

SEASON 8, EPISODE 31
SHAVUOS 5784

nageela shavuos

DVAR
TORAH

A Long Walk
by Rabbi Dani Locker

“Are we
theeeeeere yet?”

If I was a Jew traveling between Egypt and Mount Sinai, I'm pretty sure I would have been asking that question every six and a half minutes (that, by the way, is the scientifically accepted average time between “are we there yet”s for children internationally on car rides of any length; a 27 second decrease from just a decade ago). Well, I mapped directions from the Great Pyramid of Giza to Mount Sinai, and it should only take about 4 days walking. Add in some sleeping time, and slow down the pace because a nation moves slowly, and still it should not have taken more than 10 days or so. Yet the Torah was given fully seven weeks after the Jews left Egypt. Why? What was the delay?

It wasn't traffic (probably). We weren't waiting for the product to get out of Beta testing, or for the venue to have a date open. We could have left Egypt and gotten the Torah immediately. But we didn't. Why not? What was God waiting for?

Clearly, if God was ready, the Torah was ready and the mountain was ready, there's only one possibility left. WE weren't ready. On the surface it's easy to understand. When our ancestors stumbled out of Egypt they had a lot of growing to do. They had not succeeded in maintaining a high level of holiness. They were down in the 49th sub-basement of morality. They had stooped to worshiping idols, eating sweet pickles, and other nefarious acts. So maybe the Jewish people were not ready to get the Torah. Maybe they had to improve in their...

Wait a second.

If you want to improve yourself, what tool should you use? If you're looking to become a better person, what do we believe is the most effective way to get there? Torah! Studying Torah, learning lessons from Torah, performing the commandments of the Torah. These are the training grounds we use to get awesomer. So isn't it a little weird, maybe even counterintuitive to delay giving the Torah because we needed to improve? It's like saying, “You can't get medicine because you're sick.” Why would God

*You can sponsor an episode of Nageela Shabbos in honor or in memory of a loved one.
Also, yuo cna spnosor an espisode in honr of gud speeling.*

continued on two, too.

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delay the giving of the Torah to wait for the Jews to be worthy, if the Torah is meant to help them become worthy?

The truth is that the Jewish people had the Torah long before they got the Torah. As we've mentioned in previous episodes, our forefathers had and kept Torah. While in Egypt, the Jews had the Torah. Many of them kept Shabbos, and the tribe of Levi studied and taught Torah since they were exempt from labor detail. As they were about to leave Egypt, God presented a number of commandments to the nation, specifically about the Jewish calendar and Passover. In the desert, we received some more commandments directly. Additionally, through eating the manna and drinking from the divine water fountain (also known as the well of Miriam), we developed our character traits, especially trusting in God. We had the tools to improve. So if we already had the Torah and

stuff, why then did God wait?

We were missing something. Yes we were already learning Torah, and it was helping us improve daily. Yes we already had many mitzvos which were guiding us to become better people. Yes we already had a meaningful relationship with God, had eaten His food and drunk from His well. But we weren't married yet. The Sinai experience was about making our connection to God 'official.' He loved us already- that's why we were miraculously rescued from Egypt. Yet we were not yet formally committed to be His nation. That moment came at Mount Sinai when we declared "Naaseh V'nishma- We will do and we will listen!" That moment came when God spoke openly to our entire nation, binding us to Him forever. That moment came at our chuppah- Mount Sinai acting as the wedding canopy as we entered a forever promise.

Shavuos marks not only the wonderful date when we received the entirety of the Torah. It is the date when our relationship with God became whole and eternal. The date we said "no backsies." So yes, Shavuos is about the Torah, but it's also about so much more. It's about us reaching the level when we were ready. And it's about our very real and special connection that we have with God both through the Torah and in order to receive Torah.



MAZAL TOV!!!

TO LONG TIME NAGEELA HEAD STAFF
RABBI YEHUDA LEITER
AND
RABBI YEHUDA PALGON
UPON RECEIVING THEIR ADVANCED SEMICHA
(RABBINICAL ORDINATION)

LOLZ

**WHY DIDN'T THE ANCIENT GREEKS
CELEBRATE SHAVUOS?**

**THEY NEVER STOPPED COUNTING THE
HOMER**

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

14

**DAYS UNTIL
CNW GIRLS
2024**

36

**DAYS UNTIL
CNW BOYS
2024**



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.

#263 Ignorance is Not Bliss

stump the rabbi

Hi Rabbi,

I keep learning stuff about the mitzvahs and it's a little overwhelming. I'm not sure I'll be able to keep them all, and now I'm feeling like I would have been better off not knowing. Maybe ignorance is bliss. Is there a concept that it's better not to know than to know and fail?

Thanks,

Inga Rant

Dear Inga,

I think you're in the same boat as many other people. You're right about part of it. We have a concept that it's better for a person to violate the Torah out of ignorance than to violate it out of knowledge. "Better to be unintentional than intentional." It's kind of logical. Imagine if you know your friend is annoyed by a certain thing you do. Then it's pretty mean to do that thing, right? If you don't know and you annoy them it's not quite as nasty. The same thing is true when it comes to God's commandments. If you know something is wrong, then it's a pretty serious betrayal. If you're clueless and you violate something, it's not great, but it doesn't have the same bite. When does this apply?

Manny was still limping. It was the ankle. He was pretty sure it was the ankle. It was frustrating. Attempting to run his first ever marathon, Manny had stepped hard in a pothole and twisted the ankle good. He wrapped the ankle in layers of bandages and then decided to continue the race. "There are a lot more ditches on this part of the route," someone told him. "If you trip again, you can do more damage to your ankle. Or worse, you can break your face or your spleen!"

"Don't worry," Manny replied, grinning. "I have a plan!" Manny tore off a bit of loose bandage from around the ankle and wrapped it around his head, covering his eyes. "Like this, I won't be able to see any holes in the ground, so I don't have to worry about them!"



I hope you can figure out what's wrong with Manny's logic. Intentional ignorance does not protect you from potholes. The Mishna says (Pirkei Avos) that if we mess up because we didn't bother to learn, that counts as a purposeful violation, not an accidental one. We have to learn as much as we can so we can do our best. If we purposely don't learn, that does not help us, and it's just as uncool as doing something we know is wrong. So when do we apply the rule of "Better to be unintentional than intentional?"

This rule is for dealing with other people. Let's say you see somebody else doing something they should not. What will happen if you tell them what they're doing wrong? If you think there's a good chance they'll listen to you, then you should definitely tell them. "Hey, Julia, please stop pouring Gorilla glue on Jack's head!" Hopefully Julia will listen and you'll save Jack from a really, really bad hair day. However, what if you think the person won't listen to you. For example, you keep Shabbos, and you see your friend who doesn't keep Shabbos using his phone. What should you do? If you tell him to stop using his phone, he's not gonna listen to you. In that case it's better to do nothing. Let him be unintentionally using his phone then for you to tell him and then he's like, "I don't care about God!"

Now there are some exceptions to the rule (for example this may only apply to rabbinic rules and not to biblical ones) so as always, don't take what is written here as a halachic ruling. This is just info to help you understand the concepts and give you food for thought.

Have a Nageela Shabbos,

The Rabbi

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Tuesday, June 18th

Girls: 6pm Pacific
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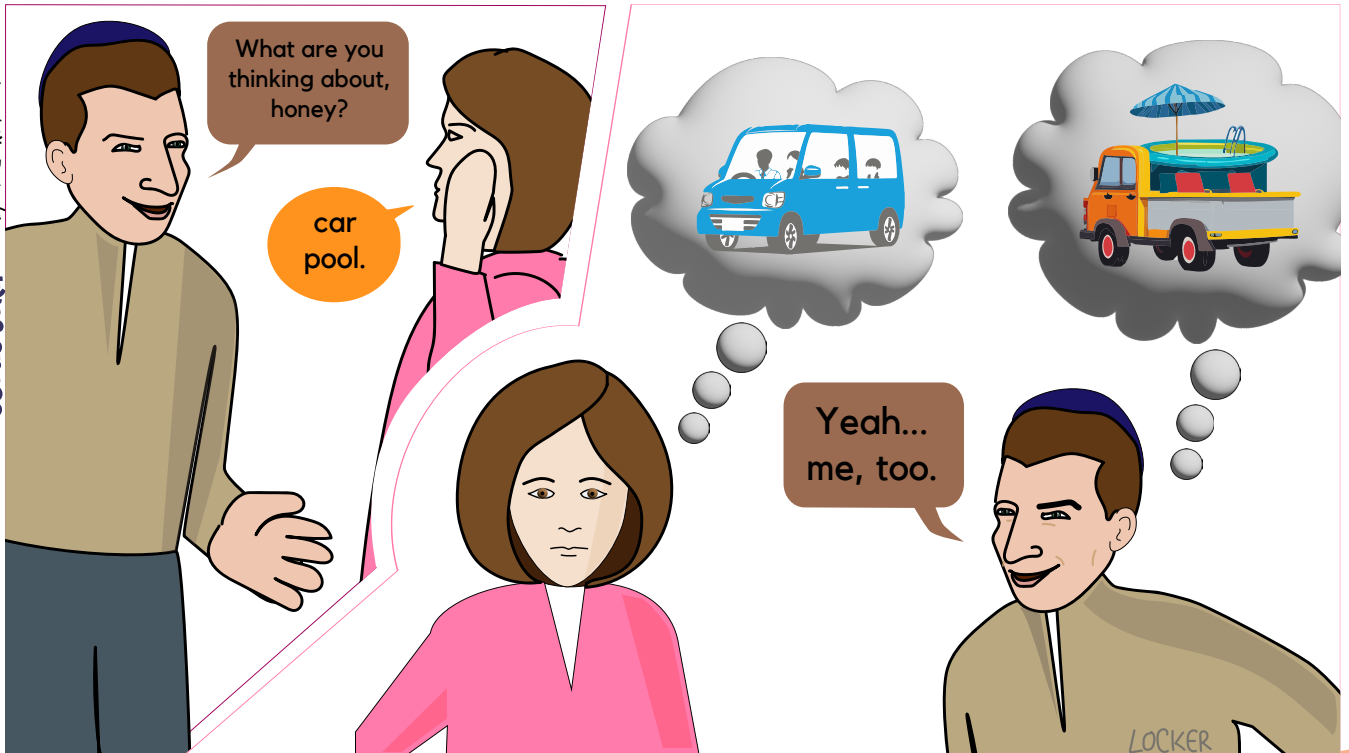
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Continuing next week

PICKLE JEWS
 GALACTICALLY SYNDICATED COMIC STRIP
 by Dani Locker, 2024



Partial Partia- Megillah of Ruth

On the holiday of Shavuot, the Book, or Megillah of Ruth is read. This is a section of Kesuvim- the Holy Writings and the time period is during the early days of the Jews in the Land of Israel. This is after Joshua brought the Jewish people into Israel, but before the period of the Kings (as we'll see, King David, one of the earliest Kings, is Ruth's great- grandson).

There are a number of reasons given for reading this particular book on Shavuot:

1. It's about accepting the Torah. Not a national acceptance of the Torah, but Ruth is the example of a personal acceptance of the Torah.
2. It takes place at the time of the harvest.
3. Shavuot is linked with King David, who passed away on this day. Ruth is essentially King David's origin story (or part of it at least)

Ruth- A foreigner becomes royalty

- A wealthy man named Elimelech brings his family to Moab in order to avoid a hunger in the land of Israel. Apparently, Moab was famous for their burritos
- While there, his two sons, Machlon and Kilgion marry local girls, and both die
- Elimelech dies as well, leaving his widow Naomi together with her daughters- in- law, named Ruth and Orpah
- The hunger in Israel has ended, so Naomi decides to return. She says goodbye to Ruth and Orpah
- Orpah goes home but Ruth is tenacious. She refuses to leave her Mother- in- law, and commits herself to become Jewish and follow Naomi no matter what
- The dialogue between Ruth and Naomi have become part of how the Talmud sets the standards for future conversions
- They return to Bethlehem (literally, house of bread) during the harvest season. They are penniless (but since people there probably used shekels, I guess even the rich people were technically penniless) and Ruth supports them by gathering leftovers in the fields of the wealthy
- Ruth discovers the field of Boaz, who is a relative of Elimelech and is extremely generous with them
- Boaz, impressed with Ruth, and having heard of her kindness to Naomi tells her to stay with his staff and that it's not necessary for her to go anywhere else
- Naomi sees this as a sign and convinces Ruth to ask Boaz to marry her, as a close living relative to her deceased husband
- Ruth, knowing Boaz would be sleeping in the fields that night to work with the harvest, sneaks into his room and asks Boaz to step in for his deceased relative
- Boaz agrees, but tells her he must first obtain permission from a closer relative
- Boaz purchases one of Elimelech's fields in the presence of this close relative, symbolically taking responsibility for Ruth's future as well
- Ruth and Boaz have a child named Oved, who is a great source of comfort to Naomi, who had lost her own children
- Oved's son is Jesse (Yishai) and his son is David

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Who authored Tehillim- the Book of Psalms?

Answer is on page 6.

DON'T CHEAT!

DEEP DEEP THOUGHTS

With all due respect to Skittles, the rainbow probaby tastes like water.

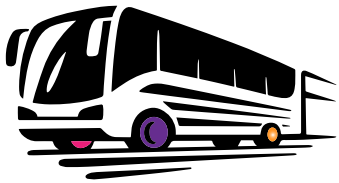
ANSWER OF THE WEEK

QUESTION ON PAGE 5

Yo, whatcha lookin at?
You gotta think first!

This is a trick question. Most people would answer King David, but that's an incomplete answer. King David compiled Tehillim, and he wrote much of it, yet he included psalms written by 10 other psalmists: Adam, Malkitzedek, Abraham (mentioned in Tehillim as Eisan HaEzrachil), Moses, Heyman, Vedusun, Asaf and the three sons of Korah.

Some say the Heyman was actually Moses, and include Solomon as the tenth author.



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Tiffani Minkowsky
Edon Freiner
Yoni Ghalili
Brandon Zucker
Lielle Azouz

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