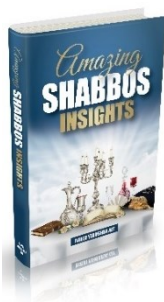


Fascinating INSIGHTS

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[Check Your Mate](#)

We know of the idea concerning marriage of זוג and ראשון, first-union and second union. How does this work? The gemara¹ reconciles two seemingly contradictory statements—that man’s mate is predestined from the time of his conception, before it is known whether he will be righteous or wicked and the statement that says man and woman were mated according to their deeds. The gemara answers that the notion that matches are determined at conception was stated concerning a first union while this notion that it is

contingent on conduct was stated concerning a second union.

Another meaning in זוג and ראשון is the following. At the time of conception an ideal mate is designated for each male i.e., the first-choice union. When he attains marriageable age, Heaven judges him. if he is deserving, he will be given his ideal mate. if not, she will be given to someone more deserving and she will be the

¹ Sota 2a.

other man's second union i.e., in accordance with his conduct.²

Likewise at times a person outgrows their spouse before they ever meet. In that case too Hashem will send this person a different spouse than was originally intended. This different spouse is called זוג שני. This is implicit from the gemara that says that the notion that one's mate is contingent on his conduct was said concerning זוג שני.

Perusing Pain

During the Holocaust, R' Yissachar Shlomo Teichtal penned his magnificent work, Eim Habanim Semaicha.³ In it,⁴ he cites the following. "In the introduction to the sefer Mishpitei Yaakov, a sefer on topics in gemara written by a brilliant scholar from Latvia named R' Yaakov Aryeh Leib Kastin⁵ it says the following. He explains the prophecy כי ההרים ימושו והגבעות תמוטנה וחסדי מלאך לא ימושו, for the mountains may be moved and the hills may falter but My kindness shall not be removed from you.⁶ Hashem's kindness doesn't depend on any other cause because if it did, the moment the cause would disappear the effect would also disappear. This can be compared to the mountains and the hills which hang upon the foundations of the earth. If the earth would move from its place, the mountains and hills would tumble down, as actual, natural phenomena demonstrate. Many mountains have sunk to the depths of the earth because of the shifting of the ground beneath them. This happens because the mountains and hills depend on an external cause, and when that cause dissolves, so do they. The kindness of Hashem, on the other hand, doesn't depend on any other cause. Therefore, it will never falter. This is

the meaning in the aforementioned pasuk, 'For the mountains may be moved and the hills may falter but My kindness shall not be removed from you.'"⁷

The story is told of the Ohaiv Yisrael who once expressed that when he dies and is in Heaven, he will aim to hasten the geula. Soon after the passing of the Ohaiv Yisrael, his son, R' Yitzchak Meir of Zinikov, remarked that his father appeared to him and explained the words דמינו חסדך בקרב היכלך⁸ — אלהים חסדך בקרב היכלך (I thought דמינו as in דמיון, imagination) bad occurrences were judgment and punishment. But חסדך בקרב היכלך — now that I am in the upper world, I see that it is all good. How then can I ask to nullify it?"

Let's examine the name of Hashem that represents דין, strict judgment — אלהים.⁹ Rearranging the word מלא י-ה, we notice it spells י-ה, fullness of י-ה. Spelling out (מלא) the letters ה, י, what do we get? י spelled out is יוד, whereas ה is ה. Adding up these letters, we come to a total of 26, the same as י-ה-ו-ה, the name of Hashem that represents רחמים, mercy. This alludes to the fact that that which appears as דין (אלהים) is in truth רחמים (י-ה-ו-ה).

In light of the aforementioned we can grasp another meaning in the pasuk, דורשי ה' לא יחסרו כל טוב, those who seek Hashem will not lack any good.¹⁰ This can be understood that those who seek Hashem (דורשי ה') lack nothing (לא יחסרו) because כל טוב — they know everything Hashem does is for the good.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of four books including the recently released Amazing Shabbos Insights, in addition to being the host of The Fascinating Insights Podcast. His writings, some of which have been translated into Yiddish, Hebrew, German and French, inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:12]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

² Be'er Sheva citing Chachmei Ha'emes. See also Responsa Chassam Sofer 7:34 and Haghos Yaavetz.

³ The sefer Eim Habanim Semaicha was written while enduring the horrors of the Holocaust, often without sefarim and always in hiding. In fact, in one place in Eim Habanim Semaicha (p. 185), R' Teichtal writes, "I am unable to cite the exact location [in the sefarim quoted] since I am now writing without sefarim. I am in exile here in the capital, hidden in a secluded place in the cellar of a house." In another place, he writes (Eim Habanim Semaicha, p. 159), "In a work by one of the great gedolim" and then he writes, "At this point I cannot indicate the title or reference as I have fled from my birthplace because of the oppressors and I am writing without sefarim." It was written and published in Budapest, completed on Thursday night, Parshas Vayera, the 15th of Cheshvan in 1943, a little more than a year after beginning it. While most responses to the Holocaust were written after the fact, with the advantage of hindsight, this sefer was composed amidst the destruction. Both of R' Teichtal's major works — Eim Habanim Semaicha and Mishneh Sachir (which is a record of his responses to the numerous halachic questions he received from communities throughout Europe. He began working on this at 24 and published the first volume 15 years later in 1924.) — survived the Holocaust. Other manuscripts included a personal journal were also saved. R' Teichtal deposited these works with a non-Jew and requested that any family member who survives the war return to retrieve them. After the war, his daughter Hindel fulfilled the request and recovered them from the non-Jew who miraculously managed to guard them. These manuscripts include novellae on gemara, homiletic discourses, ideas on the weekly parsha and lessons from the lives of great scholars.

⁴ p. 132. To escape capture and deportation, R' Teichtal and his family hid in the attic of the local Beis Midrash along with ten other families. Through the cracks in the wall, he witnessed the massive deportation of

his friends and neighbors right below. He heard their screams and watched helplessly as his fellow Jews were beaten and herded away. In response R' Teichtal took a vow: Should he survive and escape death he would write a sefer in honor of Eretz Yisrael. The goal of this work would be to inspire every Jew to ascend to the holy land and help rebuild it. R' Teichtal began fulfilling his promise immediately. There in that attic with virtually no sefarim at his disposal, he began writing his sefer Eim Habanim Semaicha.

⁵ R' Kastin, a student of R' Yitzchak Elchonon Spektor, was the owner of a flour business. R' Teichtal writes, "When I was in Kovno in the summer of 1937, he honored me with this wondrous volume. An absolute genius, he sustains himself by the sweat of his brow, an attribute that is not found in these lands. May the merit of his Torah stand by him during these difficult times [referring to the Holocaust]."

⁶ Yeshaya 54:10.

⁷ The Sefas Emes (Vaeschanan 5657) tells us that every calamity that has befallen the Jewish people is for the best, similar to the suffering of the birth pangs of a woman in labor, which are a necessary preparation for the birth itself. When we think of pain as the prelude to something important and new, the suffering can be seen as part of the process of creation, renewal and birth itself.

⁸ Tehillim 48:10. The simple meaning is, "We hoped for Your kindness in the midst of Your Sanctuary."

⁹ Shemos 14:19. We have two Parshios of תוכחה, rebuke — Bechukosai and Ki Savo. After Bechukosai we have Parshas Bamidbar where Hashem counts us because He loves us (Bamidbar 1:1, Rashi). After the rebuke of Ki Savo we have אָתָם נִצְבִּים...לפני ה', standing before Hashem. See also Shomer Emunim, Maamar Hashgacha Pratis, 14.

¹⁰ Tehillim 34:11.