

Parshas
Mikeitz / Chanukah
5779

December 7th,
2018

have a **Nageela** **Shabbos**

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

Season 3
Episode 11

Great Expectations

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Joseph had been away from his family for a really long time. The 17-year-old boy who had left home as a slave was now 39, bearded, and a powerful ruler in the land of Egypt.

This week's Torah portion opens with Joseph's rise to power and continues with the story of a terrible hunger that reached across continents. There was no food to be had anywhere, except Egypt where Joseph had stored away more than enough. His older brothers, not knowing that their brother whom they had sold as a slave was now an important person, travel to Egypt to buy food for their family. Of course they had to meet with the administrator, who turned out to be their long lost brother, who had not seen in 22 years. They did not recognize him. I don't mean like for a moment they did a double take. It wasn't a case of, "Hey, for a minute there I almost didn't recognize you, what with that beard and the not being dead and all." They truly thought Joseph was an Egyptian leader whom they had never met.

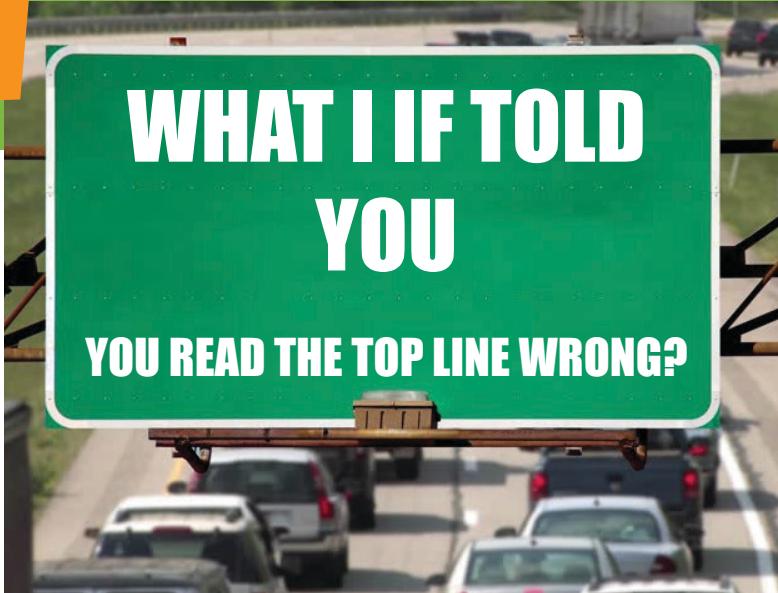
Awhile later, when Joseph invited them to eat with him, the Torah describes the seating arrangements. Joseph sat at his own table. His Egyptian staff sat at their own table, and Joseph's brothers sat at a third table. The Egyptians had rules against eating together with "Hebrews" which apparently even included their viceroy, Joseph. This is amazing, if you think about it.

continued on page 2



Candle Lighting:

Las Vegas 4:08
N. Lake Tahoe 4:18
San Diego 4:24
Los Angeles 4:25
Tarzana 4:26
Scottsdale 5:01



The Egyptians put Joseph at a separate table because he was a Hebrew, from their homeland. If I were the brothers, perhaps I would've scratched my head and said "Hmmm, he's not Egyptian after all. I don't recognize him from our homeland. Let me think, does he look like anyone I know?" He even seemed to know incredible facts about them, like which of the brothers shared a mother, claiming he had done magic. They knew their younger brother had gone to Egypt years before, and how old he would be now. These clues might have tipped off the brothers to his true identity. Yet they continued to have absolutely no idea. According to one commentary, Joseph even looked like his father Jacob. Why couldn't they see what was right in front of them?

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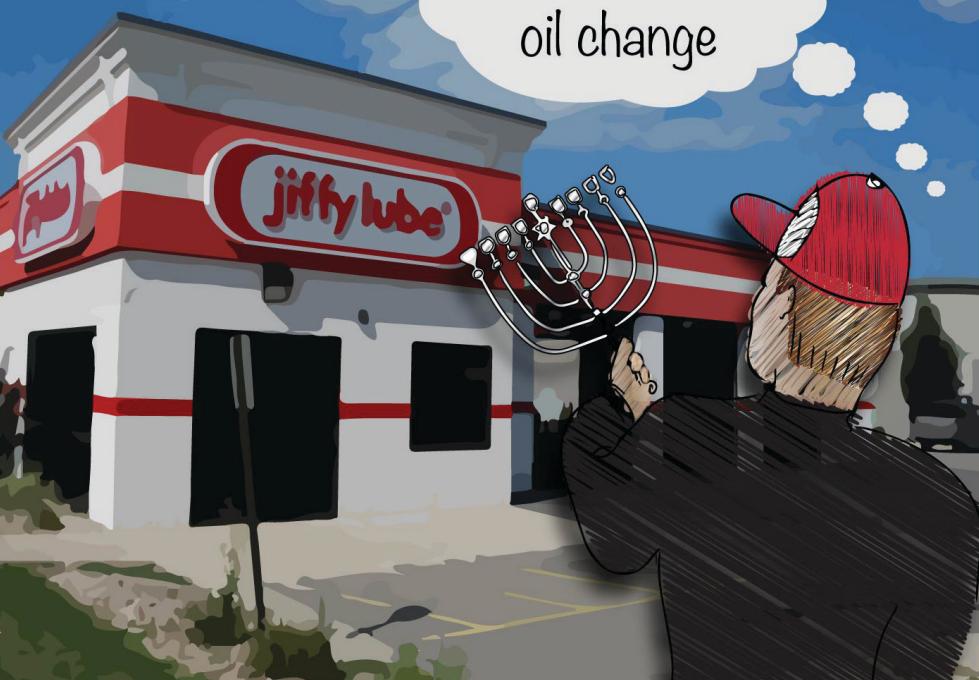
For a while, I lived in an apartment in Forest Hills, NY. Fans of the Marvel universe know that Peter Parker lives in Forest Hills, and so, when the Spider Man movie (2002) was being filmed, they closed off the street right next to my apartment to film a few scenes of Peter in front of his home. It was either autumn or spring, I don't recall which, but the trees still had all their leaves. The scene they were filming though, was a winter scene. They had sprayed water all over the street to make it look like it had rained recently. The actors in the scene were wearing winter coats. One of my friends asked a crew member how they could film a winter scene with all those green trees around. Would they edit it out digitally? The guy explained to us

that digitally editing the trees was probably not necessary. People are looking at a winter scene. They expect to see winter. They simply won't notice if there are some green trees around the edges.

Sometimes we see what we EXPECT to see. Sometimes we see what we WANT to see. Very rarely do we open our eyes to actually look at what's in front of us and see it for what it is. This is an important lesson in many ways. Let's realize that just because we think we see or understand something, doesn't mean we're absolutely right. Sometimes the answer can be right in front of us and we're simply not looking. Or maybe you've really been bitten by a radioactive spider. I'm just saying.

PICKLE JEWS GALACTICALLY SYNDICATED COMIC STRIP

I think it's time for an oil change



QUICK HITS:

WHAT WERE THE MACABEES REALLY FIGHTING FOR?

1. One of the decrees the Macabees fought against was a prohibition to study Torah. Make sure your Chanukah includes Torah learning, or frankly, it's wasted.

2. The Syrian-Greeks banned the Jewish calendar. I suggest as part of your celebration, you find out your Jewish birthday!
3. Greek myths are a soap opera of 'gods' acting like jerks. Their followers naturally worshipped physical strength & domination rather than

goodness or strength of character. Our G-d personifies perfection. To emulate him means to always act with patience, kindness and love.

4. One thing the Macabees fought for was Kosher food. Keep this in mind as you plan your Chanukah celebration calendar.



What kind of insect prefers oil to honey?

A Maca bee!

OUCH! GROAN!

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

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stump the rabbi

Dear Rabbi,

Ahh, I'm so confused! My birthday is February 2nd. It has been for quite while now. I was having my Bat Mitzvah lessons and the Rabbi told me my birthday next year is January 20th. I mean... seriously, what gives? I think I know what my birthday is! How can it be different in different years? OK. I might not be making sense anymore because I'M REALLY, REALLY... ughhh.

Thanks

Kallie Lander

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

Time Lapse



Awesometastic birthday wishes to Nageela family members celebrating their birthdays:

Eli Banner

Shlomo Berk

Alec Milton

Yaffa Fabb

Tal Hirsh

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Dear Kal Lander,

Deep. Breaths. That's right. Take a deep breath in. Now hold it... 8, 9, 10... slowly exhale. Repeat until you calm down. You're clearly nervous about your upcoming Bat Mitzvah. Don't worry, you'll do great! Now, to answer your question.

There are a lot of different ways to measure time. As I'm writing this, it's Wednesday. It's also December 5th. It's also 27th of Kislev. According to the Persian calendar, it's the 14th of Azar, and according to the Indian civil calendar, it's the 16th of Agrahayana in the year 1940. All these cultures and many more measure their time based on different phenomena. Our typical Gregorian calendar follows the sun. Some other calendars follow the seasons, the moon, or important historic events in their culture.

The Jewish calendar for the most part follows the lunar cycle (personally, I prefer the looney cycle). In other words we measure our time by the moon getting bigger and smaller. In the beginning of every Jewish month the moon is teeny tiny, by the middle of the month the moon is full, and then it shrinks down again to nothing. Every Jewish holiday is based on the position of the moon. Rosh Hashana is always at the beginning of the month and so the moon is small. If you step outside during the Seder Passover (careful not to trip over Elijah on your way out) or peek through the branches on the first night of Sukkot you'll always see a full moon because they are on the 15th day of their respective months. Unless it's cloudy. Then you won't see any moon (duh). The details of how the months are calculated and when we do leap years are really really complex and I won't try to explain them here (you can always email me for a more complete *continued on back page*

continued from page 3
explanation).

So we have our own calendar. Is that important? Well the Greeks certainly thought so. During the Chanukah story, one of the evil decrees that the government made against the Jews was to stop the use of Jewish calendar. The Greeks understood that as a people, keeping track of our own holidays was really important to survival, and losing our system of measuring time would make it easier for us to become just like the other nations. That was their goal after all.

Some say the reason we follow the moon is because the Jewish people are quite like the moon. The moon starts off small, gets bigger and then seems to almost disappear. You think it's gone forever. Yet it comes back again; growing and shrinking, but always, always surviving. Our nation has gone through huge amounts of changes, trials and challenges over the millennia, and there have been many times when we thought we might not continue to exist. Then, after the very darkest times, we seem to grow stronger again, and always, always, continue to exist. 75 years ago, many might have said we were done for, yet in some ways we're ever stronger than we were.

Another possible reason for a moon based

calendar is you do not need to be a scientist to figure it out. In fact it was not the expert astronomers who determined when the new month started, during the times of our Holy Temple. Ordinary people would come to the courts to declare that they saw the moon. The judges of the courts could not declare a new month until people came and testified that they saw the moon. The lesson for us is that it's not just up to the leaders and Rabbis to be the heart and soul of the Jewish people. Every individual, ordinary person is needed.

So your birthday might indeed be in January next year. I'd trust the Rabbi. Here's how it works. The day you were born had a Gregorian date (that's the standard calendar we use in the United States) and it also had a Hebrew date. So if you were born on February 2nd 2007, the Hebrew date was 14th of Shevat. The 14th of Shevat in 2019 comes out on January 20th. All Jewish holidays follow the Jewish calendar. So do important dates like a bar or bat mitzvah, or a yartzeit. Another lesson... trust your Rabbi :)

Have-A Nageela Shabbat,

the Rabbi

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