

Rabbi David Wolpe's

Off The Pulpit

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A Chance For A Miracle

Can a single gesture change a life? On New Year's Eve 1913, a shot rang out. A boy was playing with a pistol, and he was taken by police and put into a house of correction, called "The Colored Waifs Home for Boys."

His behavior there was so difficult that the Director, one Peter Davis, decided to try quieting him by handing him a trumpet. Exchanging the metal of the revolver for the metal of the instrument, twelve year old Louis Armstrong coaxes from the trumpet the first notes of a legendary career.

The world is awash in talent but most of it will languish if we do not provide

chances for people to prove their gifts. The Torah is an education in the potential of human beings. Moses was a runaway shepherd with a speech impediment, Ruth a lonely widow from another country, David the youngest and seemingly least promising of his brothers. But seeing possibilities is one way of showing faith. There is Armstrong in the lost boy, Einstein in the patent clerk. All human beings are in the image of God. Many of them just need the chance to show the world who they are and what they can contribute.