



## EXTREME POTENTIAL

Dear Parents,

*Erev Shabbos Parashas Terumah Parashas Zachor 5781*

We all strive mightily to bring forth our children's potential. It's a lot easier said than done. We get caught up in the stresses of the mundane day-to-day responsibilities and are not always able to take a broader view of where our children are holding and how they are progressing in their development. We also experience the frustration of our children disappointing us in small and perhaps not so small ways, and we easily lose focus on the hopes and dreams we held in our hearts when they were new to this world.

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Perhaps a profound insight from this week's *Parsha* can be useful in helping us recalibrate and reawaken a positive outlook on what our children can become. The *Medrash* tells us (*Shemos Rabba* 33:8) that when *Hashem* spoke to *Moshe Rabbeinu* about constructing the *Mishkan*, *Moshe* questioned how it was possible for the Jewish People to create a structure that could contain the *Shechina*, the Divine Presence. The nature of what *Klal Yisrael* was being tasked with seemed to be, in *Moshe Rabbeinu's* eyes, beyond human ability. The *Medrash* goes on to give *Hashem's* response.

*Hashem's* reply is that not only is *Klal Yisrael* as a whole able to build a *Mishkan*, even one individual Jew has the capability of achieving this. This can be seen from the *Pasuk* that says (*Shemos* 25:2) “...from every person whose heart motivates him...” The emphasis is on each individual, which is *Hashem's* way of communicating that any individual Jew has the capability to construct the *Mishkan* and devise a way for a physical structure to be infused with sufficient *Kedusha*, sanctity, to be able to contain the *Shechina*.

This is puzzling. *Moshe Rabbeinu*, who was very attuned to the capabilities of every single Jew, and who considered the presence of the many great people that *Klal Yisrael* was blessed with at that time, including *Tzadikim* and *Talmidei Chachomim*, still could not fathom how even the collective wisdom, piety and devotion of all Jews together could accomplish the task. *Hashem* corrects his

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estimation of the potential of the Jewish people to the extent that even one individual Jew could accomplish what *Moshe* thought impossible for the entirety of the Jewish people.

This teaches us that only *Hashem* knows how vast, deep and great is the potential of every human being. It is beyond the comprehension of even *Moshe Rabbeinu*, but it is the reality. *Hashem* has blessed every person with a potential that is limitless.

When a parent absorbs this reality, it should galvanize even greater effort to find ways to help each child succeed. If a parent feels his child might be the next Albert Einstein, he'll put in untold effort to maximize his child's academic success. When a parent believes his child could become the next star quarterback in the NFL, he'll spare no effort to train and encourage endless practice. And, *L'Havdil*, if a person sees his child as the next *Chofetz Chaim*, he'll make absolutely certain to provide the environment, appropriate friends and the most outstanding *Rebbeim*, to learn with him.

“That is because, there is no limit to what a human can accomplish.”

This *Medrash* is teaching us the secret of every child's potential and is letting us know that we should be providing world class training for our budding all-star. Parents have the responsibility to uncover each child's strengths and with encouragement and not pressure, work to develop them as if there is no limit to how much the child can become. That is because, there is no limit to what a human can accomplish.

Best wishes for a wonderful Shabbos and for drawing forth the limitless potential in each child.

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