

PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH

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SHIUR PRESENTED IN 5782

THE PARSHAH OF SHIDDUCHIM

HASHEM MANAGES SHIDDUCHIM

This week's *parshah* is the *parshah* of *zivugim*. Avraham Avinu is seeking a *shidduch* for his son. Anyone who hopes for children, understands that they are going to face this *parshah*. Facing this *parshah* is something that must be studied. It is a tall order to expect that you will be from the few lucky people for whom the *shidduch* comes easily.

I remember hearing from Rav Chaim Stein (1913-2011), ז"ל, that the Rambam writes in one of his letters that his beard turned white from the *parshah* of *shidduchim*.

Now, people tend to often fall into self-inflicted traps. People think they have to take matters into their own hands. They think they have to do something to enable their children to get married. Now, the problem with that is that *shidduchim* is something that is completely in the hands of Hashem. Sadly for people who think they have to do something, *shidduchim* is one of the areas in which Hashem is completely in charge. In *shidduchim*, there is no partnership. You have to know that.

When it comes to *parnasah*, Hashem didn't say to people, "You can't do something to engage in means of getting *parnasah*." He never said that. As a matter of fact, Hashem wrote in the Torah clearly, בְּזַעַת אֶפֶיךָ תֹאכַל לֶחֶם (Bereishis 3:19). Now, we know that *parnasah* comes from Hashem. Anybody who thinks otherwise is lacking *da'as*. He's lacking proper *emunah*. You can't make your own *parnasah* or dictate your *parnasah*. Only Hashem does that. But since it says in the Torah תֹאכַל לֶחֶם אֶפֶיךָ - we are obligated to exert effort for *parnasah*. But when it comes to *shidduchim*, the *gemara* says in Moed Katan (18b) מִן הַתּוֹרָה וּמִן הַנְּבִיאִים וּמִן הַכְּתוּבִים and we learn out that אִשֵּׁה לְאִישׁ מה' אִשֵּׁה לְאִישׁ, that Hashem, and only Hashem, manages *shidduchim*.¹

HISHTADLUS IN SHIDDUCHIM IS FOR NAUGHT

Try as you may, you have to know that only Hashem is going to decide when you are going to get married or whom you will marry – we don't decide at all who we will get married to or when we will get married. Hakadosh Baruch Hu says, "Here, in this area, I take care of things. I am the One who's bringing you your *zivug*, not you." We have to recognize that, ultimately, we cannot choose whom we marry; it's Hashem who chooses that for us, and it is our job to understand and recognize when it is truly Hashem's *shidduch* coming our way, and accept the *ratzon* of Hashem.

Now, I've mentioned before that the Vilna Gaon in the sefer *Yahel Or* (p. 32) writes clearly that *hishtadlus* in *shidduchim* is *lashav*.² Before everybody jumps up and down, I want to tell you what *lashav* means. *Lashav* means it's "for naught." It doesn't say it's *asur*. It says it's *lashav*. *Lashav* means it has no value whatsoever. That's what it means. If a person is hoping to become very smart by banging his head against a brick wall, that is *lashav*. He may shake some things up in his brain, but if he's hoping to get smarter, that is *lashav*. It's for naught. Can you do it? If you don't make yourself bleed, you can do that.

What is the greatest challenge of *hishtadlus* that a Jewish person has in any area? Some say that it's doing *hishtadlus*, and *not* feeling that it's because you did the *hishtadlus* that you made something happen. In other words, if a person goes to work and has a good job and he makes *parnasah* and thinks that his *parnasah* came because he has a good job - that is absolutely false. It's *pashut* false.

The Chovos Halevavos says that if a person locks his doors at night and he relies that now he's safe, that's false. You're never safe because you lock your doors. It's not to say you shouldn't lock your doors, but you're not safe in your house *because* you locked your doors. It says, כִּי חִזַּק בְּרִיחֵי שַׁעֲרֶיךָ, "Hashem strengthened the locks of your gates" (Tehillim 147:13). Hashem is the One who strengthens your locks. There is nothing that you can do to strengthen your locks. The Chovos Halevavos writes that if a person takes a job, he should not expect any benefit or any harm to come to him because of the means of his employment unless it's the will of Hashem.³

Now the reason why you make *hishtadlus* when you go for *parnasah* is because that is what Hashem told us to do, according to the *shitah* that *hishtadlus* is an obligation. It's merely an obligation to fulfill the will of Hashem. That's all it is. But it's such a difficult thing for a person who is *matzliach* to realize, accept, and believe! But that is the truth. It's not *shayach* for a job to bring a person *parnasah*. The sole thing that brings a person *parnasah* is Hashem.

Here is a fellow who exercises regularly, follows medical advice on how to live a healthy life, and he feels good. You know what he's going to tell you? Every one of them says this. "I work out, so I feel good. I ride my bike. I have a StairMaster machine. I have

¹ הכי אמר רב משום רבי ראובן בן אצטרובלי מן התורה ומן הנביאים ומן הכתובים מה' אִשֵּׁה לְאִישׁ מן התורה דכתיב ויען לבן ובתואל ויאמרו מה' יצא הדבר מן הנביאים דכתיב ואביו ואמו לא ידעו כי מה' היא מן הכתובים דכתיב בית והון נחלת אבות ומה' אִשֵּׁה מְשַׁכֵּל
² וז"ל וז"ש (ע"ב) ואע"ג דלזמנין מסתייע מלמא ושקיל דא יתיר מן דא סלקין ומתחברין כחדא כו'. ועניין הפסוק כך הוא שקודם לכן אומר בטחו בו בכל עת שהוא סוד הזיווג שנקרא כל ועת בחיבורא כידוע ואומר שיש לבטוח בזה על הי כמו כמ"ש (מ"א ק"י"ב) מן התורה ומן הנביאים ומן הכתובים שמה' אִשֵּׁה לְאִישׁ, מן התורה מה' יצא הדבר, מן הנביאים ולא יודעו כי מה' הוא, מן הכתובים ומה' אִשֵּׁה מְשַׁכֵּל ומה' אִשֵּׁה לְאִישׁ אם הי לא יבנה בית שוא עמלו בוניו בו שהוא הזיווג שנקרא בניו בית כידוע ואמר עם הי וכוי ששוא הוא עסק בני אדם בענין הזיווג שהכל הוא מאת הי וז"ש אך הבל בני אדם כב בני איש רק במאזנים לעלות אבל המה מהבל יחד כוי. (ס' יהל אור באורים על הזה"ק)
³ וכן בעלי המלאכה והסחורה והשכירות מצוין לחזר על הטרף בהם עם הבטחון באלהים כי הטרף בידו ורשותו ושהוא ערב בו לאדם ומשלימו לו באיזו סבה שירצה ואל יחשב כי הסבה תועילה או תזיקהו מאומה ((שער רביעי - שער הביטחון (ה)

a treadmill.” I also try to do it almost every day, but I sit there and know one thing: Any result that I get of a good feeling has to do only with Hashem and nothing to do with me. That’s what a person has to know. Yes, Hashem wants a person to exercise, take walks, and keep himself healthy. But a person can’t keep himself healthy. Only Hashem keeps you healthy. And if a person knows that and really understands that, he may be challenged to never do *any* exercise because he realizes it’s not the exercise that keeps him healthy. Exercise cannot keep you healthy.

Chovos Halelavos says if a person is excited about his job because it’s making him money or his *hishtadlus* is producing what he wants it to produce, ולא יוסיף בהן אהבה וחבה יתרה, he says. Don’t get enamored, don’t get excited or feel any special enthusiasm about them. Because it’s misguided and misdirected enthusiasm.⁴

It’s like a guy who really loves his job. There is nothing wrong with loving your job. It’s a *brachah* to love your job. But the guy who loves his job and is excited about it because of the paycheck he brings home at the end, is equivalent to a guy who says, “I love putting on my pants. The most exciting thing I do during the day is putting on my pants.” And his friend says, “Why are you so excited that you put on your pants?” He says, “You know how much money putting on my pants gets me? I go to work, and do my job. If I didn’t have pants, I wouldn’t have a job. So I’m excited about putting on pants.” I think most people would agree that the guy is a *shtickel* misguided in his enthusiasm.

Now, that’s not to say a person shouldn’t wear pants. And he should thank Hashem with the brocha of *malbish arumim*, that he has a pair of pants to put on. But to think that I’m excited about that, is the exact same thing as a person who is excited about the job and the profession that he’s engaged in because he thinks that brings him *parnasah*. The Chovos Halelavos says a person should not gain any increase in confidence from the job even though they seem to be helping him. The only One he should gain his confidence and *bitachon* in, is Hashem.

TO RELY ON HASHEM, AND NOTHING ELSE

Let’s say a person has a wife who brings him *parnasah*, or a father-in-law who brings him *parnasah*, or he saves money that brings him *parnasah*, and he’s excited about that. Would I blame the guy for getting excited? No. I don’t blame the guy. But he’s a fool. He’s totally misguided. Because to be excited about that is not understanding that it has nothing to do with your wife. It’s Hashem who is giving you the *parnasah*, and that is the only direction in which you should build up your confidence. And you have to rely on Hashem independent of the means by which you happen to be getting your success. And that’s very, very difficult. The biggest challenge in *parnasah* is definitely that challenge. But you have to appreciate the person who delivers the money.

When it comes to *shidduchim*, it’s the exact same thing. A person has to know that Hashem is the only one bringing you that *shidduch*. But the challenge is, that in the modern world, everyone is involved in choosing things. When they write an invitation to a wedding, they write the chassan’s name, and then they write the kallah’s name. And then they write in between *ayin beis lamed*. That stands for עם בחירת ליבו, “with the choice of his heart.” In a *frum* invitation, it says *ayin beis gimel*, which means עם בת גילו (lit. “with the girl that’s born in his mazel,” i.e. my bashert). I am sure in the more modern ones, they say עב”ל - “both ways”: she is choosing him, and he is choosing her. But the truth is, you don’t choose who you get married to.

Now, when people tell me they think they made a mistake, I often ask them, “Did you meet your wife on the internet?” and they say, “No.” “Did you meet her in a pizza shop?” “No.” They say, “What difference does it make?” I said, “Because if you went on the internet to look for a wife, well, you can expect Hashem to punish you and send you something that is not good for you.” Because if that’s what you’re looking for, that’s what you’re going to get. If you look in the garbage can, you know what you find there? Not pearls. Rarely do people find pearls in a garbage can. But if Hashem sent your *shidduch* through a shadchan or through an agent of His, then you know it’s the right one for you.

Many boys have told me, “I was forced into it.” I say, “In this day and age, are there still forced marriages?” I have never met a person with a forced marriage. I spoke to a lot of people. I have never heard of a forced marriage. Girls tell me, “I was forced into it.” I said, “Did your mother tie you up? How did they deliver you? In a box? What was it?” Nope. No one forced you. Hashem guided you and you’re not happy with what Hashem chose for you. That’s what it is.

PUT YOURSELF IN THE HANDS OF HASHEM

Now, the first approach to get a *shidduch* is to put yourself in the hands of Hashem. Everybody tells me they do that. But they don’t. *Bobbe maasehs*. They put themselves in the hands of a good *shadchan*. If they have a connection with the *shadchan*, they are even more excited! People really, truly believe that this *shadchan* is a very good *shadchan* and he or she brings *shidduchim*. That’s what people believe.

Somebody once asked me, is that a bad belief? Besides for being a silly belief, it’s a *bizayon* to Hashem to have that belief. Could you imagine somebody bringing a *kallah* her diamond ring, and a young child comes and delivers the ring to the *kallah*. Three children. And they all have this little dance and jig that they do. And they come to the *kallah*’s house, and they say, “Here is your ring.” And the *kallah* starts to lavish thanks upon these kids. “Thank you, my dear children, thank you, my dear children.” And then the *chassan* walks into the house. And she says, “Thank you, my dear children, thank you, you’re so special, you brought my ring.” And the *chassan* says, “Oh, by the way, *mazel tov*.” And she says, “Oh, *mazel tov* to you too. My dear children, you’re the best! You’re the nicest, you’re the greatest!” Are you cuckoo? Your *chassan* is here! The ring is from your *chassan*, not from the kids! What are you doing?!

⁴ והשלישי כי הבוטח באלקים ואם יתעסק בסבות לא יסמך בלבו עליהן ולא יקוה מהן תועלת ולא נזק מבולתי רצון האל אך מתעסק בהן לבחור בעבודת הבורא אשר צוה להתעסק בעולם לישבו ולזינו. ואם תגיעו תועלת או ידחה בהן הנזק יודה האלהים לבדו על זה ולא יוסיף בהן אהבה וחבה יתרה ולא תנוח נפשו עליהן יותר אך יחזק בטחונו באלהים ויסמך לבו עליו מבלעדי הסבות. ואם לא יועילוהו הסבות ידע כי יבואוהו טרפו כשירצה הי מאיזה ענין שירצה ולא יאסא בהן בעבור זה ולא יניח להתעסק בהם לעבודת הבורא (שער רביעי - שער הביטחון ה')

BELIEVING IN SHADCHANIM IS BIZUI HASHEM

People really believe in *shadchanim* and *shadchaniyos*. And that's a crime because it's being *mevazeh* Hashem.

I want to share with you an episode from history that is a little bit heartbreaking. The *aron* of Hashem was on a wagon, and this *aron* was being transported from place to place. They didn't have smooth highways. They wagons going over rocks, ditches, and holes. The wagon with the *aron* began to tip and the *aron* appeared to begin to fall. So there was a fellow named Uzah, who he saw this was happening. He was quick on his feet, and he decided he's going to jump and grab the *aron* in an attempt to prevent it from falling to the ground. The *passuk* tells us in the *navi* Shmuel, וַיִּאָחַז בּוֹ, "and he grabbed onto it," כִּי שָׁמַטוּ הַבְּקָר "because the oxen caused it to slip" (Shmuel II, 2:2).

Now, what would you say about such an action? You would say it's a heroic action. I would say, "What a *zechus*!" This man had the *zechus*. Imagine if a man was walking in Bnei Brak one day and he sees Rav Chaim Kanievsky deeply involved in his learning, and Rav Chaim then steps off the sidewalk, but he doesn't realize, and he begins to fall. This man runs through the traffic and before Rav Chaim falls, he catches him. Wow! That guy would be a hero! He would be on the front page of the newspapers. He would definitely get interviewed for a magazine. What did it feel like, what was it like, what do you attribute this *zechus* to? They would give him all kinds of accolades. Maybe even in the humor section, he would get in. People would make jokes about it. Now, this man, Uzah, jumped forward to prevent *aron* from falling. And you know what the *gemara* (Sotah 35b) tells us? Hashem punished Uzah so severely for this seemingly righteous act, that he died. He died! He forfeited his life for such a great, righteous act!

What's the reason? You know why? Because if he would have been aware of what he was trying to save and what that *keili* was, what that vessel was, he would have realized that his action was completely unnecessary.⁵

The *gemara* says, the *aron* never needed to be carried. It says וְנִשָּׂא אֲרוֹן אֱתָנוּשָׂאיוּ, it carried its bearers (Sotah 35a). This is the holiest vessel that the Jewish nation owns, which Hashem gave us. It was a miracle vessel. It was a miracle that there were people around it to carry it, but it actually carried the people. When they came to a body of water, and they had to cross the body of water, everybody hung on tight. They were lifted up, transported, flew across the water, and deposited on the other side. Now, if somebody would have taken a picture, they would have said, "Wow, look at these magicians, they are carrying the *aron* across the water!" No, no. The *aron* was carrying them across the water, not they were carrying the *aron* across the water.

Since the *aron* was able to carry itself, Uzah was held accountable for reaching out to grab the *aron*. He had to die for that. You know why? Because he was *mevazeh* Hashem. He was saying to Hashem, "You can't help Yourself. You need me. There is nobody but me to help You." And if a person thinks that he needs to assist Hashem, when Hashem could clearly take care of it on His own, that person is belittling Hashem and mocking Hashem.

To give you a little bit of an idea, imagine there was a young, healthy, strong person walking into *shul*. He's striding with great strides, and everybody is looking at him, with great *kavod*. Suddenly, somebody lunges forward and grabs him. He says to the guy grabbing him, "Excuse me?" The fellow answers, "I want to stop you from falling." The guy replies, "You think I'm falling?!" The fellow says, "I was sure you were going to fall, I wanted to save you." Is that a *kavod* for the person? No. That's not a *kavod* for a person.

You have to know that. And for that, Uzah lost his life.

HONORING HASHEM THROUGH MAKE-BELIEVE HISHTADLUS

Now the question is, if the *aron* was able to carry itself, why were there people appointed to carry the *aron*? Hashem appointed people to carry the *aron*. Why was that necessary? The answer is that Hashem is offering these people, these special Kohanim, an honor to participate. But the second the Kohen thinks that he's carrying the *aron*, that is an act of belittling Hashem, of not being *machabed* Hashem. If he begins to think that he's carrying the *aron*, that is a great mistake. If you know you're just there as an honor guard, Hashem is giving you a chance to make believe you are participating in carrying the *aron*, but if you think Hashem needs you to carry it, then you're in trouble. And that's what we have to understand when it comes to *shidduchim*.

Now, somebody tells me, "But Avraham made *hishtadlus*!" This is a common question I get and I tell them, "What *hishtadlus* did you see Avraham make?" I didn't see any *hishtadlus*. You know what I saw him do? Let's study this for a moment. What did he do? He took his *eved*, Eliezer, and he told him, "I don't want my daughter to marry any of the Canaanite women from this country, so I want you to go to Syria, to Charan where I have family members. Go there and bring home a wife for Yitzchak." Rashi writes that Avraham was told that's where the *shidduch* was. Did he tell him, "Make a whole list, a checklist. She has to be pretty, nice, smart, *yichus*?" No. He said, "Go there and bring somebody home."

What does Eliezer do? You know what *hishtadlus* he did? He came to the well, and he davened to Hashem. "Hashem, I have no idea which girl is for Yitzchak. I'm going to wait here by the well, send out the girl and make it clear it is the right girl." So I told somebody, if you want to take your daughter, let's say you come from Chicago and you decided that for your daughter, there are no boys in Chicago, for whatever reason. You decided your *shidduch* is in Lakewood. Nu. So you want to travel with your daughter to Lakewood, go to a *shul*, and sit and *daven* that your *shidduch* should come. That is great.

I'll tell you an even better scenario. You don't have to send your daughter. Your daughter can stay in Chicago. You could go to Lakewood for her. Avraham didn't send Yitzchak. Avraham sent his *eved*. So you go. If you don't feel you're good enough, get a rabbi to go into a *shul* in Lakewood and *daven* for you to send the *shidduch* to the *shul*. That's the kind of *hishtadlus* you could make. Anything more than that, to take your daughter and parade around to this *shadchan* and that *shadchan*, that's superfluous. And you have to give an excuse why your daughter has a pimple here and how come her nose is not exactly straight and how come the ears are not this, and that she is tired from her trip, and so you say, "Really, I have old pictures, and you should look at those

⁵ ויבואו אחר ששגו בכל אלה הוסיף עוזא לפשוט במה ששלח ידו לאחוז בארון בחשבו שצריך סמך בל יתמוטט והיה לו לדעת כי ה' השוכן בו נושא לא נישא ואמרו חכמינו זכרונם לברכה (סוטה לה) נושאיו נושא את עצמו לא כ'אש, והסבה לזה היתה כי שמטו הבקר מתחת העגלה, והיה לו להבין שזה היה משאתם ופחדם (מלבי"ם שם)

pictures.” People go nuts. And we have to explain why her report card is not alef plus in third grade. What difference does it make?! These crazy people! That’s *hishtadlus*?! That’s *lashav*, and it’s not only *lashav*. I’m telling you it’s *asur* because you’re not banging your head against the wall. What you’re doing is you are “helping” Hashem. You think the *emes* is that you’re making it happen.

WHAT IS A GOOD HISHTADLUS?

You want to take her to the Lakewood *rosh yeshivah* and ask for a *brachah* for your daughter? That is great *hishtadlus*. That is the *hishtadlus* you make.

Another thing my *rebbe* pointed out was that we don’t see Yitzchak being involved in the *shidduch*. Avraham didn’t say to Eliezer, “By the way, on your way out, stop by Yitzchak. Before you leave on the mission, check out with him what he’s looking for. I told you what I’m looking for, but check out what Yitzchak is looking for. Maybe he has different ideas than me.” There was no such a thing. And my *rebbe* said, what was the success of this *shidduch*? What brought about the success of this *shidduch*? Was it the *zechus* of Avraham? Was it the great *zechus* of Eliezer? What was the *zechus*?

He said, you know what the Chazal say? צדקת תמיש דרכו, “integrity of the righteous paves the way” (Mishlei 11:5). It says וְצָדִיק יִצְדֵק, the *chassan*, Yitzchak, was *tamim*. That *temimus* was תמיש, it paved the way for the success of Eliezer.⁶ It wasn’t Avraham. It wasn’t Eliezer. It was Yitzchak’s *zechus*, that he was a *tamim*, that made this happen.

READY AND WILLING TO DO HASHEM’S WILL

Today, everybody thinks they could decide when to get married and when not to get married. But the only thing you could do is say, “Hashem, I’m ready to get married whenever you send me the right one.” When my oldest daughter was 16, I received an unusual, uncommon phone call from my *zeide*, *zichrono livrocho*. And he said, “How old is your daughter?” I said, “She’s 16.” He said, “It’s time to put her on the market.” I said, “Okay, she’s on the market. Done.” “Be *matzliach* to find a *shidduch*,” he told me and hung up the phone. My wife said, “Does he realize she’s only 16?” I said, “Yes, I said she’s 16. He said that she’s got to get an early start.”

Now, could I have started early? No. What could I have done? Put an ad in the Hamodia, “My daughter is for sale”? What could I have done possibly? Put a paper around in *shuls*? No. I told Hashem, “I am *mekabel* if the right time for my daughter to get married is now, I accept it. I’m not going to fight your will.” Hashem didn’t want her to get married then. She got her first *shidduch* at 20 years old. That is when Hashem wanted her to get married. And the first boy she met was her *shidduch*. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Now, I remember my father (Rav Shmuel Elchonon Brog, *zt”l*) asking me, “Where does the *chasan’s* side come from?” I told him, “My daughter is about to get engaged.” He said, “Really? When did she meet somebody?” I said, “Two days ago.” He said, “So where are they from?” I said, “They come from Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.” “But are they *Galiciana*? Are they *Poilshe*? Are they *Litvishe*?” I told my father, “I have no idea.” He said, “Where do they *daven*?” I said, “They *daven* in a *shul*, that much I know.” He said, “Which *shul*?” I said, “I don’t know.” He asked me a few questions, and I told him, “*Im yirtze Hashem*, there is going to be a *vort* soon, so by the *vort*, you’ll ask him all your questions, and I’m sure he’ll answer you.” They were very interesting answers. He came from a Satmar background. He *davened* in a *rebbe’s shul* in Boro Park by a *rebbe*. We are as far away from that as *mizrach* is from *maariv*. And the *shidduch* worked out very happily! Wonderful people! *Be’emes*. You’ve got to accept the will of Hashem. But instead, we say, “No, it’s not my type. It’s not my son’s type, it’s not my daughter’s type.” Who do you think you are, playing Hashem?! That’s what brings *tzaros*.

A SHIDDUCH CRISIS?

I hate to tell people about the terrible *shidduch* crisis, but it’s a self-made crisis. Hashem deals with people based on their own actions: your actions and your inactions. When I was 19 years old or barely 19, somebody *redt* me a *shidduch*. My *rebbe* was very upset because I wasn’t 19 yet. “And they are *redting* you a *shidduch*?” They arranged for me to be somewhere on Shabbos and that the girl would be there. My *rebbe* was quite ticked. Then he said to me, “Are you *davening* for a *shidduch*?” I said, “No, I’m only 18. Why should I be *davening* for a *shidduch* now?” He told me, “You should start *davening* now, three times a day at least.” I said, “Why?” He said, “Because it says: על זאת תפפל כל חסיד אליך לעת מצא, for this, every pious person should *daven* for the time of his finding his *zivug* (Brochos 8a, based on Tehillim 32:6).⁷

Chazal tell us that people who are unmarried are considered to be in jail (Bamidbar Rabbah 3:6).⁸ This ‘jail sentence’ comes from Hashem and everybody gets a sentence. And you’re going to get released when your sentence is over. You have to know how to get that sentence terminated. Just because you want it terminated, just because your mother wants to terminate it, or your father, it won’t terminate. You have to think, and you have to study, and you have to know, “Am I doing all the right things?”

⁶ ויאמר אחיה ואמה תשב הנער אתנו (בראשית כד, נה), ובתואל היכן הוא, בקש לעכב ונגף בלילה, הדא הוא דכתיב (משלי יא, ה): צדקת תמיש דרכו, צדקת תמיש זה יצחק, תישר דרכו של אליעזר.

⁷ “על זאת תפפל כל חסיד אליך לעת מצא”, אמר רבי חנינא: “לעת מצא” זו אשה, שנאמר: “מצא אשה מצא טוב” (ברכות חא; רש”י ד”ה יתפלל לעת מצא – יתפלל שיהו מצויין לו כשיצטרך)

⁸ במדבר סיני לאמר (במדבר ג, יד), הדא הוא דכתיב (תהלים סח, ז): אלהים מושיב יחידים ביתה, אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא אל פי שבני אדם בעולם הזה היו יחידים אלא הפריתי אותן והרביתי אותן ועשיתים בתים שישבו בהן בעולם הזה, כיצד, דוד היה יחיד ועשיתי אותו בית, שנאמר (ירמיה כא, כב): בית דוד לה אמר ה’. ואהרן היה יחיד ועשיתי אותו בית, שנאמר (תהלים קלה, כ): בית הלוי ברכו את ה’. (תהלים קלה, יט): בית אהרן ברכו את ה’. ואף ישראל יחידים היו, שנאמר (שמואל ב ז, כג): ומי כעמך כישראל גוי אחד בארץ וגו’, והרבה אותן האלהים, שנאמר (דברים א, י): ה’ אלהיכם הרבה אתכם וגו’, היו מושיב יחידים ביתה. דבר אחר, אלהים מושיב וגו’, שאלה מטרונה אחת לרבי יוסי בן חלפתא אמרה לו הלל מודים שבששת ימים ברא אלהים את העולם, משה ולקאן מהו עושה, אמר לה מעלה סלמות ומוריד סלמות, פלוני שהיה עשיר ועני ופלוני שהיה עני ועשיר, שנאמר (שמואל א ב, ז): ה’ מוריש ומעשיר וגו’. רבי ברכיה אמר לא הטיבה פן, אלא כך אמר לה מזוג בעולמו זוגים ואומר פלוני ישא פלונית ופלונית תנשא לפלוני ומושיבן בביתיהן. אמרה לו יכולה אני לזוג אלף ביום אחד, שתק רבי יוסי והלך לו, מה עשתה, הביאה אלף עבדים ואלף שפחות וזוגתן זה לזה, אמרה להם פלוני ישא פלונית ופלונית תנשא לפלוני, כיון שנכנסו עמהן בלילה נפלה קטטה ביניהן ועמדו והפו אלו את אלו, לבקר הלכו אצלה דין רישיה פצוע, ודין גדיה פצוע. שלחה בשביל רבי יוסי וספרה לו המעשה, אמר לה אם הדבר הזה קל הוא בעיניך קשה לפני המקום קרעת ים סוף, הדא הוא דכתיב: אלהים מושיב יחידים ביתה וגו’, מהו אלהים מושיב יחידים, הקדוש ברוך הוא יושב ודן אותם ומביא זה ממקום אחד וזה ממקום אחר ומושיבן בבית אחד. מוציא אסירים בפושרות, שהוא מוציאן מבתיהם אסורים בעל כרחן ומזוגן. בפושרות, אם אינן זוכין בזכין, ואם זכו משוררין, וכו’.

Now, of course, everybody says they are doing the right things, but obviously they are not because if you are doing the right things, the *shidduch* would come.

Somebody called me today and said, "I'm 34 years old, and my siblings are also old, and none of us have *shidduchim*. And I'm accepting the fact it's not our time yet." I said, "Your time has come. Trust me." There are a lot of *shitas* in Chazal about what time you are supposed to get married. 16, 18, 20, or 24. But 34? I have never heard that one yet. Now, I'm not saying it never happens, but that's not the plan. You have to see what happened; what the blockage is. There has to be a blockage.

They made it into a crisis because it's good for business.

WE DON'T NEED TO HELP HASHEM, WE NEED TO DAVEN

Now, somebody thinks that they could orchestrate and manipulate Hashem to make people get married before it's their time to get married. No. This is a very difficult and sensitive pathway to walk upon and you have to be careful what you're treading on. You don't want to make it look like you're helping Hashem, that Hashem needs assistance, and that Hashem can't take care of things by Himself. That is something you are not supposed to do. And yes, you need *tefillah*. You need a lot of *tefillah*. You need to learn how to *daven* and create a relationship with Hashem like you've never had if you don't have a *shidduch*. Absolutely. You need to learn how to subjugate your will to the will of Hashem.

Now, I have people calling me, and telling me, "I'll accept anything." I would like to test them and send them somebody that I'm sure they wouldn't take. But if you are like that, why do you think Hashem is not giving you a *shidduch*? There has got to be some reason. You don't have a brother named Lavan. You don't have a father named Besuel. And even if you did, Hashem could take care of them, too. When he got in the way, Hashem eliminated Besuel. You don't have to help Hashem. If *chas veshalom*, somebody tries to help Hashem in an area that Hashem says, "This is my domain," that is incorrect. It's wrong. It's frightening.

So let us study this *parshah*, let us learn from this *parshah*, and get rid of our old cobwebs. Maybe a person believed in *shadchanim* and *shadchaniyos*, and a number of their children got married in that fashion, and all of a sudden, bam. It comes to child number five, the doors are closed. What's the difference between me and everybody else? I'm no different. The chips landed on you. Hashem decided, "Now it's time to teach your family who married all those children off, from beginning to end," and to put no confidence in any of the means that you employed, that you were excited about until now. There are many people who have money and they are convinced because they have money they are good to go. It's going to be a walk in the park. It's not like that. I've seen many people marry people with big money, which ended up with very terrible, unhappy endings.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu should help us be focused on Him, to *daven* to Him properly, to learn how to *daven* properly, and *im yirtze Hashem*, Hashem will send you the *zivug* easily and quickly *besha'ah tovah umutzlachas*.

IN CONCLUSION

We tend to think that we have to do something to enable ourselves or our children to get married. However in *shidduchim*, Hashem is completely in charge. Our job is to reach a point of understanding that we don't decide who we or our children will get married to, or when marriage will come. Similar to practicing health-inducing habits or doing activities for the sake of *parnassah*, in *shidduchim*, we may do something for *hishtadlus*, but we must remember that our confidence and *bitachon* should be placed solely in Hashem as the source of our satisfaction. An additional benefit from accepting that Hashem arranges *shidduchim* is being able to acknowledge that He gave us the right one. The first step in *shidduchim* always has to be placing ourselves in the hands of Hashem and being ready to do His *ratzon*. From there on, the *shidduch* can come - whenever Hashem says it is the right time. When a *shidduch* opportunity arises, I will (*bli neder*) approach it from the angle that Hashem is entirely running the *shidduch*, and is allowing me to make believe I am participating. My best *hishtadlus* will be to *daven*, to build my relationship with Hashem, and subjugate my will to the will of Hashem.

✧ IN CONCLUSION ✧

Middah keneged middah, the Gemara tells us, whoever enjoys themselves on Shabbos, for the sake of Shabbos and for the sake of *kavod Hashem*, is granted a נחלה בלי מצרים, an inheritance without boundaries. This means that the more we enjoy Shabbos for the sake of Shabbos, the more we can bring expansiveness into our lives. Automatically, when we have more *oneg*, there is a noticeable lack of limitations, feeling pressured and constricted. Instead, we will feel there are no worries, no *tzaros*, or even worries about bills to be paid. Enjoying oneself on Shabbos influences our lives positively as we can reach a place where we feel, “I have everything I need,” which is a sure sign of Hashem’s *brachah*. This week, as I prepare for Shabbos, I will (*bli neder*) focus on preparing or buying some things that will give more *oneg* Shabbos on Shabbos, such as treats for your children, your family, or yourself, and higher quality fish, chicken or wine.

