

Bechukosai 5782
May 27th 2022



a kid friendly publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences



Be Memorable

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Why is Isaac left out? Well not really left out, but stuck in the middle seat on the airplane, with no armrests.

repeated when talking about Abraham. Yet it's nowhere to be found when remembering Isaac's deal. What's the deal?

The Torah talks about some of the painful events that were destined to happen to the Jewish people over the generations. After a loooong list of troubles, it concludes with some hope: "I shall remember my deal with Jacob, and also the deal with Abraham I shall remember..." So to make a long story short, God promises us that even though things sometimes get rough, He will always remember the deals he made with our great and holy ancestors, and He will never abandon us.

Well, what did both Abraham and Jacob have in common that Isaac did not? One explanation is that Isaac lived his entire life in Israel, while his father and son both spent significant portions of their lives outside the holy land. God provided us with a holy land to help us grow. It is a place where one can more easily thrive spiritually. Isaac had those benefits. Despite the life challenges Isaac had (and he had plenty), he faced them all in the chain mail armor of the Holy Land of Israel. Abraham had to achieve greatness while living among the corrupt

Interestingly, it specifies the word 'remember' when talking about Jacob, and it's

fluence of his own father, of the brutal tyrant Nimrod and soci-



- Honolulu 6:49
- Scottsdale 7:11
- Henderson 7:30
- San Diego 7:30
- Las Vegas 7:31
- Irvine 7:35
- Los Angeles 7:38
- Reno 7:59
- Oakland 8:04
- Park City 8:29



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ety that had not yet reached their potential. Jacob spent many of his years alongside the dishonest Lavan and later in Egypt.

According to the Bal Haturim, these ingredients make Abraham and Jacob the ones whose goodness is more memorable. God made a deal with Isaac too, but it seems there's a stronger connection somehow of remembering the deals with his father and his son.

What does this mean for us? Here's one idea. What defines a person isn't his or her accomplishments, but their challenges. When we

face difficulties in life (whether they're physical difficulties that make life uncomfortable or whether they're spiritual challenges which seem to hold back our growth) it might help to appreciate that these are what makes us truly great.

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Our challenges are what define us

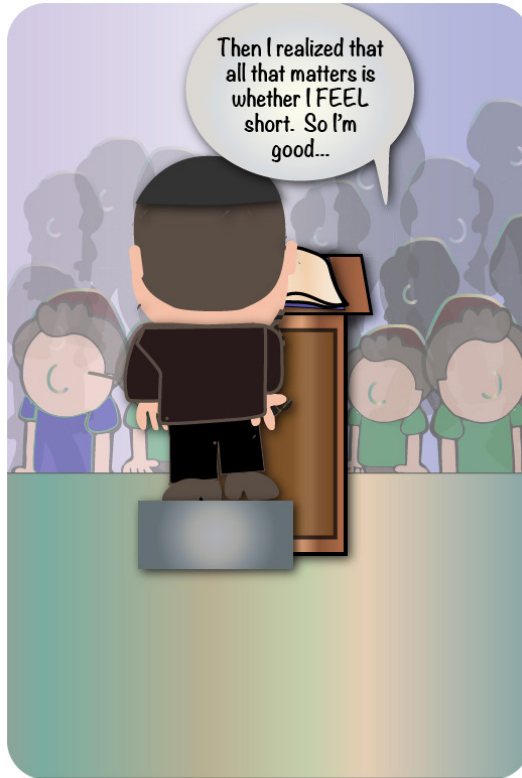
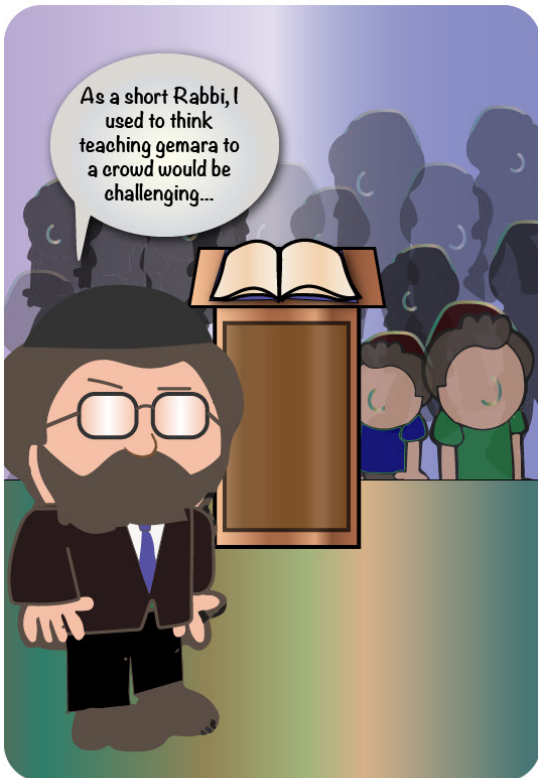
MAZEL TOV!

to Ian Boyd who is celebrating his Bar Mitzvah this week!

PICKLE JEWS

GALACTICALLY SYNDICATED COMIC STRIP

by Dani Locker, 2022



**TIME IS
(JUST ABOUT)
UP!**

**THIS
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LAST
TIME TO
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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.

Note: We call this 'Stump The Rabbi' for fun, but that's not really the point. The goal is to learn something important in an interesting way.

Stump the Rabbi



#206 Can't tune a Torah

Hi Rabbi,

I'm learning for my bar mitzvah and it's really hard. I mean, reading from a Torah without vowels is hard enough, and then I found out that I have to do it in a special tune. I'm not musical at all, so that's hard for me. And now, I just found out that the tune for the haftorah is different and I have to learn it all over again! Why is the tune necessary or important? I understand that publicly reading the Torah makes sense, but why the trop?

Thanks,

Tommy
M. Mikrah

Dear Tommy,

Mazel tov on your upcoming Bar mitzvah! It's very cool of you to read both Torah and Haftorah. Good luck! Here's some background on the tunes for Torah reading, also called te'amim (literally tastes) in Hebrew or trope (or trope) in Yiddish.

The Talmud talks about the tune for reading the Torah, which means that the customs of reading with a specific tune is even older than your great uncle Felix (I don't know your family, but if you had a great uncle Felix, he'd probably be pretty old- that's what I was thinking). Some authorities maintain that the tradition of how to read the Torah with tunes actually dates back all the way to Moses, while the final version of it is probably closer to 1000 years old.

way:

w knw tht trh scrll hs n vwls
wht y mght nt b wr f s tht thr r
ls n pncttns thnk bt ths hw cld y
pssbl knw whr sntnce strts r nds
frthrmr wtht cmms smcins hphns
nd thr pncttns ts qt dffclt t dcpnr
nthng n n lngg th tn f th trh rdng
hlp wth tt by prvdng nts tht ndct
stps cntntns nd pss we hv th blt t
bttr ndrstd wht th trh mns

Jussst in case you had trouble with the previous paragraphs, I've repeated it below with vowels and punctuations:

We know that a Torah scroll has no vowels. What you might not be aware of is that there are also no punctuations. Think about this. How could you possibly know where a sentence starts or ends? Furthermore, without commas, semicolons, hyphens and other punctuations, it's quite difficult to decipher anything in any language. The tune of the Torah reading helps with that. By providing notes that indicate stops, continuations and pauses, we have the ability to better understand what the Torah means.



Let's think about it this

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It's actually quite important to read the Torah with the proper trop, because grouping words incorrectly can change the meaning of the sentences and cause people to misunderstand the Torah (which is tough enough to understand as it is). That being said, if you make a mistake in trop, the Torah reading still works, as long as your mistake doesn't actually change any meanings. While we're at it, I want to add that there are also deep hidden meanings and hints that can be inferred from the trop. As far as I know there aren't any books that go through those widely, but there are a few interesting ones that are quoted. I'll give you a fascinating example:

God told the people that they would be in 'a strange land' for 400 years. They ended up only staying in Egypt for 210 years. How does that make sense? One answer given is that the Egyptians made their lives SO bad that they got 400 years of suffering in only half the time. The trop for the words "and they made their lives bitter" is called "kadma v'azla" which in Aramaic

can be translated as, "They went out early." How cool is it that the trop explains that these words tell us WHY they were able to go out early!

There are slightly different versions of trop in different communities (Sephardic, Ashkenazic, etc) and there are a few different kinds of trop used to set the mood for various readings. For example, the book of Eicha, which mourns the destruction of Jerusalem, uses a tune that definitely sounds sad, while the trop for Esther, read on Purim, sounds dramatic and joyful.

The main thing for you to remember is that when you get up there to read the Torah with the trop, you are continuing a really ancient tradition, and that is pretty awesome!

Have a Nageela Shabbos,

the Rabbi

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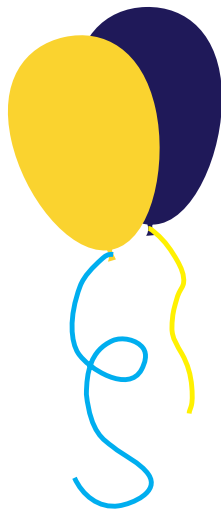
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WHY DO PEOPLE SAY 'TUNA FISH,' BUT NOT 'CHICKEN BIRD?'

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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Rey Branton
Jason Gloth
Ilan Cohen
Oren Stern
Yehonatan Eitan
Salomon Tibi
Ben Bialek



When does a regular joke become a dad joke?

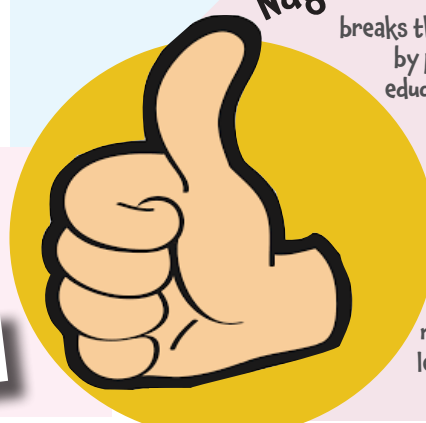
When the punch line is apparent!

OUCH! GROAN!
Why do bad jokes happen to good people? Find a better joke. Send it to dlocker@nageelawest.org

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