

Rabbi's With Reasons

In this scene Grandpa is Hank Greenberg and he is explaining to Aaron how fans of baseball, both Jews and gentiles, were trying to find a reason why he could play on Rosh Hashanah.

GRANDPA: Sure did! I was the only Jew on the team. When September 1934 came around, I was playing my best ball. But Rosh Hashanah arrived, and I thought I might have to skip the game. They were desperate for a reason so I could play that day.

A SLIDE IS SHOWN: "RABBIS WITH REASONS.
800 R-E-A-S-O-N-S (732-7667).
"HAVE WE GOT A REASON FOR JEW!"

GRANDPA PUTS ON A BEARD AND YARMULKE AND OFFERS THE SAME TO AARON.

AARON RELUCTANTLY PUTS ON THE BEARD. THEY BECOME RABBIS. A PHONE RINGS.

GRANDPA: Ah, Yaakov. You can always tell the holidays are here when the calls start.

AARON: It's the tenth one this morning!

GRANDPA PICKS UP THE PHONE.

GRANDPA: Rabbis with Reasons, Rabbi Yaakov... Yes, people give us impossible situations and we give you reasons why you can or cannot skip holiday services. No, Mr. Gordon, missing your weekly foursome is not an impossible situation. There is no mention in the Talmud that it's okay to miss synagogue on Rosh Hashanah because you're playing golf. I'm sorry you have to cancel your foursome. Yes, mark your calendar next year. Shana Tovah.

PHONE RINGS. AARON ANSWERS.

AARON: Rabbis with Reasons, Rabbi Benjamin. Oh, you HAVE a reason... (Soto voce to

GRANDPA: It's Mrs. Feinstein again...

GRANDPA: Oy.

AARON: Mmm-hmm. For the third time, we do not have a reason why you should have better seats for the high holidays this year, Mrs. Feinstein. I will beseech the seating committee on your behalf. La Shana Tovah.

HE HANGS UP. THE PHONE RINGS AGAIN. GRANDPA ANSWERS.

GRANDPA: Rabbis with Reasons, Rabbi Yaakov. Baseball? We've never gotten the question before. Jews don't play baseball. Hank Greenberg? Mr. Hebrew Hammer? This is an honor! (Soto voce to AARON) It's the Hebrew Hammer! (Back to the phone) Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. We'd love to see you in shul, of course. But... Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Alright. Yes, I understand. We'll look into it and let you know as soon as we can. La Shana Tovah to you too.

AARON: What does Hank Greenberg need a reason for?

GRANDPA: He says the Tigers play on Friday.

AARON: On Rosh Hashanah, I know. Against the Red Sox.

GRANDPA: He's having a hard time deciding whether to pray or play. Under normal circumstances...

AARON: This is not normal Yaakov, you putz! Detroit in contention for the pennant! 25 Years since we went to the series! If they're going to hold off the Yankees, they have to beat the Sox. But the way they've been hitting lately-

GRANDPA: You're right. They need Greenberg. He's batting 339. He's leading the league in doubles and extra base hits.

AARON: And he only just got here!

GRANDPA: Everyone wants him to play...

AARON: Most of all his gentile fans... If he fulfills his duty to them, then he lets us down, his biggest fans. What sort of example would that set for the Jewish community?

GRANDPA: He's more worried about letting down his mother. He said he promised he wouldn't play on High Holy Days.

AARON: Well that settles it.

GRANDPA: Don't give in so easily. There is always hope. We must study the scriptures.

AARON: Yes... It's in the hands of the sages.

A SLIDE:
TWO DAYS LATER.

AARON: How are your readings coming, Yaakov?

GRANDPA: Slowly. Finding a baseball reference in the Talmud is like finding a kosher Chinese restaurant in Detroit.

AARON: Time is of the essence. They play in two days!

GRANDPA: If these newspaper men would stop bothering me already!
PHONE RINGS. GRANDPA PICKS UP.

GRANDPA: (Into phone) I don't know what Greenberg has decided. No, we have not advised him yet. But we like to see all of our congregation in shul for the Holy Days. No, I don't know when. Yes, of course I care whether Detroit has a shot at the pennant this year!

HE SLAMS DOWN THE PHONE.

AARON: Hey, I think I found something... This gemara mentions children playing in the streets of Jerusalem on holidays. [HE STARTS TO DANCE IN CELEBRATION]

GRANDPA: Show me this.

AARON POINTS OUT THE ENTRY IN THE TALMUD.

GRANDPA: You putz, these are Roman children playing!

AARON: How about this... I think we can safely rule that under the following conditions, Hank Greenberg can play on Rosh Hashanah. Number One: Orthodox Jews may not buy tickets for the game. Number two, no smoking can be allowed in the stadium. And number three: all the food served in the ballpark must be kosher.

GRANDPA: Brilliant, Benjamin!

AARON: Now who's the putz?

GRANDPA: Give me a minute while I call Tiger Stadium and tell them we have to replace all their trife hotdogs with Hebrew Nationals. And then I'll call my Bubbe and tell her we need chicken soup for 10,000.

THE PHONE RINGS. AARON ANSWERS.

AARON: (into the phone) I don't know what he's decided. And no, we have not advised him yet. Yes, I know the game is only two days away...

GRANDPA: I think I've found something.

AARON: (into phone) I can't help your deadline. Goodbye.

HE SLAMS DOWN THE PHONE.

GRANDPA: It says here that Rosh Hashanah is a joyful and festive holiday. Can't we rule that such a holiday allows for play?

AARON: I suppose we could. But we're not telling him to play.

GRANDPA: No, we're telling him it's okay to play. He must make the decision himself.

AARON: Now that God has hit a double for us, I figured out how to make it a home run.

GRANDPA: This I want to hear.

AARON: Greenberg comes to shul in the morning and he plays the game in the afternoon!

GRANDPA: Mazel tov! Spin the dreidel, Rabbi. First Gimel calls Greenberg.

AARON: Shin calls the papers!

THEY FREEZE. NEWSPAPERS FLY ON THE SCREEN WITH HEADLINES:

"TALMUD CLEARS GREENBERG FOR HOLIDAY PLAY"

"HAPPY NEW YEAR MR. GREENBERG"

"DETROIT DEFEATS RED SOX"

HANK AND AARON BECOME THEMSELVES AGAIN.