

SEASON 8, EPISODE 29
BEHAR 5784

HAVE A

NAGEELA SHABBOS

A Kid Friendly Torah Magazine by Nageela West Coast

DVAR TORAH

How many
commandments
are there in the Torah?

If you said 613, you'd be right!

How many of them were given
at Mount Sinai?

Ahhh, that, my friend, is a trick question.

Several of the commandments were taught to the Jewish people before they reached Mount Sinai. For example, the rules of Passover were taught while they were still in Egypt, as were the laws pertaining to establishing the months and the calendar.

Oh, so not all the laws were taught at Mount Sinai.

They were ALL taught at Sinai.

But you said...

Let me explain. There were several commandments that had been taught to the Jewish people before they reached Mount Sinai, yet even though we KNEW these concepts, they were not actually



I Saw the Sign-i
by Rabbi Dani Locker

OBLIGATIONS

until we stood at the foot of the mountain (or perhaps UNDER the mountain) and were commanded. At Sinai, God retaught all the commandments we had previously known, and made them obligations for us. So what?

Lemme ask you another question. When was the first Yeshiva established? I asked Chat GPT, and they told me the first Yeshiva was established by Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakkai after the destruction of the second Holy Temple, less than 2,000 years ago. With all due respect to Chat GPT, there was a Yeshiva waaaaaaaaay earlier. Shem, the son of Noah, and his great-grandson Ever had a Yeshiva, and at this Yeshiva Abraham studied, as did Jacob! I don't know if this Yeshiva had a basketball team or ran a Charidy campaign, but they certainly had some pretty impressive students. Here's the real question. What happened to all those students? We tend to credit Abraham as being the one to spread the belief in The One God. Indeed, only Abraham's family is counted among the early Jewish people (not even all of Abraham's family).

You can sponsor an episode of Nageela Shabbos in honor
or in memory of a loved one.
Also, you can sponsor an episode in honor of your spouse.

continued on two, too.

won from page one

So what happened to the people who studied for hundreds of years at the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever? Even if Abraham was their first student (which is unlikely) and Jacob was their last, there's still over a hundred years in between. They must have had at least a few students! Where did they go?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein explained that those students of Shem and Ever (as well as all the people who converted through Abraham) learned right and wrong in a philosophical sense. Meaning, they came to appreciate the logic of God and His guidance. It made sense to them, because, well, it makes sense! Yet they were never obligated. They were volunteers. As dedicated as they may have been to scholarship and logic, that never got passed down to their children and did not remain firm in their families because it was just what THEY

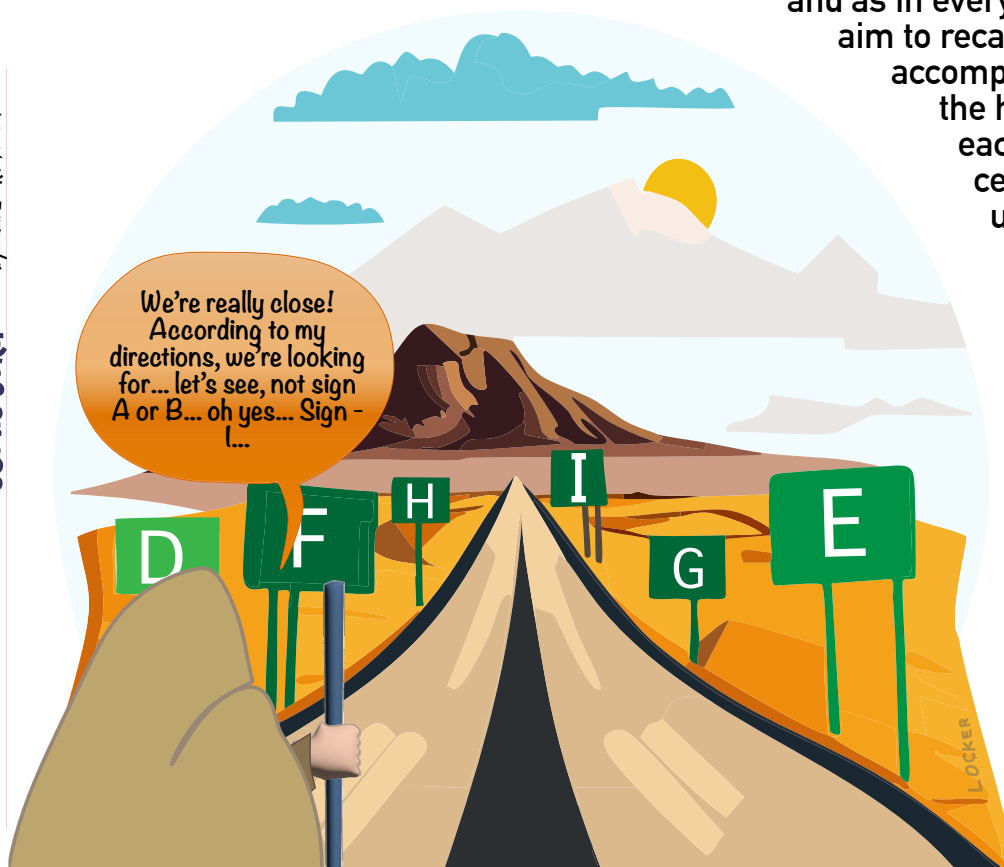
believed, and their children could easily discard or ignore it. At Mount Sinai, God challenged us, charged us, required us, obligated us in all the commandments. Even the ones we knew before, God commanded us afresh, so that we would feel a firmer responsibility.



The Talmud predicts that in the future, the nations of the world will have a

complaint to God. "Why didn't you hold the mountain over our heads like You did to the Jews?" In other words, they will recognize that just seeing the truth, though super- valuable, isn't really enough. Sometimes we need a little more commitment. Shavuos is coming, and as in every holiday, we aim to recapture the accomplishments of the historic event each time we celebrate. We can use this year to renew our firm commitment to the commandments, as we did under the mountain.

PICKLE JEWS
GALACTICALLY SYNDICATED COMIC STRIP
by Dani Locker, 2024



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32

DAYS UNTIL
CNW GIRLS
2024

54

DAYS UNTIL
CNW BOYS
2024

#169b Logging In

* This is a revised version of a STR we did about 3 years ago.



stump the rabbi

StumpTheRabbi

is a forum where kids can

ask ANY Jewish question.

Have a question? Please send it in to stump@nageelawest.org

(Most) questions here are real. Names and some wording have been changed.

Note & Disclaimer: 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.

The answers here should not be taken as halachic decisions. You should always ask a competent Rabbi personally.

Hi Rabbi,

I don't really understand why we celebrate Lag Ba'Omer. I understand that the students of Rabbi Akiva stopped dying, but isn't that because there were basically none left? He had 24,000 students, and 24,000 students died! I have also heard it's because it marks the passing of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. I'm sure he was really great, but do we have a day to celebrate the passing of Abraham or Moses?

Thanks,

Bonnie Feyer

Dear Bonfeyer,

Lag Ba'Omer is truly one of the most mystifying days on the Jewish calendar. First, a bit of background for those who might not know:

Around 1900 years ago, the great sage known as Rabbi Akiva developed a following of 24,000 students. That's a lot. It could have been the beginning of a new golden age of Jewish scholarship. Instead, they all died within a 33 day period, just after Passover. We mourn this tragic loss each year in a number of ways (for more info, see Stump The Rabbi archives Season 1 Episode 24 and season 2, episode 31). According to tradition, they stopped dying on the 33rd day, evermore called 'Lag Ba'Omer' (Lag when written in Hebrew has the number value of 33).

Traditionally, the 33rd day, Lag Ba'Omer (which is celebrated this coming Sunday) is a day of happiness. Many people make bonfires, do archery, and engage in other fun and sporty activities. It's also a day when it's quite common to have weddings. I don't recommend archery at weddings, BTW. Many people use the day to study some of the Kabbalistic teachings of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai who passed away on this day.

Your question is excellent. On Tisha B'av we mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple. We don't have a holiday the next day because the destruction



was over! That would be weird. And inappropriate. And did I mention weird?

There are a number of answers to this question, but let's work with this one: What happened after the loss of Rabbi Akiva's students? The Talmud tells us that Rabbi Akiva found 5 new students who then became the intellectual and spiritual leaders of the Jewish nation. According to the Arizal, HE FOUND THESE STUDENTS ON LAG BA'OMER! What that means, is that on the very same day Rabbi Akiva's last student died, he immediately began the search for new students. He did not waste a day!

In reality, the celebration is not simply that the death stopped. It was the beginning of a new era of Torah learning and growth. The sadness we feel for the loss of Torah leadership during the 33rd day is exactly the reason for our excitement on the day Rabbi Akiva started anew (might I point out at this point how absolutely incredible it is that this man who struggled so hard to study Torah, finally succeeded only to have all of his students die... found the strength and motivation to 'just keep swimming' and not give up!!!).

Oh, and by the way, can you guess who one of these five students was? No! Not Dumbledore. Good guess, but no. It was Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai! According to this approach, Lag Ba'Omer isn't simply the day Rabbi Shimon passed on. It's also the day that marks his very greatness- the day he became a primary student of the legendary Rabbi Akiva.

Because RSBY contributed great brightness to the literature of

CONTINUED ON 4

Torah, and particularly the hidden secrets of the universe in his book Zohar (literally, "the light"), we celebrate with bonfires. On normal years more than 100,000 converge at the place he's buried. Unfortunately this year, due to security threats, people will have to create their own light on this special day.

While I'm at it, I'll take a minute to explain the odd custom of archery on Lag Ba'Omer. BTW, you really shouldn't shoot arrows while blindfolded... you don't know what you're missing. The Torah tells us that the first rainbow appeared after the great flood (everyone was high-fiving and saying, "Great flood guys!") That's probably why it's called the great flood) as a sign that God would never again destroy all life. If you view the

rainbow like an archery bow, it's pointing AWAY from the world. Good sign, right? Kinda. The rainbow appearing is a reminder that God promised not to destroy us. That's not necessary if we're rocking and rolling the way God wants us to. During RSBY's lifetime, no rainbows appeared. When he died, they came back. Therefore the use of bows on Lag BOWmer commemorates the greatness of RSBY.

A word of advice? Never have an archery competition against communists. They're really good Marx men.

Have a Nageela Shabbos,

The Rabbi

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LOLZ

A KID WALKS INTO A RESTARAUNT AND SAYS "OUCH!"

I GUESS THEY WOULDN'T LET HIM INTO THE BAR.

THINK YOU CAN DO BETTER? YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.
SEND YOUR JOKES IN TO DLOCKER@NAGEELAMEST.ORG

**QUICK
FIX!-
BEHAR**

The Parsha talks about what happens if a Jew needs money desparately and sells his property. His relatives have the opportunity to jump in and bail him out, by buying it back. The Torah also discusses what happens if he has no relatives. Rashi asks: Are there any Jews who have NO relatives? Of course he does. The Torah must simply mean his relatives are poor too.

This is amazing, because there are certainly Jews with no close relatives. What happens if your closest relative is a great- great- nephew 7 times removed? It doesn't matter. We are people who help out our family. No Jew is without family, even if it's distant.

QF

Parshas Behar We Play Fallow the Leader

- While at Mount Sinai, God instructs Moses regarding the laws of Shemitah, the sabbatical year
- Similar to the counting of the Omer which counts 7 weeks of 7 days, totaling 49, we also count 7 groups of 7 years, totaling 49
- Every seventh year is called Shemitah. During this year, field may not be plowed, planted, harvested or worked in any way
- The produce of these sabbatical years are left for the poor, yet the owners may take the needs of their families and animals
- After seven such cycles are observed, the next year (the 50th) is celebrated as a Jubilee year. Or should we call it Jewbilee?
- A shofar is sounded and the fields are again left fallow
- When the Jewish people entered Israel during the time of Joshua, the land was divided based on tribes and families. The land received by a family was not to be permanently sold to another. Each Jubilee year, each family would be able to return to their ancestral land. Purchase prices had to be set accordingly, knowing that buying land was really a rental, and not a permanent sale. I call this process YOLO (Your Original Land Only)
- It is forbidden to overcharge for a product
- God promises us that keeping the laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years will come with a blessing so that there will be enough food
- If someone sells a house within a walled city, then there is a window for the owner or his family to buy back that house, but if they don't within a year, it becomes a permanent sale
- The Levites were given cities to live in, and they could always buy back any homes they sold (for a fair price). Then I guess the buyer would have to leave-ite
- We are forbidden to collect interest from another Jew who borrows money from us, or to pay interest voluntarily. That's interesting
- If a Jew becomes so poor that he sells himself into slavery to someone who isn't Jewish, it's a mitzvah to try to buy him back
- We are told not to treat our workers like slaves
- It is forbidden to bow, even to God, while kneeling on stone. Besides, it'll give you bad knees

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

The number 50 is mentioned in this week's Torah portion regarding the Jubilee year. Can you find 7 other times the Torah actually mentions the number 50? Take your time!

Answer is on page 6.
DON'T CHEAT!

THIS IS A TENTATIVE PROGRAM IN FORMATION. IF YOU HAVE AN 8-11 GRADER INTERESTED, PLEASE EMAIL [DLOCKER@NAGEELAWEST.ORG](mailto:dlocker@nageelawest.org) ASAP



CHILLY CHILE

SUMMER SKI & SNOWBOARD CAMP
AT VALLE NEVADO SKI RESORT IN CHILE - MID AUGUST

DEEP DEEP THOUGHTS

Is it even possible for a snake to lose a staring contest?

ANSWER OF THE WEEK

QUESTION ON PAGE 5

Yo, whatcha lookin at?
You gotta think first!

- I've got 8 for you:
1. God instructs Noah to build an ark with a width of 50 cubits (Genesis 6:15).
 2. Abraham beseeches God to save the city of Sodom if the city contains 50 righteous people (Genesis 18:24).
 3. Moses (at his father-in-law's request) appoints judges over every 50 people (Exodus 18:21,25).
 4. 50 loops and hooks connect the different sets of the coverings placed on top of the Tabernacle (Exodus 26:5-6,10-11).
 5. The width of the Tabernacle courtyard is 50 cubits (Exodus 27:18).
 6. The Levites are counted and designated for work in the Tabernacle from ages 30 until 50 (Numbers 4:3).
 7. 2 percent (literally, one out of fifty) of the war spoils are donated to the Levites (Numbers 31:30).
 8. A man who violates a young maiden must pay 50 silver coins as reparation (Deut. 22:29).



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HBD

Happy Birthday wishes to the following Nageela family members:

Shimshon Levin
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Andrew Adler
Rey Branton

Jason Gloth
Ilan Cohen
Oren Stern
Adina Bukshpun
Micah Schneider
Yehonatan Eitan



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