

**Pinchas**Tammuz 24<sup>th</sup>, 5772**DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE YOURSELF**

A child once asked me to explain the difference between a child and a man? I must confess that I was stumped. Children do sometimes come up with simple yet penetrating questions or observations and I think this is a great illustration. The challenge in answering such questions is where does one begin.

To be sure, this is a highly complex subject. Yet, there is always a profound and simple thought that can provide a glimpse into the essence of even the most complex ideas.

As human beings we begin our lives without any pretensions. As children we simply behave neutrally and unashamedly without any ulterior motives or any strategic planning. We simply are who we are no matter the short or long term consequences.

As we grow older and we become adults we begin to change. As members of a community or a society in which live, we begin to move away from being and living according to our true inner selves and start to measure who we are and how we behave against others. Before long, we find that we cannot make a decision about anything without taking into consideration what others might say or do or even think. Needless to say, all of this forces us to behave in an unnatural way by constantly trying to be something that we are not. In short, we have stopped being our natural selves for fear of not being accepted or loved by others.

One of the great mystics was once asked, what he thought about during his prayer. He replied by saying, "I try to pray as I did when I was a child".

There is nothing more powerful than the purity and innocence of our childhood. The good news is, that we all experienced this wonderful phase in our lives when we were young. When we did what each and every one of us does best. Being ourselves without any pretension.

The simple truth is. Just as there is nothing more difficult and frustrating than to try and be something we are not. So too is there nothing that comes more naturally to us, than to be ourselves. To discover the real you, by getting in touch with the child within each and every one of us. It is something that comes most easy to each of us and it is also what we know how to do best.

*By Yosef Vogel*

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13<sup>th</sup> July

Sedra: **Pinchas (Mevarachim Hachodesh)**

Shabbat Begins: 20.59pm

Shabbat Ends: 22.15pm