

FORGET THE SHIDDUCH CRISIS

Recently, I let slip that I had made 55 *shidduchim*. Now I am not a *shadchan*, and I only make *shidduchim* if I know the boy and girl well as my *talmidim*, but nonetheless, when someone told someone who told someone the number of couples that are happily married through my arrangement, I became a Media Matchmaker. I was interviewed on a secular radio program recently, and then calls came flooding in for me to speak about the topic elsewhere.

A Jewish radio station wanted me to address the “*Shidduch Crisis*” issue. There just seem to be so few young men—or even older men, for that matter—for women to marry. A recent *Ami* article explained the crux of the problem from a demographic perspective: Men of any age tend to marry younger women. As our *frum* birth rate increases, so does the number of girls there are to choose from.

Too much choice is not usually a good thing; the more choices there are, the harder it is to choose one. Young men, especially, are quickly spoiled by choice. And, as I told the Jewish audience of the radio show: Far, far more important than the matchmaker who comes up with the idea of a *shidduch*, is the person who sees the *shidduch* through to the end, counseling and guiding the young single. This is very important because people tend to view themselves very subjectively. Think of the last time you were in an argument. Who was right? People are very good at judging others, but they are absolutely hopeless when it comes to taking a good honest look at themselves. An objective mentor is



needed to help with this process.

“Ah!” said the interviewer, “It’s a bit like the marriage model, where a couple needs a third party to help them sort out their problems?”

“No,” I replied, “It’s like the Torah model. *Asei lecha rav* applies to every major life decision we have to make. If it applies to married couples, then *kal v’chomer*, it applies to singles who are trying to get married.”

My interviewer started the show with a story of someone who had gone to ask a *chasidische rebbe* for “a *brachah* for *shidduchim*.” The *rebbe* said that was something he could not help with. “I can give you a *brachah* for a *shidduch*, but not for *shidduchim*. You only need one!”

In this week’s *parshah*, Hashem calls to Moshe (*Vayikra* 1:1). Rashi explains that only Moshe heard Hashem’s voice, while *klal Yisrael* did not. Perhaps the reason was that Hashem called out quietly? No, writes Rashi, the voice was enormously loud. But still, only Moshe could hear it.

Rav Moshe Feinstein, *zt”l*, asks: If only Moshe was to hear the voice, why did it have to be so loud? There is also another time when Hashem’s voice calls out but no one hears it: forty days before

a fetus is formed. “This girl will marry this boy,” the *bas kol* announces. But if no one hears the voice, then why does it speak?

Reb Moshe answers that even though none of *bnei Yisrael* was on the level to hear what Moshe heard, Hashem wanted them to be. He spoke in a loud voice to encourage them to strive to be able to hear it one day.

The voice that announces the perfect *shidduch* for you has already spoken. It speaks to let you know that the ultimate matchmaker is Hashem Himself. The voice encourages you to strive to find the better half of your soul at the right time.

If you are careful to go about finding that person in the proper way, with a little help from someone acting as Hashem’s deputy matchmaker to make the suggestion, and a wise mentor to supply good advice during the process, *im yirtzeh* Hashem, you will find the perfect *shidduch* in the perfect time—forget the *shidduch* crisis! ■

Rabbi Y. Y. Rubinstein is an author of six books, and an international speaker and Gateways lecturer. He teaches at Machon Basya Rochel, in Lawrence, NY.