

Shoftim 5782
September 2nd 2022

NAGEELA SHABBOS

Have-a

SEASON 6

EPISODE 41

a kid friendly publication of Nageela West Coast Joyfully Jewish Experiences



Just a Little Rinse

by Rabbi Dani Locker

Do you wash the dishes before putting them in the dishwasher? This apparently is a major disagreement around the world. It's up there with the other great debates of Batman or Superman, flip flops or slides, iPhone vs. Android, is a hot dog a sandwich, is cereal just cold soup, and so many more life changing, important discussions.

Let's shift topics for a bit. Did you hear the shofar this week? If you're not a regular at your synagogues weekday services, you might be surprised at that question. Wait, did I miss Rosh Hashana or something? No, it's still safely three weeks away, but I (and many others) did hear the shofar being blown several times this week. Ya see, we've entered the Jewish month called Ellul, which is the month that comes right before the High Holidays. In a way, the

whole month of Ellul IS part of the high holidays. We blow the shofar every day (except Shabbat) during Ellul to help prepare us for a successful Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

But why? We're going to have an intense and hopefully awesome Rosh Hashana. We're going to pray and plan for a good year. We're going to do teshuva, regretting our wrong decisions and committing to do better. Why do we need a whole month in advance?

It's the pre-wash in the dishwasher. Dishwashers work pretty well. In fact, dishwasher companies will tell you (it's on their websites) that it's best not to do a pre-wash normally. But everyone agrees that if you've left a dirty dish for too long and the leftover food has

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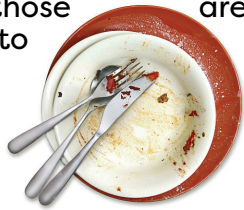
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hardened and formed a layer of tough grime, you need to soak that stuff. In a whole year of life, we have plenty of opportunities to mess up. Sometimes we've built up a good amount of hardened residue. Maybe we've been so upset at a friend that we've forgotten about things we've said to them a few months ago. Perhaps, life has been so hectic that it completely slipped our mind that we wanted to improve our prayers or our honesty or our schoolwork. The month of Ellul gives us extra time to wash away some of the bits of dirt that may have stuck. Once those are gone, we can go into the main cleaning cycle (the actual high holidays) and accomplish much more.



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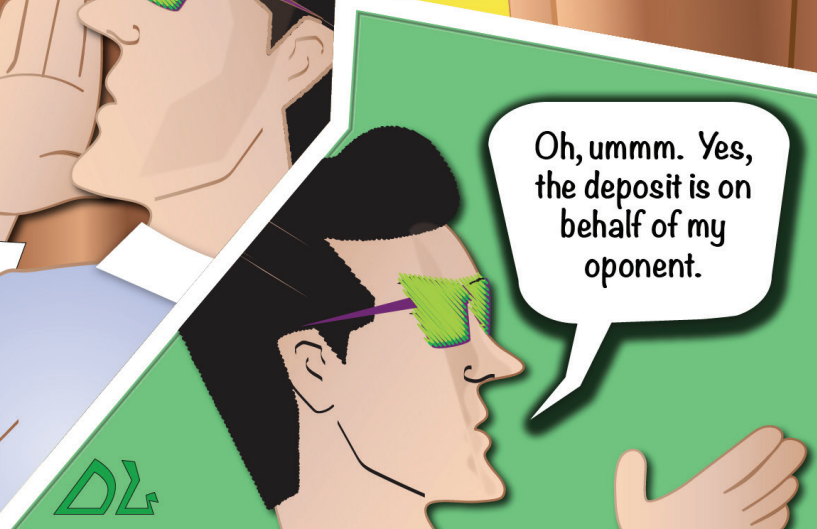
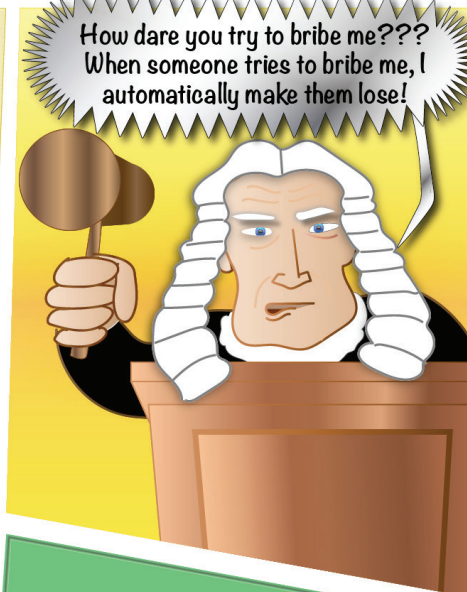
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IF YOUR TONGUE GOT STUCK IN A MOUSE TRAP, YOU'D PROBABLY START PRONOUNCING IT 'MOUTH TRAP' WHICH ISN'T WRONG.

PICKLE JEWS

GALACTICALLY SYNDICATED COMIC STRIP
by Dani Locker, 2022



QUICK FIX

The Torah tells us not to take bribes, because bribery can twist even the most careful and honest judge.

The Torah's lesson isn't just for people who are actual judges. We are constantly making judgements about how to act, who to trust, when to say or not say something. If we stand to gain something by making a certain decision, that is bribery, and we might subconsciously make a poor decision because we think we'll get something out of it.

The only way for us to make honest decisions is to really be sure we're not doing it for the gain, and it's even better if we ask someone else for advice, because they have nothing to gain and can be impartial.

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



#211 Tall and Moody

Hi Rabbi,

I had an amazing time at camp, and Shabbos was actually my favorite part! When you made kiddush in the dining room at the start of each Shabbos meal, we made an announcement that "some people have the custom to stand for kiddush and some people have the custom to sit for kiddush." Is there a reason for these different customs? If my family doesn't have a custom, what should I do?

Thanks,
Omid Yoshev

Dear Omid,

I know this is an old joke, but here goes anyway: A new rabbi starts his first week on the job at a synagogue. They get to one part of the prayers and a bunch of people stand up, while others stay seated. The standers start to get upset at those who are seated, and those who are in their seats are equally upset at the ones who are standing. The rabbi decides he needs to get down to the bottom of the issue and find out what the synagogue's tradition actually is.

He finds out that the oldest living member of the shul, a 100 year old man, lives in a nearby retirement home. He goes for a visit.

"Is the custom to stand for this part of the prayers?" the rabbi asks. "No." replies Mr. Alter.

"Oh, so the custom is to sit?" the rabbi concludes. "No." Mr.

Alter repeats.

"Wait, so if the custom isn't to stand and isn't to sit, then what is the custom?"

"The custom is to fight about it."

Perhaps another week we'll discuss why so many parts of Jewish practice are left up to custom, and why they're so important. But for now, let's just discuss this issue of standing or sitting for Kiddush. There are two main categories of blessings (there are really 4 categories, and for more on that, take a look at season 3, episode 32, but they can be simplified to 2 main groups): Blessings for enjoyment and blessings for commandments. Whenever we enjoy something with our senses, like food or good smells, we bless God for those pleasures. We're familiar with the blessings we say before and after eating food. We also thank God for the beautiful system He's set up that gives us guidance in life through the



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commandments. Many, many commandments therefore, have a blessing that comes along. For example, you might be familiar with the blessings we make for lighting Chanukah candles or hearing the shofar, for putting on tefillin or for reading from the Torah in public.

Now which category does kiddush fall into?

I believe now is the time to fight about it.

Seriously though. On one hand kiddush IS a mitzvah, and it's essentially the blessing on the commandment of celebrating Shabbat. On the other hand, it's also a blessing on food (specifically the wine or grape juice that is normally used) and it's the intro to the meal. The kiddush for Friday night has an additional blessing aside from the wine blessing, but the Shabbat morning kiddush only has the one blessing.

This question has been debated for a loooong time.

The majority opinion among the books of Jewish law is that it's better to sit for kiddush (with the possible exception of the first paragraph of the night kiddush), because it's connected to your meal, and also because if a group of people are all hearing kiddush together, then sitting seems more like they're 'joining together.' Yet many great people have

advocated for standing, mostly for deep mystical reasons, and also because part of kiddush's purpose is to testify to God's creation- and witnesses always testify standing. There's also a third opinion, that one should stand for the first paragraph of Kiddush and sit for the rest. So what to do?

Since all opinions are valid, if you have a family custom you should follow it. If you don't have a family custom, then it seems the best thing is to follow the standard halacha which is to sit.

Me? I alternate squatting, twirling and doing somersaults while balancing the Kiddush cup on my elbow.

Have a Nageela Shabbos,

the Rabbi

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What do British sea monsters eat?

Fish and ships

OUCH! GROAN!
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