



LISTEN TO YOUR DREAMS

Dear Parents,

Erev Shabbos Parashas Vayakheil, Shabbos Shekalim 5782

One of the wonders of the construction of the *Mishkan*, that the Torah continues to discuss in this week's *Parsha*, is the fact the Jewish people possessed the skills to create such a magnificent and sophisticated structure along with unique and beautiful vessels. The *Malbim* (*Shemos 36:2*) points out that the craftsmanship needed for the *Mishkan* was not anything they had experience with from their labors in Egypt. How did they know what to do, and who knew which person was capable of the task? ***"The Malbim points out that the craftsmanship needed for the Mishkan was not anything they had experience with..."***

The *pasuk* tells us (*36:2*) *Moshe summoned Bezalel, Oholiav, and every wise-hearted man whose heart Hashem endowed with wisdom, everyone whose heart inspired him, to approach the work, to do it.* To the first question above, the *Malbim* writes that *Hashem* infused them with the skills, with *Bezalel* as an intermediary. The second question has great relevance to all people, in all times.

The *pasuk* says that *"everyone whose heart inspired him"* should step forward to volunteer to perform the intricate tasks involved. Even if *Hashem* was implanting special wisdom in the hearts of certain select people to enable them to perform the work, how did each of those people know that he was one of the ones who was receiving this great gift from *Hashem*?

The *Malbim* explains that one who had a heartfelt desire to assist in the work and had a certain feeling that he might be capable, this was the sign that *Hashem* had bestowed upon him the special wisdom to participate in the construction of the *Mishkan*. It was the burning desire to glorify *Hashem* and bring honor to the Jewish People, more than any skill, experience or training that made them successful in their work.

"It was the burning desire to glorify Hashem and bring honor to the Jewish People ... that made them successful in their work."

Clearly, the construction of the *Mishkan* was achieved through miraculous means and the skills that were spontaneously implanted in the hands of untrained workmen was not a natural occurrence. Nevertheless, the prerequisite for these miraculous occurrences are consistent with our 'natural' life. The ability to achieve great things starts with passion, motivation and interest in the project at hand.

Knowing what one is best suited for in life is an elusive goal for so many. People are confounded as to what they want to be when they grow up. So many try out careers after years of schooling and training only to burn out very shortly afterwards. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a *Navi*, prophet, to tell us what we should spend our life doing?

We have no prophets but we are not alone. The *Malbim* has revealed a great secret that has relevance to each of us, in our present day. If you want to know if you have a good chance of success in a certain endeavor or pursuit, pay heed to what is in your heart. If you really enjoy a certain activity, if you feel drawn to a certain discipline – be it learning, *Chesed*, science, arts, music, physical movement, or anything – realize it may be a message from *Hashem* that He has blessed you with a special talent and strength in that area.

We all want to live a satisfying life, and we are responsible to help our children find a path in life that will be filled with meaning, purpose and fulfillment. Pay close attention to the things your child is drawn to. If it is a skill or activity that has some benefit to mankind, it may just be the directional signal towards the child's future vocation and life-long pursuit. We must steer our children away from a career or path that he may be considering on account that his older sister is doing it, because it seemingly makes the most money, it will make you proud, ("My son, the doctor") or because it is popular at the moment. Going through life doing something you are not excited about is not only a recipe for depression, it is a colossal waste of human potential.

"Pay close attention to the things your child is drawn to."

We should be noticing, focusing on and supporting hobbies and interests that our children have. Look insightfully into the interests and skills involved in their activities. Guide your children and show them how this skill, that strength or that which they are drawn to may be a sign from *Hashem* that they can succeed and be fulfilled by pursuing their dreams.

Best wishes for a fulfilling *Shabbos*,

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