

have a Nageela Shabbos

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

Candle Lighting:
Scottsdale 5:50
Henderson 6:01
Las Vegas 6:02
San Diego 6:11
Irvine 6:13
Los Angeles 6:15
Lake Tahoe 6:19

Season 3
Episode 45

Shofar Ram-blings

by Rabbi Dani Locker



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Go Rams Go! Go Rams Go!

No, that's not an NFL chant, and I'm not a Rams fan. Sorry LA peeps. I was talking about the shofar, of course. On our spectacularly awesome day of Rosh Hashana (like literally, it's a 'day of awe'), the main mitzvah of the day is hearing the sound of shofar, which is usually made of the horn of a ram. Why a ram? Why not a Giant, or a Patriot? But seriously, why can't it be a bull's horn? I hear those are cape-a-bull of being blown...

You may have heard the explanation that a ram's horn is a reminder of the incredible sacrifice of Abraham, who was willing to give up his son at God's command. That is one of the important symbolisms of Shofar, but there's something it still doesn't explain. A goat's horn is fine for Shofar. A Kudu's horn is fine for shofar. There are probably many residents of Narnia whose horns are fine for shofar. Not just rams. In the laws of shofar, there is only one species specifically excluded. You guessed it. Cows. The horn of a cow (or bull, to be precise) is not approved for Rosh Hashana use. Oh, you can use it to drink from, or as jewelry. There's nothing wrong with a cow's horn. You just can't use

it to do the mitzvah of shofar on Rosh Hashana.

Why not? What's wrong with cow?
The Talmud tells us why not.

Do you know what happened that involved a cow? That's right. The Golden Calf. The terrible incident when many Jews worshipped a cow made of gold, right after God gave us the Torah. It was a biiiiiig mess up. The idea of the shofar is to 'remind' God of good stuff we've done (like Abraham's and Isaac's willing sacrifice), not of our blooper reel. And the golden calf tops that list. So no cow products during shofar blowing.

Similarly, on Yom Kippur, the Kohen Gadol, who had the great privilege of entering the holiest place on earth, had to remove his special golden clothes and wore only white linen to enter the holy of holies. Why? Same reason. Gold is reminiscent of the golden calf... red flag... or, gold flag... whatever. Either way, it's not the message we want to send to God as we plead for a good new year.

If you think about it though, the Kohen Gadol does wear his gold clothes the rest of the

What came first, the sponsor or the publication?

The choice is yours!

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time, just not when he enters the Holy of Holies. We do not believe in boycotting gold because it was once used improperly. If we did that, there's nothing we'd be able to use! That means it's OK to use reminders of the golden calf MOST of the time. At the absolute most critical, holy time, as the KG enters the holiest spot- no gold. That tells me that shofar is, like, ninja level holy. If we won't use a cow product for shofar (even though you're gonna be having brisket later, am I right?), that means shofar is on the same super- holy plateau as the greatest man, entering the holiest spot, on the most important day of the year. Score one for shofar!

Now is where it gets tricky. Some years, the first day of Rosh Hashana is on Shabbos. AKA Saturday.

During those years, we skip the shofar blowing entirely for that day (which is a big deal, because the first day is the Torah obligation). How could we cancel something SO HOLY unless we're replacing it with something of equal holiness? Aha! What does that tell you about how special Shabbos is.

This Shabbos, there's no shofar. There is no incense being burned behind the curtain of the Holy of Holies. There might not even be brisket. But as we can see, Shabbos itself is of an equal level of holiness with shofar. So this Shabbos, enjoy your rest, have some great food, and realize that you can connect to God is a really powerful way. Shabbos is an amazing gift, and we have it every week!



I am a Champion

Hi Rabbi,

I spent about a gagillion hours in my synagogue on Rosh Hashana, and I'm about to do the same thing next week, only longer. During this week in between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, I've been told it is appropriate to try to be my best. I'm supposed to be a perfect human being, ask forgiveness for all the things I've done wrong, and do everything better. But I'm not going to stay that way. I know that. So what's the point? Why go crazy to be really good for 'judgement week' when I won't be able to keep it up? If anything, it seems a bit dishonest!

Thanks,

Raquel E. Pence



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 R.E. Pence

Alexa had been a star. For most of high school, the track team won competition after competition, mostly due to her fantastic speed and agility. Then it happened. The torn cartilage. The knee surgery. Alexa missed most of her Junior year rehabbing her knee and trying to get back into shape for competition, but when she finally entered her first races, her time was way slower than it had been in the past. The doctors and physical therapists all told her that she was perfectly healthy and that her knee was as good as new, but for some reason, she just couldn't do it like she used to. As she lost more and more races, Alexa started to truly doubt her ability to ever bounce back and become a star again.

The morning of the state semifinals dawned, and her team had just made it in. Coach Anderson pulled Alexa aside and asked her to come into her office. "I want to show you something that will help you run," the coach whispered. Alexa was curious. Was it some kind of vitamin supplement? An inspirational pep talk? What was the coach going to do?

Coach Anderson sat Alexa down in front of a screen and for two hours showed her films. They were videos of... Alexa.

Alexa winning state in her Freshman year. Alexa breaking the high school record. Movie after movie of her own great achievements.

"This is who you are." The coach told her. "You've just forgotten. Your recent failures have clouded the realization that you are a superstar athlete. You are a champion. You are a champion no matter what setbacks you've had recently. You are a champion. You are a champion!"

Alexa smiled to herself. "I AM a champion. I AM A CHAMPION!"

And after that, she was.

Every person has ups and downs. We're gonna have some times, like Alexa, when we fail, hit a low point in our lives. The hard part is remembering that our bad times don't define us. If we can truly rise up during the week between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur and be great people, just for a few days, that will give us new inspiration. When you go through a challenging time, you can think back and say, "Hey, during that week, I really rocked! I'm a pretty good person and a pretty good Jew. I can get back on top!"

So take the opportunity during this week to try to improve a bit. Study a bit more



Jew^{nior} NCSU announcements

During the past 3 weeks, we've had middle school kickoff events in San Diego, Scottsdale and Irvine. We're so excited for the coming year!

THIS WEEK:

Las Vegas Summerlin: Grade 4-6, 5:45pm

Las Vegas Summerlin: Grade 7-8, 7pm

Studio City: Monday, 6pm

Tarzana: OFF

LA City: Thursday, 6:30pm

Irvine: Thursday, 6:15pm

UPCOMING EVENTS:

SAVE THE DATE: Las Vegas Kickoff Event: Sunday, October 27th @ Gravady

Regional Shabbaton Weekend: Jan. 17th (MLK weekend)

Join your city's Junior Board: email locker@ncsy.org

Torah than you normally do, speak less gossip about your friends, and perhaps try to be more careful about what you eat, and remember to thank God when you do. Even if you won't be able to keep all this up, you'll be able to look back on this week to inspire yourself.

Because YOU are your own greatest inspiration.

Have-A Nageela Shabbat,

the Rabbi

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy Birthday to Nageela family members celebrating this week!

Ayden Arya

Aaron Deutsch

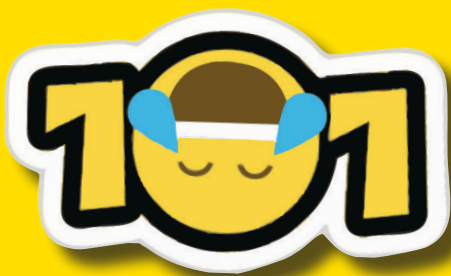
David Elmaleh

Esther Neissany

Shaye Jaget

Sammy Katz

**HAPPY UNBIRTHDAY TO
EVERYONE ELSE!**



Past, present and future walked into a bar...

Then things got tense!

OUCH! GROAN!

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



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.