

*Going Rogue (at Hebrew School)*

I mean, really, what's the difference between the two? Both served as the right-hand man to a crummy emperor, both wielded incredible power, both used that power to master evil, and both tortured anyone who didn't agree with their beliefs.

HST: Interesting point, but ...

Me: And both had gnarly mangled faces behind their creepy masks and used red lightsabers.

HST: (*Blank stare.*)

See what I mean? Star Wars and Hebrew school. It's like mouth wash, hot sauce, and tuna fish liquid. People seem to find the mixture offensive.

Same thing with science and Hebrew school.

Here's the thing: Grown-ups are always telling kids how important school is, how we need to pay attention and work hard in school. Okay. Fine. I get it. I pay attention. I work hard. I don't *love* school, but it's better than being a moisture farmer on Tatooine, like Luke Skywalker was when he was my age.

My favorite subject in school is, obviously, science. (I've been told recess is not a subject, and in PE we're learning ballroom dance which all the mothers think is fabulous but which I argue is not a sport, and therefore PE is no longer my other favorite subject.) Although my science teacher won't let us explode things ("not appropriate," she tells me), we *have* learned some pretty amazing stuff in science.

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The Big Bang. One word: Whoa.

Dinosaurs. Bring it. Especially the dilophosaurus, which would make an excellent Star Wars creature.

Evolution. Example: My parents say I eat like a Neanderthal. I say better than a *Homo heidelbergensis*.

All good stuff, right?

But then I go to Hebrew school and it's like I'm in some weird parallel universe where none of the things I'm really into even exist.

My HST tells us that God created the universe in six days.

"What about the Big Bang?" I ask.

She smiles a little nervously and says, "Well, that's also true."

"Also true?" I ask. "How?"

She closes her eyes and rubs her forehead like she suddenly got a headache. "Honey, that's a conversation for another time, okay?"

That "another time" hasn't come yet.

"Were there dinosaurs on Noah's Ark?"

"Ummm." She scrunches up her nose and taps her chin.

"I don't believe so," she says.

"Did Adam and Eve also evolve from early primates?" I ask.

"Ooh, interesting question. But how about we put that one on the back burner for now?"

I'm afraid everything on the back burner is going to burn. And, to make it all worse, not only do I have to go to *extra*

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school twice a week to learn things that go totally against what I'm into, I'll never be able to convince my parents to let me play in the East Bay Football League because practice is on Tuesdays at 4:00 and games are played on Sunday mornings—the exact and precise days and times of Hebrew school.

Coincidence?

I think not.

I believe my Hebrew school teachers have devised a master plan to ruin my life.

Over the years, I've tried just about everything to get out of Hebrew school.

Pretending to be sick.

Sneaking out the back door of the synagogue and hiding in the creepy alley. The mangy mice and I had a pretty intense stare down. Eventually, they won and I had to sneak back in.

I even signed up to be in the spelling club at my regular school just because their meetings conflicted perfectly with Hebrew school. But my parents didn't fall for it. "Aren't you the kid who argued that learning how to spell has been a waste of time ever since the invention of spell check on computers?" they reminded me.

"Why do I even have to go to Hebrew school?"

I've only asked this question about a million times.

And they've given me about a million answers. Only problem is, none of their answers add up. Here is a sample of their attempts: