



Parshas Terumah 2023, young for life

*This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the immediate and speedy recovery of **Daniel Aaron Chaim Ben Ruth**. May he and all those who need a Refuah Shlema experience G-d's mercy and compassion swiftly!*

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

Our Parsha begins with G-d telling Moshe to solicit donations from the Jewish people to construct the Mishkan, a sanctuary for G-d. They were asked to donate precious stones, gold, silver, and copper. Specialty red, blue, and purple wool, linen, animal skins, and acacia wood.

On the summit of Mt. Sinai, G-d gave Moshe the exact instructions on how the Mishkan was built. It was made to be readily disassembled and transportable to accompany the Jewish nation during their journeys throughout the desert. The second half of the Parsha and the following few Torah portions go through the intricate design and construction of the Mishkan.

However, a question comes to mind: our Torah portion has the commandment to build the Holy Ark of the Covenant, the Aron Hakodesh. Covering the top of the Aron was the Cheruvim, two pure golden figures with wings that faced each other. The Talmud in Sukkah (5a) explains that the Cheruvim had a child's face, and their dimensions were also childlike.

But why was Moshe commanded to design the Cheruvim with the look of a child? Why not the face an elderly scholar that radiates wisdom and holiness? Why not the face of a leader that emanates feelings of tranquility, understanding and compassion?

Rashi, Rav Shlomo Yitzchaki, the leading Torah commentator, answers this question by translating the word Cheruvim. He writes that the word Cheruvim is multiple for *Cheruv*, which means “*like youth*” in Aramaic. Rashi explains that the word Cheruvim indicates the design of the two Cheruvim, two golden childlike figures intended to face each other.

However, the Kli Yakar, Rav Shlomo Ephraim Luntschitz, an immense Torah scholar from the late 15th century, gives a deeper and more powerful explanation. He writes that G-d wanted the holiest vessel, the Aron Hakodesh, to have a childlike face to give us an invaluable lesson. At the core of our belief and the depth of our hearts, we must be pure, holy and absolute, just like a young child.

When babies are born, they come innocent, sinless, and unblemished. All their actions originate in the stem, the lower part of the brain. The brain stem connects to the spin and regulates the most basic bodily functions essential for life.

At this level, there is no evil, wickedness or immorality. This is how our essence, heart and soul should resemble, honest, virtuous and upright in our service to G-d.

We must also mirror the positive and unambiguous determination that our children have. From figuring out how to walk to exploring nature, children have an unwavering resolve despite the learning curve they face. This persistence and determination should continue as we age and increase as we mature and develop our personalities.

The Kli Yakar explains that the childlike faces of the Cheruvim should inspire us to be youthful in our connection to G-d. To retain and nourish the natural purity, innocence, and virtue innate within each person. To preserve the determination to discover and explore the unique and singular path reserved for us alone.

In our daily life, even as we grow older and mature, we must remain youthful and spirited. From having an insatiable desire to learn to a sense of joy at even the simplest things, we can learn so much from children's conduct and character.

One of the key characteristics of childhood is a sense of determination and stubbornness. Children are not easily discouraged by setbacks and are willing to keep trying until they achieve their goals. This is an invaluable trait as it allows us to persist in the face of challenges and disappointments.

Children remain positive and optimistic even as they encounter the learning curve of life. A youthful sense of joy and purpose can enable us to endure the challenges ahead and achieve the seemingly impossible.

“It is hard for us to stay perpetually young.

We drift and lose our way and with it our energy, focus and drive.

The best way to stay young is never to forget “the devotion of our youth.”

The defining experiences that made us who we are today.

**The dreams we had on how we might change the world
to make it a better, more spiritual and beautiful place.”**

-Rabbi Lord Dr. Jonathan Sacks

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*