

Are Children Prophets?

PARSHA INSIGHTS - TERUMA (5760)

IT'S BECAUSE OF THE KINDERLACH

“You shall make two *Keruvim* [angelic figures] of gold - hammered out shall you make them - from both ends of the Ark Cover” (25:18). The *Gemara Succa* 5B informs us that the faces of these entities looked like those of children. Remember, Hashem instructed us to create these figures from the same solid piece of gold of which the *Kapores* [Ark Cover] was fashioned.

What profound lessons can one derive from the *Keruvim*? There are undoubtedly many. Let us explore some holy words of the Lutzker Rav in his commentary known as the *Oznaim L'Torah*.

The *Keruvim* sat on top of the *Aron* [Holy Ark] containing the tablets with the *Aseres Hadibros* [Ten Utterances or Commandments]. This indicates that the education of children should be **based only on Torah**, just as these child-like figures were literally stationed on the *Aron*. What is the penetrating message? Torah education should not be viewed as an “afterthought”. Secular studies are necessary, but it is a grave error to consider them the mainstay of *chinuch* [education], and Torah subjects as secondary.

Just as the *Keruvim* (who resembled children) had to be one beaten piece with the Ark Cover, children should be totally connected with and devoted to their Torah learning. If a *Keruv* [angelic figure] were formed from a separate lump of gold and then placed on top of the *Aron*, it would obviously be invalid. We must constantly realize that the very essence of *Bnai Yisroel* [Children of Israel] is that we are inseparable from Torah.

We know that communication from Hashem emanated from between these angelic beings. “When Moshe arrived at the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him (Hashem), he heard the Voice speaking to him from atop the Cover that was upon the Ark of the Testimony, FROM BETWEEN THE TWO KERUVIM...” (*Parshas Naso* 7:89). How does this tie in with the idea of *Keruvim* representing children? The special bond between Hashem and *Bnai Yisroel*, demonstrated when Moshe would receive prophecy, is attributed to Jewish children dedicating themselves to Torah study. In fact, this applies to all generations; Moshe’s experience was the prototype, the evidence to this eternal truth. “From between the children” - because of the youngsters’ adherence to Torah, Hashem makes His love of *Bnai Yisroel* evident, showering His favor upon us.

There is also a hint here that even when prophetic communication would no longer exist among *Klal Yisroel* [the Jewish people], a form of *nevua* [prophecy] would remain with the children who learn Torah. The fact that Divine messages flowed from between the *Keruvim* was an indication of this reality. Many times we find in *Chazal* [our Sages’ teachings] that children were approached by adults who asked them to reveal which verses of *Chumash* they were learning. “Recite your *psukim* [verses] for me!” The topic being studied at the time was assumed to be an authentic prediction of events for the one making the inquiry. In this vein, we are told in the *Gemara Bava Basra* 12B that after the *Bais Hamikdosh* [Temple] was destroyed and prophecy was taken from the prophets, it remains, to some degree, with the children. There is clearly a lot of depth to this, but perhaps today’s remarks help us grasp these lofty words of our sages.

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