

Match Made in Heaven

**STRAIGHTFORWARD ADVICE
HOW TO FIND YOUR
MATE AND HOW TO FINALLY UNCOVER THAT**

Match Made in Heaven

**BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF
RABBI NACHMAN OF BRESLOV
AND OF HIS STUDENT
RABBI NOSSON OF BRESLOV**

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Of all the challenging ordeals in life, perhaps the most frustrating is finding the right marriage partner. Yet, the Talmud tells us (*Sotah 2a*), "*Forty days prior to the conception of the child, a Heavenly Voice proclaims: So and so is destined for so and so*". With the marital die already cast, what is holding back so many single people today from finding their destined partners?

Can it be that the current crisis facing the single population has been created by single people themselves? Does a shortage of available partners exist or, are single people guilty of being too highly selective in their tastes, so that no one is ever good enough for them? Living in a consumer-oriented society, how can single people expect to marry, if their whole approach to finding a spouse resembles shopping for a car? The key to alleviating your plight of prolonged and painful singlehood lies in counteracting society's ambivalent attitude towards marriage.

As a single person you need to be strongly reminded that according to the Torah, marriage is an obligation not an option! In fact, marriage plays such a fundamental role in leading a stable and wholesome life, that it's the first commandment mentioned in the Torah. Let's face it! Being single is no blessing; most of the time you're plagued by a nagging sense that something is missing in your life. To be married, on the other hand, is a blessing! A man finally feels a sense of being more settled and fulfilled in life, because his wife satisfies his restless desires. She, on the other hand, feels safe and secure having a husband who provides her with support and protection. It's married life – not singlehood – that represents the ideal lifestyle, upon which G-d confers his blessing, as is written (*Yerushalmi Berachos, 9*), *"A man cannot exist without a woman, and a woman cannot exist without a man, and they both cannot exist without the Divine Presence"*.

Are you tired from the painfully long years spent in search of a mate? Are you fed up with the singles-scene and its market-place mentality, which still has yielded no returns? How many more blind dates must you endure with which you end up seeing no results? Can you face the prospect of remaining single and lonely your whole life? Isn't it time to meet your match made in Heaven and start experiencing the joys of marriage? To make the necessary changes in your life you must begin with a revision in your way of thinking. Much of what prevents people from getting married today are the modern misconceptions about marriage that have robbed it of its sanctity and stripped it of its true purpose. Standing at cultural crossroads, will you continue to remain frozen by indecision with the rest of today's undecided youth, endlessly speculating, "Is he or she really for me?"; or will you dare to turn your back on contemporary society's self-centeredness and make the personal sacrifices it takes to marry for the sake of Heaven? The only way to conquer narrow self-interest and

overcome the fear of commitment contributing towards marital delay, is to stop holding out until you get what you want, and to start giving in. The moment you allow selfish consideration to slide and are prepared to settle, the years of misery and isolation will come to an end, and you will be married in no time! But the trend in today's dating scene is to be highly selective, so you insist on waiting for prospects to come along that will cater to your sophisticated tastes, while rejecting one good possibility after another in pursuit of unattainable perfection. Friends and family will set you up repeatedly, and as you exhaust the pool of dating options, you will tell yourself over and over, "Why rush into things? I have time!". And so the weeks turn into months and the months turn into years until you finally wake up and discover that your youth has fled, leaving you isolated and alone. This is the sorry state that so many older singles are finding themselves in today, and out of frustration and bitterness they cry out, "How did this happen to me?". Wondering why they have to suffer such a lonely

fate, they forget that it is they who dug this pit of loneliness that they find themselves lying in. Now they sigh with regret that they didn't grab the marital offers of yesterday. Had they just been more trusting in G-d's ways, and lowered their standards, they could have long been settled, enjoying the warmth of family life with the one they love. But obsessive concern with social image and needing to conform to popular tastes, they've allowed traditional family values to be pushed aside in favor of the premium that society puts on superficial values like money, good looks, and prestige. As a result, today's society is inundated by a population of older, highly intellectual and socially upscale – singles. And despite their successful careers and their demand for only top quality in a prospective mate, they suffer genuine pain and loneliness as they observe others less smart and accomplished than them finding their partners and settling down to lead happily married lives.

Isn't it time to look at your singlehood objectively, and to start taking responsibility for your own part in prolonging it? Stop making excuses why nothing ever works out for you and stop blaming G-d for your morbidly lonely state. Statistically speaking, there's enough fish in the ocean for everyone to catch so why are you never satisfied with any match. Time after time, you're presented with marriage opportunities, but with one dismissive wave of the hand, you reject one after the other, with a decided, "She's not for me", or "He's not really my type" or "That's not what I'm looking for". Whether motivated by low self-esteem or too much self-esteem, it's never the right one in your critical eyes. Naturally, you then turn to G-d as if it's His fault, complaining to Him about your lonely predicament, as it is written in Proverbs (9, 3), *"The corruption of a man confounds his way and upon G-d does he cast the anger of his heart"*.

True the years have flown away and so have many marital opportunities, but does that mean

you should allow bitterness and despair to set in and wash away your hope for ever getting married? No! It just means that you've reached a point in your life where faith must take over where reason has failed. It is precisely when you're confronted by failure and disappointment in life, and you feel so utterly helpless and out of control, that you come to realize how much you need G-d. Suddenly, all the lonely and confusing years spent trekking down the path of prolonged singlehood takes on new meaning, as you see how much you've grown in your acceptance of G-d's control over your life. Now, what mattered so much to you regarding the opposite sex, doesn't seem to matter as much, as what G-d wants for you. Humbled by all the hurt, you will no longer reject so callously the marital offers that He sends you. You will have the courage to make a radical departure from today's warped ideals of love and marriage, and willingly embrace the concept of selfless love that characterizes the Jewish marriage. Gone will be your romantically selfish fantasies of marrying for looks, wealth, or power.

When you're thoroughly prepared to put your marital portrait into proper perspective, permitting needs like looks, wealth, and power to recede into the background, while allowing the image of walking down that aisle to stand out in sharp relief, then getting married is a cinch! For Heaven sake just say "yes", and accept on good faith the match that G-d sends you. What does it matter what your friends will think? So much wasted time; so many years of solitude; when will you finally stop being so insecure? How long will you continue to let the opinions of other people stand in the way of your happiness, because you feel the need to impress them? Cure yourself from the "image-conscious" neurosis afflicting society at large, which has made relationships between people today so cold and impersonal. Drained of all the warmth that comes from sharing and giving to one another, marriage today has been reduced to a status symbol – is it any wonder why so many single people have been reluctant to get married and are terrified to say "yes"! Put meaning back into marriage by

recognizing how desperately you need it and how empty your life has become without it. Life is too short! Does it make sense to be so uncompromising and demanding when it comes to what you're looking for in the opposite sex? Go visit a cancer ward, where patients are struggling for their very last breath of life, and see if money, power, and prestige have any value to them now. Come to your senses! G-d has given you life and good health, and now He presents you with a potential mate – and you turn your nose up at it. Where is your gratitude? Give in – after all, isn't it G-d who knows best what we need? Put aside self-interest; doesn't He have your best interest in mind, anyway? Just say "yes", even if it's the first match He sends you, because when your faith in G-d is solid you can't go wrong. Sounds too extreme? Consider the alternative: Prime years of your life sacrificed, painfully waiting for your "dream-match" to arrive. After you finally extract a commitment from him or her, then there is all the squabbling over the meticulous details of the lavish, royal wedding designed to

impress all your friends. After it's all over and the pressures and stresses of life begin to close in on you, then the love starts evaporating along with all the romantic glitter of the magical wedding. As he begins to discover the not-so-nice person behind that pretty face, and she begins to sense a not-so-generous, nor thoughtful person behind that handsome and rich man, they both question whether they made the right choice. The marital battle thus begins – many times ending up with infidelity and even divorce. This is the tragic fate of many marriages when we choose to marry for the wrong reasons, insisting that we know what we want and we follow the dictates of our heart. The key to gaining control over getting what you want in life, including a spouse, comes with the paradoxical awareness that you have no control, as it's written (*Chullin 7b*), "*A person does not stub his finger below unless it was decreed in Heaven*". Moreover, "*A person cannot touch that which is reserved for his friend, nor can one monarchy encroach on the next by even a hairsbreadth*" (*Yoma 38a*). When you find the

inner courage to let go and let G-d lead you to the right one – even if it's the first – then yours will be a match made in Heaven.

2.

The unprecedented freedom of today's modern age has given rise to a conflict between our strong urge not to be tied down and our duty to get married. Wanting marriage without responsibility, a generation of single youth has been stricken with a paralyzing social disorder called "fear of commitment". Never has there been a society of people possessing so much, yet committed to so little. The legacy of our time is a population explosion of older singles who are holding out, despite having very little meaning in their lives. Perhaps this is what our Sages meant when they said (*Kiddushin 29b*), "*He who has reached the age of twenty and has not wed, G-d says, "Let his spirit and soul burst"*". Indeed, how crushed our spirits and souls become when we fail to satisfy our inherently human need for love and companionship, by delaying marriage. But

how is the single person today to be blamed if the society surrounding him is so sexually permissive, that marriage is regarded as an after-thought? The answer lies in our willingness to reverse the trend by returning to an age of innocence, where traditional family values once prevailed. The youth today need to be educated and inspired about the beauty and enduring meaning of marriage, so that they automatically reject the shallow and corrupt versions of love and romance promoted by the media. Moreover, parents today must marry off their children young, without being so choosy, before they get caught in the net of promiscuity ensnaring society today. But our sense of moral outrage has become so dull, that we no longer rush to stem its tide, by marrying young. Without the sense of urgency to prod us down the aisle, we freely indulge our tastes by becoming too picky. We criticize and analyze every aspect of a prospective mate, until we come up with a reason to throw away, yet another marital opportunity – sometimes pushing away with our own hands the one that was truly

destined for us. The Sages cautioned (*Moed Katan 18b*), "*Marry a woman, lest another (person) precede you*". How devastating! Look what they're forfeiting! Yet, the hordes of singles will continue to ride the dating merry-go-round, endlessly, while unique marital opportunities are grabbed up by others, because they procrastinate. And, after so many years of being single and fed up, how many will subsequently slip into loose and unimaginably wild behavior to blot out the emotional pain. Instead of stooping to conquer, they insist on chasing impossibly high steeples, only to fall in disgrace. The simple, nice and unassuming people that G-d sends them are never good enough. "No! She's not Miss Perfect", he complains. "No! He's not a true gentleman and scholar", she protests. They entertain in their minds unrealistic expectations of what they desire in a mate, all while forgetting that there is no guarantee in life what destiny will bring, as the saying goes, "Not everything you want you get, and not everything you get you want!". Of what use now is all the discussion and philosophizing

about how to catch the right one, when so many years of solitude have past. Just accept on face value the person that G-d sends you. Remember, G-d knows best, and only wants the best for you. But there is always those overzealous, well-meaning parents who insist they know what's best for their children. To spare their son a life of poverty, they will only consider a rich girl, or to ensure their daughter an honorable life they will only accept a boy of scholarly renown. Their lesson is learned in the form of one of life's common, ironic twists of fate; the rich family they so aggressively sought, much to their chagrin, won't yield a dime to the newlywed couple; the scholar they so eagerly wooed may earn high marks in intelligence, but scores lamentably low in manners and common decency. Amidst the tearful cries of regret can be heard, "Why didn't we just settle for someone from a simple family?"

Therefore in your search for a mate, set your priorities straight. Examine your possible ulterior motives for marrying, like money, looks or power.

Try to transcend these deceptively promising features, by keeping your focus on getting married for the sake of Heaven. Once your objective in life is to enhance G-d's image in the world, then you can let go of your obsessive concern with your own self-image. Instead of marrying in order to please others, you will marry to please G-d, even if it's to the first person He sends you. When you make G-d's choice your choice, you acquire a true match made in Heaven. Ironically, you will discover with pleasant surprise, that you got everything you wanted and even more than you could have ever imagined.

3.

Time is running out and life waits for no one! Friends in your age group have long since married and have established homes and families, and you could have too! You may be bright and successful at your career; you may be a sharp dresser, the life of the party and know how to make all the right moves; but the bottom line is that for years you've been willfully depriving

yourself of the most basic human need – of giving love and receiving it – that only comes through marriage. And, the longer you wait, the worse it gets! With each passing year the innocence of your youth fades; you grow more cynical and your mounting sexual frustration drives you to act in a manner contrary to your moral principles. You feel your religious resolve gradually weakening, as you steadily drift from G-d. Looking in the mirror, you don't like what you see, and at once you are filled with shame and anger at G-d for letting this happen to you. Be honest now! Whose fault is it anyway? Recall over the years, the procession of potential partners that marched passed your critical gaze, and how you arrogantly tossed them on the pile of rejects. So many lost opportunities! So many youthful years squandered! Have pity on yourself; get off your ego trip and start compromising. Lower your unreasonable standards, and your chance of getting married will automatically rise. Do you really want to get married? Then just say the magic word, "yes" – even if it's to the first person

you're introduced to. You will be amazed at how your life will turn around for the good, just by accepting what G-d gives you, because you elect to humble yourself before Him. Your eyes will open up to the rich rewards of faith, when you see the remarkable inner beauty and suitability of your match made in Heaven. You will never believe that it could be so good! That's because your whole perspective on marriage and life itself will have changed. You will relax you're neurotic drive to get what you need in life, with the calm and reassuring knowledge that we get all that we need from G-d, when we allow Him to give it to us. When you truly believe that your match comes only from the One Above, then you will merit the heavenly joy of a blissful marriage on earth.

Excerpts from "Likutai Moharan"
Pertaining to Finding your
Match Made in Heaven

1) Prayer with deep concentration can help a person to find his marriage partner (Likutai Moharan I, 9).

2) Dancing at a wedding sweetens the force of the harsh judgements in the world (Ibid. 32).

3) When we acknowledge G-d and give Him praise for all He has done for us, it has an influence that helps those who need to find their marriage partner to do so. The same is true when we study the "Shulchan Aruch" (Code of Jewish Law) (Ibid. II: 2).

4) Immorality makes it hard for a person to find his true marriage partner. The rectification is by following the spiritual path explained in the Kabbalistic writings about the lessons of the month

of Elul (Ibid. 87). [Likutai Moharan I:6 discusses these lessons.]

5) When a person is unable to find his marriage partner, it can help if he goes to hear original Torah teachings from a man of deep wisdom (Likutai Moharan II: 89).

6) The reason for breaking a piece of earthenware at the engagement ceremony is to remind the groom of Gehennom (Hell) in order to prevent him getting trapped by his desires. He must sanctify himself in the marriage relationship. It is symbolized by earthenware, because the Sages teach us that the Gates of Hell correspond to the Earthenware Gate that was in Jerusalem. It is also a hint to that if ones wife turns out to be a bad woman he should still not maltreat her or divorce her. Because of her, he will never see Hell. One should avoid divorce at all costs (Ibid.90).

Excerpts from "Sefer HaMidos"
Pertaining to Finding your
Match Made in Heaven

1) *A person who has difficulty finding a marriage partner should recite the "Shiras HaYam", the Song of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-19), with great concentration.*

2) *Reciting the Blessing of the New Moon (Kiddush Levanah) is particularly propitious for finding one's match. This is hinted at by the Hebrew word for moon - LeVaNaH - which comprises the first letters of the expression, "B'sulah Ni'sais L'yom Har'veee" - A virgin marries on the fourth day of the week, which was the customary day for weddings at the times of our Sages.*

3) *A man gains prosperity and blessing when he chooses a Torah scholar to be his son-in-law.*

4) *Choosing a Torah scholar as one's son-in-law saves a person from the punishment he deserves for having given bad advice to his friend.*

5) *When people choose Torah scholars for their daughters to marry, proper judges are appointed.*

6) *A person who has difficulty finding a marriage partner should recite the Torah section of "Parshas HaNeseim" which deals with the Temple sacrifices brought by the heads of the twelve tribes (Numbers 7:1-89).*

7) *The pairing of potential marriage partners, even if only discussed and never actualized is also from Heaven. Mere talk of such a match has an effect on each of the potential partners. It brings them a step closer to finding their real mate.*

8) *Praying for God's compassion gives a person the ability to bring together appropriate marriage partners.*

The main thing to remember is always keep praying. Prayer accomplishes unimaginable feats. Rabbi Nachman taught us (*Likutai Moharan 1:2*) that prayer is a person's main weapon. Whatever

battles a person has to fight, whether against his evil inclination, or against those who put barriers and obstacles in his path, should all be fought with prayer. Prayer is the source of our very life. Through prayer you'll find that match made in Heaven all the more sooner. Rabbi Nachman taught us that prayer requires simplicity – speaking to G-d in your own language, as you would to a parent or a good friend. Tell Him everything you need and beg Him to help you in every way. Don't be stingy with your words. G-d loves every word of prayer that comes from your mouth. Tell Him how much difficulty your having in finding that match made in Heaven. Tell Him how much you want to get married and build a beautiful home. He will surely help you with His everlasting compassion and you will find that match sooner than you think. You'll build a home that you can be proud of and enjoy the taste of Heaven on earth.

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