

have a Nageela Sukkot

Candle Lighting:
Scottsdale 5:30
Henderson 5:40
Las Vegas 5:40
San Diego 5:51
Irvine 5:53
Los Angeles 5:55
Lake Tahoe 5:55

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

Season 3
Episode 46

H-h-happy by Rabbi Dani Locker



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That moment when the King cancels Yom Kippur...

What? Never happened to you? Weird.

Well it did happen, but just once, as far as I know. In around 1000 B.C.E., the exact year doesn't matter, but it was some time before millennials, so that's really all you need to know. Anyway, something really special happened. One of the most important events in human history! After years of planning and construction, King Solomon had finally completed work on our sacred Temple in Jerusalem. He was ecstatic! And Ecclesiastic! And Enthusiastic! The King ordered a grand celebration in Jerusalem, for two full weeks! Loads of people came, and it sure was grand! The celebration began a week before Sukkot, and lasted through the Sukkot festival. The people finally went home after Shemini Atzeret.

The talmud points out (MK9) that since Yom Kippur is scheduled to take place 5 days before Sukkot, that means YK was canceled that year. Not only were there no long Yom Kippur services, there was partying and feasting, eating and drinking! Autocorrect wants me to write 'fasting' instead of feasting. That does sound more reasonable. Yet, the wise King Solomon, along with prophets and

sages

in his generation, saw it as appropriate to cancel Yom Kippur.

Why was that necessary, or even allowed? Don't get me wrong, I like me a good party. Throw in some wings and pickles, maybe a little Diet Mt Dew, and I'm down for any party you can throw. But why not simply take a break for Yom Kippur! Or if you must party on the most sacred day of the year, at least do it without food! King Solomon, please listen to autocorrect on this!

Yet the Talmud concludes that the mitzvah of simcha- the important job of living with joy- was a more important necessity than even the offerings which were brought at the Mishkan's inauguration. Joy is really difficult to feel without food, and therefore our great leaders were justified in letting us feast, not fast, during that year's Yom Kippur!

It's amazing when we realize how highly the Torah values happiness. "Hey," you might slyly



What do the Holy Temple and Nageela Shabbos have in common?

They both only survive on donations!

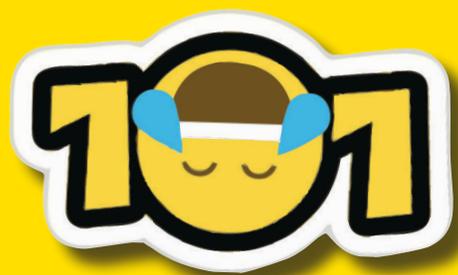
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Cun-tin-yood from page 1

suggest... "If it's always a mitzvah to be happy, perhaps we should cancel Yom Kippur every year!"

Nice try, buddy. There are times when it's important to be serious, and sometimes even sad. Only that one time, because of the incredible event of the Temple's dedication, joy overruled the normally solemn tone of the high holiday season. There are indeed times that call for solemnity. Yet when the times comes for happiness, nothing at all can stand in the way of joy. This is why the Temple's inauguration was celebrated with 14 days of partying, even canceling that year's Yom Kippur.

Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret, the holidays of this week, are labeled "the festival of joy." Our very serious and important job during these days is to make sure to do everything we can to increase our happiness. That includes eating and drinking, dancing with the Torahs, and also includes doing things for other people (see Selfie Torah #125). Have a happy, joyous, ecstatic holiday!



The cross eyed teacher got fired.

She couldn't control her pupils*!

OUCH! GROAN!

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

*plus, she was always cross with them



Photos of the Week

Grand Council

Our Las Vegas Board of Middle School Leaders enjoying sushi in the Sukkah at the first monthly board meeting. Big plans for this year!

Jew^{nior} ncsy ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS:

SAVE THE DATE: Las Vegas Kickoff Event:
Sunday, October 27th @ Crystal Palace
Las Vegas Shabbaton Featuring Adventuredome!
Nov. 22nd- 23rd
Regional Shabbaton Weekend: Jan. 17th (MLK weekend) San Francisco!
Join your city's Junior Board: email locker@ncsy.org

DEEP THOUGHTS

Why don't sheep shrink
when it rains? ?



nageela/ jewnior ncsy

SKATE NIGHT

@ CRYSTAL PALACE RANCHO
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27TH

4-6 PM

elementary and middle school students
parents invited. We will discuss plans for the year!

Heavy Circulation

Hi Rabbi,

I hope you're enjoying your holiday. I've read explanations for shaking the lulav, and for sitting in the Sukkah. I still do not have any understanding of the strange customs of Hoshana Rabbah. Why would we smack willow branches on the ground? Why do we circle the bima seven times? These all seem pretty weird to me.

I'd appreciate any clarity you can give me.

Thanks,

Allan Ravot



**stump the
rabbi**

*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.*

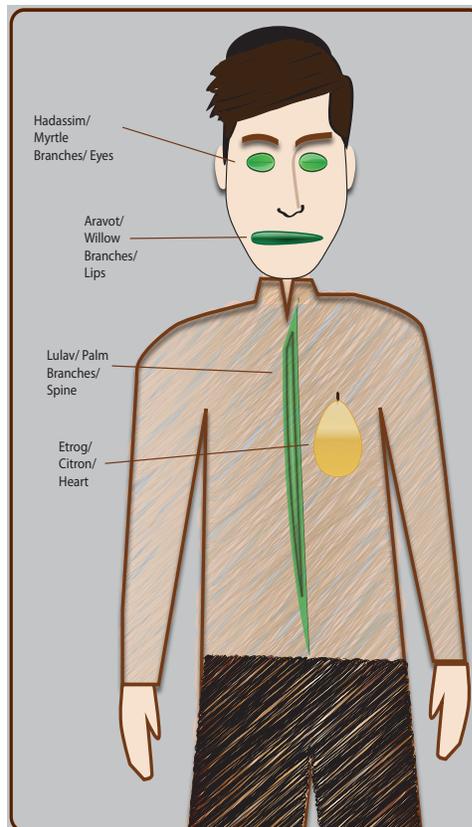
Dear A. Ravot,

My favorite Sukkot custom is when we stand on our heads while chewing fresh ginger root. In case you really didn't know, I'm kidding! No ginger root, and no standing on heads, but we DO have some rather odd customs and rules, some of which I'll try and explain now.

You mentioned Lulav. We gather 4 species on each of the seven days of Sukkot (except Shabbat) and wave them in all directions. There are many reasons and a lot of symbolism behind them. Here are a couple of ideas:

Sukkot is the harvest festival. Simply put, it's payday. When you have a job, you don't get paid every day (usually). Every once in a while is payday, when you get your payment. This is a happy day. If you're a farmer, then your entire year is planting produce, and in the autumn is when it finally is completely gathered into your storehouse. Hooray! Happy, happy, happy! To celebrate this, we pick up different types of plants and wave them around in joy! Also (you've probably heard this), the four types of species are like 4 different types of people, who must all 'bundle', come together despite their differences. Here's another interesting one. The four species each represent an important body part, all of which need to be used to serve God properly

and become the best version of ourselves. See the infographic below.



What about the 'hoshana' service? This is an interesting one. When the Jewish people entered the land of Israel led by Joshua, over 3000 years ago, Jericho was the first city we needed to conquer. Problem: There were high, tough walls surrounding the city! We

surrounded the walls, and circled them seven times, each time calling out to God to help us. Those walls sank straight down, leaving the city vulnerable and exposed! They literally 'brought the house down.' On each day of Sukkot, we also walk around the 'bima' (that's the

continuity may be achieved by flipping the page

Torah reading table) with lulav and co. in hand. Help me with my math here, how many days of Sukkot are there? That's right. Seven (Shemini Atzeret not included). On Hoshana Rabba, which is the final day of Sukkot, we actually surround the bima seven times, mimicking the Jericho attack. One way to understand this is that just as at Jericho, the circling 'brought down walls' we want our prayers on Sukkot to bring down the walls separating God from our prayers. While we circle, we say prayers that contain the word 'hoshana' many times. HOSHANA is a contraction of the words "Please save!" [see graphic]



Beating the willow. Now here's an unusual custom. We take a bundle of (usually) five willow branches, on the morning of Hoshana Rabba (the final day of Sukkot) and smash them on the ground. Weird. This custom is not mentioned anywhere in the Torah, but was instituted by prophets, years later. Among the many explanations, here are a few:

Willows, or Aravot, grow at water sources (usually near rivers). On Sukkot, God determines how much water we will have for the year. Water is massively important, because, like, nothing would grow without it. That was probably obvious. Aaaaanyway... now that we are finishing the period of judgement for water, we take this water-based plant and 'retire' it by putting it back on the ground. Here's another one:

As we mentioned before, the four species all represent different body parts (if we used wheat, it would represent dandruff, i think). Aravot represent the mouth. So what? There are two symbols here. First, in order to ensure that God listens to our prayers, we must 'put our mouth in the dirt' meaning to make sure not to say anything we shouldn't be saying, like Lashon Hara, which comes

from our mouths being 'high up.' Also, our prayers (mouth) must come from the ground, meaning, we must be humble for our prayers to work.

Like with most symbolic mitzvot, it's really important not to forget about the meaning behind the symbols. We focus on joyfully celebrating the wonderful blessings God has given us, and pray that God continues to shower us (literally- it's about rain) with blessings in the year ahead of us.

Have-A Nageela Shabbat,

the Rabbi

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy Birthday to Nageela family members celebrating this week!

- Eli Ephraim
- Sean Shamama
- Heshy Nemer
- Revital Kashani
- Tova Locker
- Alyssa Dixon

HAPPY UNBIRTHDAY TO EVERYONE ELSE!



Nageela West 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.