

have a

Nageela Shabbos

A weekly publication of **Nageela West** Joyfully Jewish Experiences

Good-eye Mate

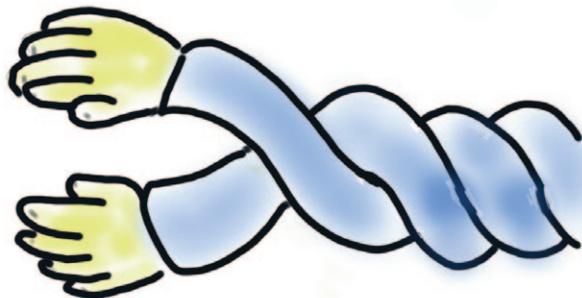
by Rabbi Dani Locker

On Friday night, step into a Jewish home, and witness the scene. The children are gathered around the table, and the father places his hands on each child's head and pronounces the blessing, "May G-d make you like Efraim and Menashe..."

As our great ancestor Jacob lay on his deathbed, he calls his son Joseph together with Joseph's two sons Menashe and Efraim. He asks Joseph to bring the boys close, and then something odd happens.

Menashe is the older son, and Joseph expects Jacob to put his right hand, the more important hand (except to lefties like me). Unexpectedly, Jacob switches everything around, and puts his right hand on Efraim's head. Then he gives them an epic blessing. He announces that for the rest of time, all Jews should bless their children by saying, "May G-d make you like Efraim and Menashe."

Jacob had twelve sons, and by this point, dozens of grandkids (at least). What was so special about these two guys? I'm sure they were wonderful kids, but Jacob gives them THE BLESSING, and I used all caps for a



reason. This becomes the blessing that Jews have been using to bless our children for thousands of years. These words are spoken over and over, "May G-d make you like Efraim and Menashe." Why them?

There are a lot of ingredients to making a great person, like one tablespoon of salt, 6 cups of flour and a jar of pickles. Err, aside from those ingredients, lots of different qualities are important. To become great, you've gotta try to be caring, smart, bold, calm, educated, patient, motivated and many more qualities. Yet Jacob here is identifying perhaps the most important quality. Think about those brothers, Menashe and Efraim. Menashe is older, yet his younger brother becomes greater than he. That's bitter medicine for a kid (or adult). It's kind of hard to see your younger sibling achieve more than you (just ask my older brothers...) and to receive the 'better' blessing. Yet we don't find

any anger, bitterness or jealousy. In Hebrew, we call this trait 'Ayin Tov' a good eye (and I don't mean not swinging at a bad pitch). Someone with a good eye wants the best for everyone else. He's not selfish, stingy or jealous. He takes great pride in the accomplishment of others, even if they overshadow his own.

That's what it take to really become great, and that's the blessing that Jacob decided all future generations need. Not to be concerned with getting ahead of the other guy, but to make sure everyone gets what is best for them. As they say in Australia, "Goodeye Mate."

shabbos info:

Candle Lighting:
Las Vegas 4:30
Los Angeles 4:47
San Diego 4:45
Phoenix 5:23

VERY PUNNY

**HOW DID THE EGYPTIANS
FEEL WHEN JACOB PASSED
AWAY?**

**FIRST ANGER, THEN GRIEF,
THEN DE NILE**

**HAVE REALLY CORNY PUN? EMAIL IT TO
DLOCKER@NAGEELAWEST.ORG**

have a Nageela Shabbos

STUMP THE RABBI



Dear Rabbi,
I heard that Abraham was the first Jew, and that he was the first person to believe on one G-d. So what religion was Noah or Adam and Eve? Were they Christian?

Thank you,

Theodore M. Ono

Dear Mono Theo,

Have you seen any of the Avengers movies that have come out in the past few years? Iron man, the Hulk, you know. Isn't it amazing that MARVEL keeps coming up with these great characters and stories consistently? Any self respecting geek is screaming right now... none of these characters are new or original. Did you know that MARVEL comics has existed for nearly 80 years? In that time they've printed over 32,000 comic books. All the current MCU (MARVEL cinematic universe) stories are remakes. Yet they've taken the old and improved.

Abraham was definitely NOT the first person to believe on one G-d. Noah was a prophet who got his instructions straight from the source. Adam and Eve were in contact with their Creator. They knew there was one G-d. Notice I didn't use the word 'believe'. People believe in the tooth fairy (she is real, right?), people don't believe in teeth. The know they have teeth. Adam and Eve may not have been 'Jewish' but they understood much of the Torah (they certainly couldn't have been Christian- that didn't start for nearly 4,000 years after Adam and Eve).

So what happened? Over the centuries, people started having a hard time connecting

to an invisible G-d, and they started honoring things they viewed as G-d's 'helpers'. So they would bow to the sun or a fire, because they felt that these things represented G-d. Eventually they forgot the G-d part and just worshipped the 'helpers' as gods.

When Abraham recognized one Creator, humanity was nearly 2,000 years old, and people had mostly forgotten the old way. There were a few, though. Shem was Abraham's great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandfather (literally) and was really, really old. He taught about monotheism as well.

So why is Abraham considered the father of the Jewish people? Two reasons (which are pretty connected). Numero Uno, Abraham didn't keep the knowledge to himself. He felt the need to tell the world! He spent years spreading the word and helping the world understand. Numero Dos, Abraham raised his son Isaac to carry on his legacy. Because of that, the children of Isaac and Jacob all link back to Abraham. Looking back, it worked! Thousands of years later, the majority of the world believes in one G-d.

I'm not sure what you call that superpower, but I think Abraham deserves a comic book.

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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

nageela week snapshot (Jan 15-21)

SUN	MON	WED	THU
\ HEBREW SCHOOL LAS VEGAS 10AM JIL BEVERLY HILLS 10AM	NAGEELATTE SUMMERLIN 6:45	SAN DIEGO CAMP OPEN HOUSE	NAGEELATTE GREEN VALLEY 5:30

Nageela West provides social and educational programs for Jewish children across the west coast.
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