

Question of the Week

answer on back page

SEASON 2
EPISODE 17

January 13th, 2018

Question of the Week is adapted with permission from the book "Question of the Week" by Rabbi David Zaback

Kosher rules determine which food items may or may not be eaten.

In what case is something Kosher only until you see it, and then is no longer permitted to eat?

Candle Lighting:

Las Vegas 4:29
Lake Tahoe 4:39
San Diego 4:44
Los Angeles 4:46
Phoenix 5:22

have a

Nageela Shabbos

Parshas
Va'eira

5778

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

Change Your Own Bulbs

by Rabbi Dani Locker

How many miracles does it take to change a light bulb?

Any guesses?

I know it's a weird question. Let's discuss some fascinating Jewish history and then maybe we can answer the question.

The time had finally come. After more than two hundred years as strangers in Egypt, and after suffering terribly at the hands of their "gracious hosts," the Children of Israel (that's us, guys!) were about to go free. Moshe, God's chosen messenger came and announced to the Jews that God would rescue

them, but his promise fell on deaf ears. The Jews just wouldn't listen to Moshe. They were so depressed and dispirited from the terrible slavery that they simply did not have the positive energy left to trust in salvation. It was bad.

The great Italian Jewish scholar, Rabbi Ovadia Seforno takes this further. He explains that really, when we were taken from Egypt, the natural course of events was for our immediate return to Israel. It was because of this lack of positivity that they were unable to fully trust in God's salvation, and because of this, they could not be allowed to enter Israel. Only their children

who did not suffer in Egypt could safely enter the land.

If you think about it, it makes sense, because the official reason our nation did not immediately enter Israel, and needed to wander the sand dunes of the Sinai desert for so long, was because of trust issues. When the twelve scouts returned from checking out the land, and ten of them were tweeting with negative hashtags, they should have trusted God would make it all OK. They did not trust. They could not trust. Their brains went to the pessimistic, negative outcome. It's kind of scary to think how much tragedy we've had because of this... not because of some grand sin of worshipping idols or mixing meat and milk. It was the simple mistake of seeing the cup as empty. Or full of root beer (I'd prefer empty).

I don't get something. Sure, while they were slaves in Egypt, they couldn't believe God would save them. But after? After ten awesome, loud, miraculous, Earth

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Stump The Rabbi

Kind of Strapped

Hi Rabbi,

Why do Jewish boys have to wear leather straps both on their hand and head? Isn't one good enough? And why can't girls put them on too?

Thanks,

Phillip Actari

Dear Phil Actari,

First a little background...

Here goes.

The straps you mentioned are called tefillin in Hebrew. Tefillin are indeed attached to our body with leather straps, but they're sooo much more than that! My belt keeps my pants attached to my body with a leather strap, too. Holy pants? Not so much.

Tefillin have three main parts: The "Bayit" that's the leather box. The "Parshiyot" are parchment



scrolls with paragraphs from the Torah inside, and the "Retzuot" are the leather straps. Having leather straps without the other two parts would be kind of like wearing shoelaces without shoes! Interesting fashion statement, but not very helpful.

The idea behind tefillin is to physically attach God to us. Most mitzvot have to do with saying stuff, or doing stuff. Tefillin is about literally tying God to us, by strapping parts of the Torah to our bodies. Doing a physical act of tying parts of the Torah to us helps us mentally and emotionally realize how important God and His Torah are in our lives. Lots of mitzvot are like this. We do actual physical things with our hands, mouth or toes (I'm not sure why I just mentioned toes. Definitely not toes.) and these acts help focus us on the things we believe and feel.

If you're a baseball fan (what's baseball? Yeah it's that sport that used to exist before the NFL) you can appreciate this. Many famous players had routines that they kept, things they did each time they got up to bat or pitch. Former Yankees slugger Mark Texeira would wear two different socks. Another great Yankee, Wade Boggs would use his bat to carve the word "chai" in the dirt of the batter's box! It



YOLO 4 SHABBATON
LAS VEGAS, MARCH 2ND- 3RD

**VERY
PUNNY**

I know my puns are
bad...

But that's how eye
roll!

Ouch. Have a better pun?
Send it in to dlocker@nageelawest.org

THIS WEDNESDAY
Los Angeles NageeLatte
contact [dlocker@](mailto:dlocker@nageelawest.org)
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must have worked, because he hit a career average of .328! Pitcher Don Robinson would not allow anyone to throw him the ball at the beginning of an inning, but would instead pick the ball up from the ground. Now I've tried hitting a major league fastball with two different socks. It doesn't work. :(All these players understand that these superstitions and routines don't have magical powers. They know that doing a physical action can help you focus your mind and your energy. I won't go so far as saying that tefillin is like baseball... but it's kind of, a little itty bit like baseball.

Now to answer your question specifically. Tying tefillin on the hand and head has two special meanings. The arm, or hand, represents action (we use our hands to do things) and the head represents thought. By wearing both, we are announcing that we serve and connect to God with our thoughts and our actions. Judaism isn't just a philosophy where you're supposed to believe something. It's also not a bunch of meaningless rituals. We connect to God with our brains and with our actions.

Also, have you noticed the placement of the leather box on

the arm? It's on the left bicep, pointing slightly inward, right toward the heart! We remind ourselves that we're supposed to connect to God with our hearts (emotions) as well. While tying one box on is good (and if you only have one, you should put one on), the full benefit comes when we've connected our minds, actions and emotions with both sets of tefillin.

You asked why girls can't put tefillin on. The truth is, they can! There are many accounts of special women throughout history putting tefillin on. However, it's not required of them, and therefore usually isn't done. Why? Well that's a whole nudder question. If you'd like to discuss that one with me more, please feel free to write, and I'll be happy to chat about it.

Have - a- Nageela Shabbat,

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

Continued from page 1

shattering plagues. After seeing so clearly how powerful God is and how much He cares for us, His people...

After we won, and became a free nation, outside of Egypt... Why didn't they trust, then? What was stopping them AFTER the exodus (and after the matzah and matzah ball soup) from seeing things in a positive frame of mind, and believing that God would care for them?

So... How many miracles does it take to change a light bulb?

The answer is that miracles don't change lightbulbs, unless the lightbulbs want to change.

Miracles don't change people. Proofs and arguments don't change people. Have you ever had an argument with someone who is so stubborn that no matter what you say they just don't listen? Yeah, like every day. I know. When people are open, positive and willing to accept change, then it doesn't really take any special miracles. When people are angry, depressed, stubborn or impatient (describe anyone you know?), then no amount of miracles, favors or proofs will help them

see the truth.

The Jewish people in Egypt were unable to trust, so those same people remained unable to trust even after they saw the sea split! The only way they could have gained trust in God is by deciding that they wanted to live more positive, trusting lives.

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ALL NIGHTER

@ GRAVADY

8 HOURS
OF
EXTREME
FUN!

MARCH 25TH
10:30P-
MARCH 26TH
7:30A

SPRING BREAK!

FOR AGE 12 AND UP!

Happy
Birthday!

to Nageela family members
celebrating their birthdays this
week!

Mathan Ben Yehuda
Ariella Bernheim-Perez

Mazal Tov to Dovid Niman
AKA "Durger" upon his recent
marriage!

Answer of the Week
question on page

CAUTION:
Don't read this
answer until you've
read the question
on page 1!
DON'T CHEAT!
HEY, STOP

Need help understanding, or have a different answer? email dlocker@nageelawest.org

Bloody mouth or gums.
The Torah strictly forbids drinking animal blood,
and all kosher meat goes through a special
process to remove the blood. If a person's teeth
or gums are bleeding it is OK if that blood gets
swallowed. However, once the blood leaves the
mouth and is visible, it's no longer OK to drink.

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. Our "questions encouraged" mindset makes Nageela a comfortable learning and growing environment for Jewish children of all backgrounds.

