

Lech Lecha 5781
October 30, 2020

HAVE-A NAGEELA SHABBOS

SEASON 5 EPISODE 3

a kid friendly publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences



Armchair Inspiration by Rabbi Dani Locker

Hey, I have a great idea! Why don't we gather all the news stations of the world, make sure they're streaming footage live, and then God will perform all kinds of miracles. Everyone will believe in God and the Torah! That should pretty much erase all the problems of the world. Right? Right? Won't it?

Let's see how this has worked (or not) in history. The War of the Four Kings and the Five Kings (not to be confused with The Battle of the Five Armies) was really miraculous. Here's a recap. Four incredibly powerful armies were putting a serious beatdown on

their enemies, which consisted of five kingdoms. Unfortunately for the four victorious armies, one of their victims was Lot, the nephew of Abraham, and as the saying goes, "You mess with me, you mess with my whole family!" Abraham and a really, really small group of his students (according to some it was 318 people, and according to others it was just Abraham's one servant/ disciple, Eliezer) joined the fight and absolutely demolished the erstwhile victors. They won big, and in seriously miraculous fashion. I won't describe all the miracles, but the

Midrash tells us that after the victory, all the involved nations begged Abraham to be-



Candle lighting

- Scottsdale 5:16
- Henderson 5:27
- Las Vegas 5:28
- San Diego 5:40
- Reno/ Tahoe 5:41
- Irvine 5:42
- Los Angeles 5:43
- Oakland 5:53
- Park City 6:106

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continued on next page

come their ruler (which he refused, possibly because he was worried about voter fraud, or maybe because he thought it would distract people from the TRUE ruler). They even built a throne on a large platform for him! The Midrash also states that after Abraham's miraculous victory the nations gathered together and swore as one to abandon their false gods. So these nations must have been model citizens afterward. Surely the people who directly benefited from Abraham's miraculous intervention would follow his example. It goes without saying that those who pledged allegiance to the One God and who attempted to crown Abraham, would live their life by Abraham's code of morality and kindness. Not even close.

Do you know the names of the nations Abraham saved? They were Sodom, Amarah, Admah, Tzevoyim and Tzoar. Heard of them before? These same five city states, led by Sodom, were so wicked that they needed complete destruction (not so many years later). How could this be? How could 5 nations who so clearly experienced and appreciated God's greatness fail so fabulously at, well, every-

thing? How could people who saw and recognized miracles turn to evil?

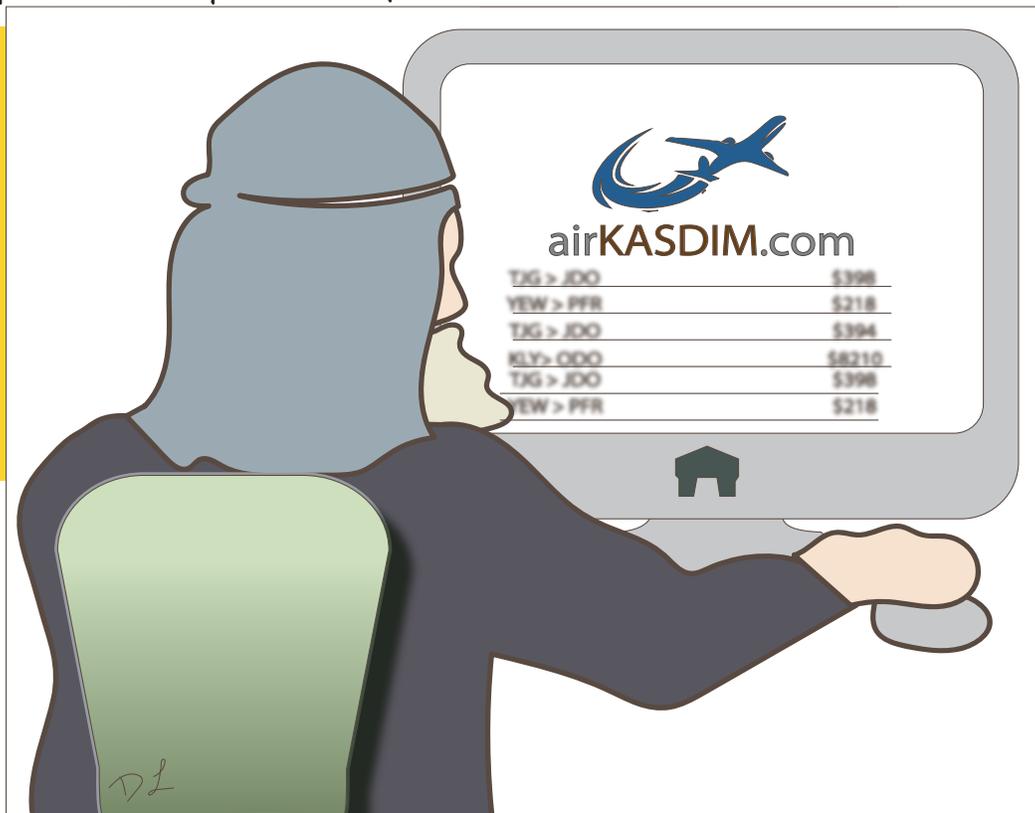
Let's contrast them to Abraham. Abraham experienced no miracles to help him believe in God. At a young age, he determined on his own that one God guided the world, and he adjusted his life accordingly. His journey was based on selflessness, and a sense of duty. The people of Sodom recognized God, not from their own hard work, understanding or sense of obligation, but because of something that just 'happened' to them. I call this armchair inspiration. They didn't work at it, and so it affected them very little.

Would it be cool if God made an awesome fireworks show in front of the whole world? Sure. But it's not the way to change people. God made us in a way that we really have to motivate ourselves to create change. Belief and goodness aren't things that happen to us. They're things that we must proactively pursue.

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COMIC STRIP



Hey Sarah, I'm not finding any flights for "The land I will show you."

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.



#145

God's 3-D printer



This is the third week in our series on creation. Enjoy, and don't forget to ask!

Hi Rabbi,

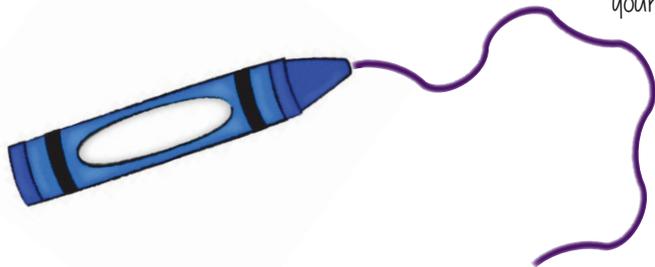
What does God look like? Does God have a long white beard? Does that mean He's old? Maybe he has a brown beard. I don't know... how do we picture God? I remember hearing that people look like God. Which people? What race or nationality is God?

Thanks
Neev R. Betzelem

Dear Neev,
I might have told this story before, but hey, it's a good one...
The second grade teacher was making her way up and down the aisles of her classroom... wait, scratch that. Need to make it more relevant...

The second grade teacher muted all of her students and announced, "OK class, work on your drawings, and if you need help, you can hold your picture up to the screen and unmute yourself. Johnny,

please turn your screen back on.
Lilly, please

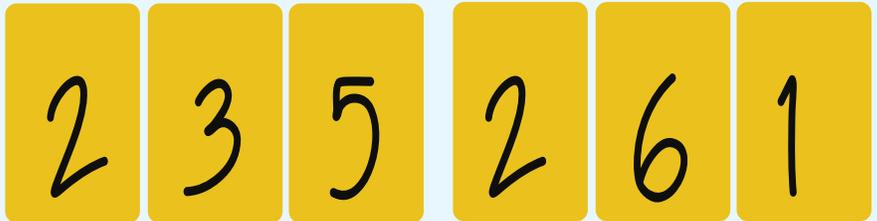


make sure you're muted while your brother has his drum lessons. Simon, can you tell me what you're drawing?"
"-----" Simon mouthed... "Oh. I was muted. I'm drawing a sailboat!" Simon held a scribble of colors and lines up to the screen.
"Very nice, Simon." said the teacher. "Alexa, what are you drawing?"
Alexa unmuted and smiled as she said, "I'm drawing God!"
"But nobody knows what God looks like!" exclaimed the teacher.
"They will in a minute!" Alexa responded.

When I was a kid, I thought of God as being invisible. In truth, an invisible person still looks like a person, you just can't see them (I just said that like

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Stump the Rabbi; continued

it's a real thing. I read way too many fantasy novels.) One of the fundamental beliefs of Judaism is that God has no body, and no physical form at all. He has no nose, fingers or small intestine. God doesn't need a dentist and doesn't put on a sweater on cold days. God doesn't physically cry or laugh or sneeze.

The Torah does indeed say that people were created in God's 'form'. As all the commentaries point out, that clearly doesn't mean a physical form, as God is not physical. It's not like God put Himself in a 3D printing photocopy machine (is that a thing?) and humans popped out. Instead it refers to our intellect. God has separated us from the

other creatures of the world by giving us understanding and decision making abilities far beyond any other life form. So when we say people are 'in the image of God' it's like saying we have God-like mental abilities. Beyond that, we have a soul which is completely not physical as well. In this sense, we're very much like God, because we have a part that is not physical, just like God does.

So, no, God doesn't have a white beard or a brown beard. God might not have a nose... but He has a knows.

Have a Nageela Shabbat,
the Rabbi



Which president is least guilty?

Lincoln. He is in a cent.

OUCH! GROAN!

Do you have a better joke? I sure hope so!
Send it to dlocker@nageelawest.org

deep thoughts

IS CON-
GRESS THE
OPPOSITE OF
PRO-GRESS?

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!

Myles Marks
Elie Ben-
zaquen
Jack Unitan
Aharon Leiter
Matan Stock-
man



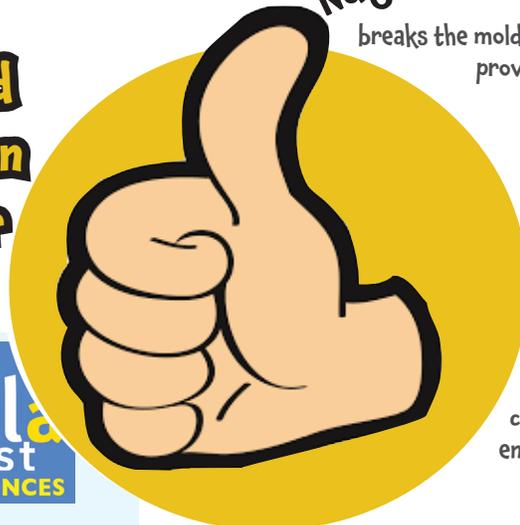
Renee Kenwood
Navah Mowery
Jake Grantz
Akiva Goldschhein



MAZEL TOV!
to Camp Nageela West head
counselor, Rachel Nahum upon
her engagement to Eli Anvar

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.



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