

Sand Castles

BY RABBI DAVID WOLPE

There is a poignant story of a Rabbi who learned the meaning of life from children building sand castles. As he watched the intensity with which they built, he could not help but realize that in a few hours, everything they created would be washed away. Yet it did not diminish their focus or joy.

At certain moments we are gripped by a sense of the futility of all that we do. Stepping back, each asks himself the purpose of all these efforts and exertions. A certain lassitude can grip us as we contemplate the inevitability that the tide will wash away what we treasure.

None can know the workings of eternity. The most that is given to us is to understand the possibilities of the present. Sooner or later the ocean will engulf our achievements. But there is exhilaration in the building; what a privilege to have this instant in which to shape something from the sands. Perhaps like those children, our work will inspire others. True, our structures will not stand. In the end, as the poet wrote, "What will survive of us is love."