

Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



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Bezalel's Gifts

Our purpose in life is largely defined by the God-given talents that are uniquely ours.

It is our task in life to recognize those skills and put them to good use in service to others.

“And Moses said to the children of Israel, ‘See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship. And He has put in his heart the ability to teach’” (Ex. 35:30-34).

One of the great tasks given to the children of Israel during their year-long stay at Mt. Sinai was the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings, described in Exodus 25-27, 35-40). The construction of these items was assigned to Bezalel of Judah. (Aholiab of Dan was an assistant, but Bezalel appears to have been the chief project manager.)

Bezalel possessed two gifts which qualified him for this role. First, he was skilled “in all manner of artistic workmanship,” including metallurgy, wood-working, gemology, and other crafts. In other words, he had a knack for working

with his hands, turning raw materials into beautiful works of art.

But for all his specialized skills, Bezalel could not possibly build everything by himself. That’s where his second gift came in. Bezalel possessed “the ability to teach” his skills to others. So throughout the course of this project, we can envision Bezalel walking among his fellow craftsmen, answering their questions and providing the occasional tutorial to demonstrate proper techniques. Consequently, even though other workmen supplied much of the labor, Bezalel’s imprint was on every detail.

For the next several hundred years—until the tabernacle was replaced by Solomon’s temple—Bezalel’s handiwork served as the centerpiece of the Israelite nation. Every Israelite who travelled to the tabernacle to worship God admired Bezalel’s gift to the nation. Even today, the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem honors his contribution to Israel’s history.

Moses attributed Bezalel’s talents to “the Spirit of God.” Was Bezalel just some inconspicuous nobody whom God

pulled out of the crowd and miraculously endowed with these amazing skills? I think not. The more likely scenario is that these were natural abilities God had given Bezalel at birth, and through the years God had guided the development of these gifts to prepare him for this special moment in history. When that moment came, Bezalel was ready.

Like Bezalel, each one of us is born with a unique set of talents. Some may be like Bezalel, blessed with the ability to create beautiful works of art with their hands. Others may not know which end of a hammer to hold, but are geniuses with numbers. Some have great “people” skills, or musical talent, or organizational expertise, or some combination of these or other skills. Whatever our gifts from God, the story of Bezalel should inspire us to make the most of them. One need not be a great prophet or king or military hero to achieve great things. What are you *good* at? What do you *enjoy* doing? Throw yourself into that work—and share that knowledge with others—and you will have found your purpose in life.

– David King