

Vaeira 5781  
January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

# NAGEELA SHABBOS

Have-a

SEASON 5 EPISODE 13

a kid friendly publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences



## Seeing Double

by Rabbi Dani Locker

A great Rabbi once noticed one of his students leaning on his friend's shoulder to look at a book the friend was reading.

"You know," the Rabbi said, "That person is like a walking Torah scroll, and you're not allowed to lean on a Torah."

The student looked thoughtful. "Well Rabbi, if he's a Torah scroll, then so am I. You're allowed to put one Torah scroll on top of another Torah scroll!"

The Rabbi glanced over his shoulder as he walked away and grinned as he said, "That's true. But if you think of yourself as a Torah scroll, you might not be a kosher one."

Wait, is a person a Torah scroll or not? This Rabbi was telling his

student that we should always view others in the best possible light, and at the same time, we need to scale it back when it comes to our view of ourselves. We see an even more powerful version of this idea with Moses (who, BTW was quite tall) and Pharaoh (who was tiny).

When God sent Moses on his epic quest to Mordor, errr, I mean Egypt, He told him that he must demand Pharaoh's surrender. Pharaoh is, of course, one of the greatest villains in our history, and Moses demands that all of the Jews are immediately released from their brutal captivity. Yet at the same time, the great commentator Rashi tells us that Moses was instructed to treat Pharaoh with respect and



Candle lighting

Henderson	4:31
Las Vegas	4:32
Reno/ Tahoe	4:42
San Diego	4:47
Irvine	4:48
Los Angeles	4:49
Oakland	4:56
Park City	5:05
Scottsdale	5:25

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dignity. This is actually a really cool thing to think about. We probably expect that when the good guy comes to defeat the bad guy, embarrassing and belittling him comes with it. It does not. The Midrash explains that even though Moses was appointed as the judge and jury over Pharaoh, that was just a job, and Moses needed to act with humility and grace.

What an amazing psychological quagmire Moses was in! He needed to look at this lousy, low down, good for nothing, miserable, contemptible, odious, heinous, vile, repugnant villain and treat him with respect and honor. In order to do that, Moses must have meditated on the innate value of human life, and how even the most wretched, despicable, sleazy (enough all ready!) of people is still created in God's image. At the very same time, he was required to view his own massively positive accomplishment through a different lens.

Even though Moses himself was meritorious, estimable, worthy, awesome, marvelous, magnificent and simply peachy (here we go again), he needed to tone down his own feelings of greatness, realizing that any greatness he had was only a reflection of God. He might have been tempted to think, "Hey, if this diabolical loser (don't worry, I'm stopping there) gets respect, surely I deserve much more respect!" The Torah expects us to get to the point (and Moses did get there) where we provide honor for others, yet demand none for ourselves. An attitude which includes treating others as if they are righteous, amazing human beings, while recognizing our own shortcomings. It's a tall order, and Moses was a tall man.

*continued from page 1*

**MAZEL TOV!**  
to Camp Nageela West  
superstar counselor,  
Aron Leiter upon his  
engagement to Gila  
Rockove

**MAZEL TOV!**  
to Allie (Yesti) Noss  
(formerly Weeks)  
on her marriage  
this past week to  
Nesanel Noss!

deep thoughts  
**IF YOU'RE NOT  
SUPERSTITIOUS,  
CAN YOU STILL  
BE A LITTLE  
STITIOUS?**



**PICKLE**  
**JEW'S**



Stump the Rabbi is a forum where kids can ask ANY Jewish question.

Have a question? Please send it in to [stump@nageelawest.org](mailto:stump@nageelawest.org)

Questions here are real. Names and some wording have been changed.



## #155 God's Short Nose

Hi Rabbi,

Is God a girl or a boy? I hear a lot of people saying "He." How do we know? Is there a way to tell? When we say man was created in the image of God, does that mean man but not woman? Thanks,

Jennifer Derr

Dear Jen Derr,

Oh boy!

That was a joke. No more jokes? Let's sing a song:

God bless America, land that I love. Stand beside her... her? Why is America a girl? Not sure if Amerigo Vespucci would like that idea very much.

Do you find it interesting that in language, sometimes we'll assign genders to things which really have no gender? If you've ever been on a boat, you'll know that sailors ALWAYS refer to their vessels as she. As we just mentioned in the song (I thought my baritone sounded rather rich, don't you?) countries are also often referred to as feminine. Many other languages have it much, much worse. In some languages, most nouns have different versions for male and female. Is a table or a boat or

a book, car, frapuccino, seashell or ripstick a boy or a girl? Not really. OK, not AT ALL. Well, maybe certain fraps!

The Hebrew language often refers to God as He, but the truth is God is nothing of the sort. God has no body or physical form, and isn't limited to the traits of either a man or a woman. This might be confusing to you, but God has no gender. Much the same way that a pineapple has no gender. Throughout our holy scriptures, God's actions are sometimes described in a masculine way (particularly when describing God's strength and control) and sometimes described in a feminine way (usually when describing God's care and love for us). In Kabbalah (kids, don't try this at home), the feminine attributes of God are referred to as the "Shechinah."

An interesting point you brought up is that the very beginning of the Torah describes man as being created in the "Image of

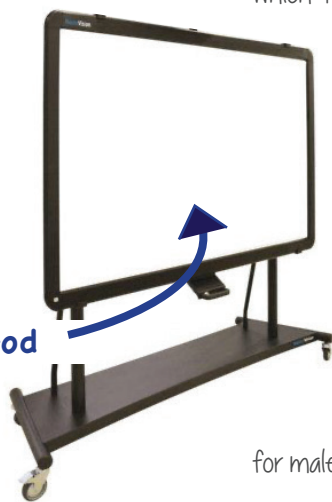


Diagram of God

REGISTRATION IS UNDERWAY FOR  
CAMP NAGEELA WEST 2021 IN  
JEWTAH

3 WEEKS, SPORTS, HORSEMANSHIP, NATURE,  
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SPORTS, JEWISH PRIDE AND EXCITEMENTS!

1

5

8

DAYS TO CAMP NAGEELA WEST  
GIRLS SESSION

1

8

4

DAYS TO CAMP NAGEELA WEST  
BOYS SESSION

Find out about our summer 2021 and see photos from 2020 at [nageelawest.org](http://nageelawest.org)

# Stump the Rabbi; continued

God." You might think that means man is in God's image, but not woman. If you take a look at Nageela Shabbos Season 5, Episode 3, you'll remember two points about this. First of all, since God has no physical form, it can't literally mean in the image of God. How long is God's nose? Probably short, because God doesn't ever lie. If you've seen paintings with 'God' by important artists like Michaelangelo or Gary Larson... just so you know, those aren't real and that's not what God looks like. God doesn't look like anything.

Secondly, at the time of mankind's creation, there was no separation between man and woman. Both genders were



**MAZEL TOV!**  
to Sofia Haffer who  
celebrated her Bas  
Mitzvah last week!

## DID JEW KNOW?

Moses wasn't just called Moses. He actually had 10 different names, including: Yered, Chever, Yekusiel, Avigdor, Avi Socho, Avi Zonoiach, Tuvia, Shmaya, Ben Nesanel, Hasofer

included in this first member of our species. It was only after God performed surgery (first female surgeon?) that our genders existed separately. So it was MANKIND (consisting of both woman and man) who is in God's image. What are God's pronouns? If you want to use she and her, you're not technically wrong. God is not any more man than woman. In terms of pure grammar, it is more correct to use masculine pronouns for God, just as you would use feminine pronouns for a time machine. Or for America, which could use a time machine right about now. Have a Nageela Shabbat,

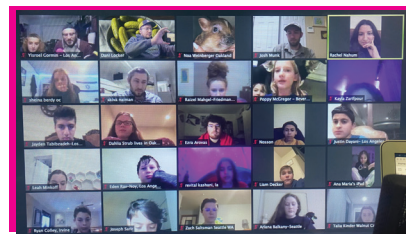
*the Rabbi*

## CHAI LIGHTS



### CHAPTER WARS!

Participants from 10 different West Coast cities got together this week for a Jewish Bingo competition. It was the first in a series bringing together Middle school students from dozens of schools for fun and educational virtual events!



**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY!**



Hinda Gross  
Jason Shapiro  
Noa Agatstein  
Shoshana Ostrow  
Nava Freeman

What type of music did the  
ancient Egyptians  
play at funerals?



Wrap music!

OUCH! GROAN!

Do you have a better joke? I sure hope so!  
Send it to [dlocker@nageelawest.org](mailto:dlocker@nageelawest.org)

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THE SUBJECT LINE, "SUBSCRIBE."

## 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.

