine with just one bottle left, but it's only enough for one of you.

Is it the right thing to keep the water for yourself? Your friend? Split it? If you split it, neither will make it. Does anything change if you have the water in your backpack? What if your friend has the water?

Jew^{nior} WEST COAST
JEWNIOR
NCSY IS
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WEEKLY (OR BIWEEKLY)

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS
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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.



*Mazel Tov to
Camp Nageela West staff
member Mor-
dy Foxbruner
upon his en-
gagement!*

Want to stay in the loop? Text the word NAGEELAWEST to 22828

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