

# WHAT A PAIR!

*by Rabbi Pinchas Winston*

## FRIDAY NIGHT:

... Rather, to my land and to my kindred shall you go and take a wife for my son, Yitzchak. (Bereishis 24:4)

It's everyone's favorite topic: Shidduchim.

Going back to the very first man and woman, Adam HaRishon and Chava, man-woman relationships have been central to history. One of the principle reasons is that, as the Talmud says, the world was made for the sake of pro-creation (Pesachim 88b). In fact, the main reason for a man and woman to marry one another is not to provide companionship and pleasure for each other, but to have children (Sefer HaMitzvos Hakatzer, Positive Mitzvah #42).

Thanks to mankind's insatiable drive for physical pleasure, and the yetzer hara's right hand 'man' - Hollywood - the male-female relationship has become greatly distorted; one main result being the high rate of divorce and possibly higher rates of spousal abuse. Along with disposable plates and cutlery has come disposable relationships and spouses, and for many, children have become a side issue, if an issue at all.

Nowadays, you don't have to find the perfect 'partner' (whom one can SUE for divorce), because you can always get a new one in the future. When people stopped believing in Heaven, they also stopped believing in matches made there. Today, 'chemical reactions' are one of the main determinants for initiating a relationship.

In the Torah world, it is supposed to be different. Unquestionably, a couple should find themselves attracted to one another. The Torah does not de-emphasize the physical nature of a husband-wife relationship, but it does demand that a couple keep its priorities straight and act in a holy way.

However, there are MANY attractive people in the world, something that has been greatly accentuated with today's emphasis on physical appearance almost above and beyond all else. However, the vast majority would be mismatches for each other even where mutual attraction exists, creating great risk especially when it comes to young couples, whose physical instincts may still outrun their intellect.

Hence, the idea of a 'shidduch,' is a pre-arranged date by someone who, hopefully, has the best interests of each of the interested partners in mind. And, of course, IDEALLY the 'someone' should

know enough about each individual to be willing to take a chance and arrange the encounter to create what, with G-d's help, will be a zivug.

What's a zivug? Literally, it is a 'pair.' However, two of anything similar can be a pair, but two people not with similar qualities are necessarily a zivug. In other words, a zivug is a soul-mate, that special someone to whom we are attracted more on the SOUL level than on the PHYSICAL level. Only by finding one's zivug can one develop sufficiently from the relationship in the most efficient and meaningful way, just like two halves come together to make a perfect whole, or in the words of Adam HaRishon, "one flesh."

However, the bigger question has always been, how does one find their zivug?

### **SHABBOS DAY:**

He said, "G-d, L-rd of my master Avraham, please make it happen for me today, and perform a kindness for my master Abraham. I am by the well, and the daughters of the people of the city are going out to draw water. Let the girl to whom I say, 'Please tip your pitcher for me to drink' and who answers, 'Drink, and let me water your camels as well' be the one whom You designate for your servant Yitzchak. Through her I will know that You have done a kindness for my master." (Bereishis 24:12-14)

In this week's parshah, Eliezer, Avraham's trusty and loyal servant, provided the crucial key to find one's true zivug when he turned to G-d to make his mission successful.

In other words, as insightful and as sincere as the greatest shadchanim (matchmakers) may be today, they still have yet to reach the level of prophecy. There might be a few Kabbalists around today with that kind of supernatural knowledge, but most of them are not shadchanim. Thus, if one truly wants to find and marry his or her personal zivug, he or she will have to turn to the oldest and most successful of all shadchanim: G-d Himself.

The truth is, whether or not a person turns to G-d in search of his or her soul-mate, Heaven is involved in any case, either helping or hindering the cause. Obviously, we can help the situation by providing sufficient merit through the learning of Torah and the performance of mitzvos and good deeds. However, the entire process becomes particularly complicated when you take into account the idea of gilgulim, as the Arizal taught:

There are several reasons for the reincarnation of souls. It can be because a person sinned against the Torah and must return to rectify it. It can be to perform a mitzvah he previously had not completed. A third reason is for the sake of another individual, to guide and rectify him . . . There are other reasons as well, such as in order to marry his soul-mate, having not merited to do so the first time. Sometimes he may have already married his soul-mate, but he sinned and must return to rectify it; he will come back alone . . . Sometimes he has merits, and even though she does not need to reincarnate, she reincarnates with him . . . (Sha'ar HaGilgulim, Chapter 8)

Thus, we see from this that a person may not merit to marry his soul-mate in one of his reincarnations. However, this should come as no surprise, given the amount of divorce cases in the world and over history. Even the Torah sanctions the idea of divorce if the husband-wife relationship deteriorates to the point of hatred (which can only have a devastating effect on the children, if they already have some).

On the other hand, the Arizal seems to indicate, not all mismatches lead to disaster:

Sometimes, a person will not merit his soul-mate the first time, and a wife is arranged for him according to his deeds. From the souls of all the women of the world, there are none as close to him as this woman even though she is not his actual soul-mate. When he sins and reincarnates, he will do so with this wife, even though she is not his actual soul-mate. (Ibid.)

In other words, a 'happy' marriage with 'healthy' children is still possible in such a situation, though it is not the ideal one. Each spouse can help in the rectification of the other, but only to a point. There will remain a lack of shlamus - completion - until each finds their true zivug, hopefully sooner than later.

Knowing this information can help resolve a difficulty with which even the Talmud grappled. Although in the end, the Talmud provides an answer, it is the Arizal and the Zohar which reveal the deeper explanation of what that answer means, as we shall now discuss, b'ezras Hashem Yisborach.

### **SEUDOS SHILSHIS:**

He said, "Blessed is G-d, L-rd of my master Avraham, who has not withheld His kindness and truth from my master. Along my way G-d has led me right to the house of my master's brother!" (Bereishis 24:27)

Eliezer had what to celebrate, as would Yitzchak Avinu. Not only had G-d made Eliezer's trip quick and successful, but he gave Yitzchak his zivug, in spite of the fact that Yitzchak himself was a gilgul, and what a gilgul he was!

Adam reincarnated into Avraham, and Chava into Sarah. After that, Chava reincarnated into Yitzchak . . . (Seder HaDoros, HaGah, q.v. Adam)

Thus, not only was Yitzchak a gilgul, but his soul came from a female, THE female, Chava herself. That explains, perhaps, why both mother and son died at precisely the same moment - Sarah upon seeing the Akeidah from the distance (Yalkut Reuveini), and Yitzchak because of it (Midrash HaGadol 22:12). Through Sarah and Yitzchak, the Akeidah was the tikun that Chava's soul needed before moving on.

However, though Sarah did not return as herself, Yitzchak did, but this time with his OWN, masculine soul (Ohr HaChaim, 21:2), which is the sod of why the parshah turns to discuss the family of Rivkah immediately after the Akeidah. Now possessing his own soul, Yitzchak was ready to marry and begin

a family of his own.

Regarding finding one's zivug in another gilgul, the Arizal taught:

... In reference to the posuk, "G-d settles the solitary into a family, He releases those bound in fetters" (Tehillim 68:7), Chazal speak of a first and second soul-mate. Hence, when it says (in the Talmud on Sotah 2a), "Difficult is pairing people like the splitting of the Red Sea," it refers to the second soul-mate. However, the understanding of a first and a second soul-mate cannot be according to the simple definition, since in many instances we see that the second marriage is better than the first. Rather, we learn the explanation from Sabba of Mishpatim of the Zohar on the posuk, "If he was married then his wife will go out with him" (Shemos 21:3). That is, when a person is new and in the world for the first time, then his soul-mate is born with him, and when it comes time to marry, They (Heaven) arrange the moment, making it simpler for them to meet ... (Sha'ar HaGilgulim, Chapter 20)

Hence, when the Talmud says that before a man is born it is declared in Heaven who he will marry, it is referring to when he comes into the world the first time. During this lifetime only Heaven arranges events to make the finding and marrying of one's zivug as simple as possible. The Arizal continued:

However, if a man sins and needs to reincarnate as a result, then the posuk "his wife will go out with him" applies to him, as it says in Sabba of Mishpatim, that is, she will reincarnate as well for his good. Nevertheless, when the time comes to get married, They will not assist them and he will only succeed after great effort. Since he was forced to reincarnate as a result of his sin, there will be those (in Heaven) who will accuse him and want to prevent her from being available to him, and they will cause fighting. (Ibid.)

That is, Divine Providence will not work in his favor since he has returned as a result of previous sins, and he now has Heavenly accusers working against him. It continues:

This is what it means when it says, "Difficult is pairing people like the splitting of the Red Sea;" it is a reference to the second zivug. Hence, in actuality she is his real soul-mate who he has already married in his previous gilgul and now, in this new gilgul, it is their second zivug. In other words, she herself is the FIRST wife but it is the SECOND time she is marrying him. This is why it does not say the "second soul-mate" (zivug sheinis), but rather the "second-time pairing" (zivug sheini). The former would refer to a different wife and not the same woman. (Ibid.)

Thus, what appeared to be a discussion in the Talmud about multiple marriages in a single lifetime turns out to be, according to Sod, one about multiple marriages over multiple lifetimes. Thus:

It can happen that a man can marry a woman quickly and without any difficulty or argument. Yet, another man may fight the entire time with his future wife until marriage, after which time there is finally peace, proving that she is indeed his soul-mate, but that it was the second zivug. Had there been no peace after the marriage, we could assume that she is not his zivug. (Ibid.)

Thus, Yitzchak's success, for everything went well for him and Rivkah prior to marriage, AND also after marriage. Then again, he had not reincarnated as a result of his own sins, and therefore, to rectify himself. It had been the Ruach of Adam HaRishon that he had been given, and expected to rectify, and curiously enough, Rivkah had been born JUST as Sarah had died. Does this not make one wonder if her soul came from Sarah, which had come from Chava herself? If so, it would have been the perfect zivug, and also explain the following unusual account:

The servant told Yitzchak everything that he had done. Yitzchak brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother. He married Rivkah and loved her, and found consolation from his mother's [death]. (Bereishis 24:66-67)

INTO THE TENT OF SARAH HIS MOTHER: He brought her into the tent and she became exactly like his mother - that is, and behold, she was Sarah his mother! For, while Sarah was alive her Shabbos candles had burned from Erev Shabbos to Erev Shabbos, there was always a blessing in the dough, and a cloud always hung over the tent. However, when she died all of these stopped, and when Rivkah came, they reappeared. (Rashi)

It's not conclusive, but it's far from being far-fetched as well. More importantly, it certainly served as a good excuse to begin the discussion about such an important topic as finding one's own zivug.

## **MELAVE MALKAH:**

### **PART FOUR (of four): The Ultimate Historical Process**

Gan Aiden disappeared because the spiritual and physical worlds were lowered from their holy positions, as a result of Adam's decision, resulting in the post-Garden reality with which we are quite familiar. The world in which we live, which supports evil as well as good, is one that exists in the reality of 'Tohu.' This is the reason for all that turns evil within creation, and why "The inclination of a man's heart is evil from his youth" (Bereishis 8:21).

Therefore, Post-Garden life is about reversing the destructive effects of Adam's choice. Tikun Olam - World Rectification - is about Borrer, about once again drawing out and rectifying the Holy Sparks that Adam failed to rectify, and the ones that he caused to return to the Depths of Tohu. Indeed:

Behold, the birur and elevation of all the Sparks and Broken Pieces is accomplished through Torah and Mitzvos, or through that which occurs to all who come into this world; or in the Soul World through punishment after death, specifically in Gihennom . . . Through all of this, all the Sparks and Broken Pieces are constantly elevated until they are completed and rectified by the time of the arrival of Moshiach. For, the sin of the Aitz HaDa'as and those of each generation are slowly rectified, based upon what they (each generation) can tolerate. However, there is no hour or moment during which rectification does not take place, either through the learning of Torah and the performance of Mitzvos, or through punishment and suffering. (Sefer Drushei Olam HaTohu, Maimar HaKlalli, 4)

History, therefore, is not about presidents and prime ministers. It is not about democracies and

dictatorships, or superpowers and third world countries. History is not about crusades, pogroms, or being forced to establish a hostile nation within a tiny Eretz Yisroel. It is about Holy Sparks and Broken Pieces in need of rectification, specific ones at specific moments in history, based upon a timetable and path determined only by Heaven, but also based upon our will to work as a partner with God in bringing creation to fulfillment.

All of the REST of it - the leaders, the countries, the agendas - are just vehicles to allow us to, or when necessary, FORCE us to do that which draws out the designated Broken Pieces and Holy Sparks from the Depths of Tohu. We may not see how this is taking place, but Heaven does, because the Final Redemption is an intrinsic part of creation as is the Moshiach who is designated to bring it about.

Moshiach, in this context, represents the end of this long and complex Birrur process. In fact, in the very same posuk regarding the World of Tohu, there is an allusion to his eventual appearance:

THE SPIRIT OF GOD HOVERED: [These words - v'ruach Elohim m'rachefes] have the gematria of "zu ruach shel Moshiach" - "this is the spirit of Moshiach." (Ba'al HaTurim, Bereishis 1:2)

First, that 'Spirit' used the Ohr HaGanuz to draw out the Broken Pieces and Sparks necessary to build creation, including man himself, from the Depths of Tohu. Eventually, at a precise moment in time known only, perhaps, to the Creator Himself, that same Spirit, that is, the will of God, will use the same holy and supernal light - a light used to make creation, to give the Torah, and to bring about past redemptions - to draw out the soul, that very specific Spark designated since the beginning to be the awesome life force enclothed by the body of the one who will merit, finally, to redeem the Jewish nation from thousands of years of exile and suffering: Moshiach Tzidkainu.

Indeed, the Arizal wrote regarding the ancestor of Moshiach, Dovid HaMelech, and Moshiach himself:

For a great soul to leave the K'lipos (i.e., the Depths of Tohu) you should know, it must be done with trickery and scheming . . . It was similar with respect to Dovid HaMelech, who only left the K'lipos at the time of the incident mentioned by Chazal on the posuk, "Behold, in iniquity was I fashioned" (Tehillim 51:7; Yalkut HaMakiri, Tehillim 69) . . . This is also the reason for the episodes of Tamar, Rus, Rachav the prostitute, all the souls of converts, all the kings from Dovid, and Moshiach who will have come from Rus the Moabite and the union of Yehudah and Tamar. Rebi Akiva himself was the son of converts who descended from Sisera. This is the trickery and scheming that The Holy One, Blessed is He, uses against the K'lipos in order to free a soul exploited amongst them. (Sha'ar HaGilgulim, Chapter 38)

Thus, history is HIS story. It is the story of the will of God releasing Broken Pieces and Sparks on the way to completing the rectification of creation, of birrur after birrur on the way to the denouement of history with the arrival of Moshiach Ben Dovid. It is the story of Tohu, created to resist the process of Birrur and Moshiach's arrival, the result of which will be Kibbutz Golios, the return of the Jewish

people to Eretz Yisroel once-and-for-all, and the end of ALL evil:

As a result of the sin of Kayin and Hevel, the souls became mixed together in the K'lipos, and this is called, 'the mixture of good and evil.' From that time onward, the souls have been undergoing a process of 'separation' (birrur) from within the K'lipos, just as silver is smelted from waste . . . Once the separation of all the souls has been completed . . . the spiritual 'refuse' which is only removed through deeds, will collapse on its own and be absorbed to the point of non-existence . . . Therefore, they will no longer have any life and will disappear like smoke, as it says, "Death will be absorbed forever" (Yeshayahu 25:8). (Sha'ar HaGilgulim, Chapter 20)

The rest of it, the presidents and the prime ministers, the democracies and the dictatorships, the superpowers and the third world countries, and all the events and occurrences since the beginning of time, is just the external and often deceiving appearance of this phenomenal, profound, and awesome process that remains hidden from the mind's eye of most of mankind to this very day.

History is about OUR story, for onto this stage steps the concept of Torah pro-activity. And, as the Vilna Gaon understood, it is about our potential to become a conscious partner in the final redemption of the Jewish people, and in the fulfillment of creation.

Have a Great Shabbos,  
Pinchas Winston

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