

- ♦ Hashem arranges matches
- ♦ There is a real connection between the groom & the bride
- ♦ We sense the Creator through the soul
- ♦ Gan Eden – a reality, not just an idea

Seven sources from this chapter are included along with their highlights. Choose a daily source of strength & renewal from among these selected practical suggestions:

1 Hashem arranges matches ... [but] this cannot be taken literally ...

SOURCE There is a well-known incident found in the *Midrash* (Vayikra Rabbah 8:1): A Roman matron asked Rabbi Yosi ben Chalafta, “How long did it take for Hashem to create the world?” “Six days,” he replied. “And what has He been doing since then?” she asked. Rabbi Yosi answered, “**Hashem arranges matches** saying, ‘this one’s former wife will marry this man, and this one’s daughter will marry that man.’ ” **[but] this cannot be taken literally**, because G-d should not need to spend all day on such a task.

2 Marriage is not merely a connection of two separate people, but a reunion with the missing half of one’s self.

SOURCE We see that originally Chavah was a part of Adam. Hashem made a separation, fashioned Chavah, and brought her to Adam. From this first match in history, we learn that **marriage is not merely a connection of two separate people, but a reunion with the missing half of one’s self.** ... A wife is part of her husband’s being.

3 The Jewish people, are, so to speak, the spouse of Hashem, and Hashem is constantly drawing us toward Him!

SOURCE Throughout *Chazal*, we find the Jewish people referred to as Hashem’s bride. For example, we are told that at the revelation at Sinai, Hashem went out to greet His people, Yisrael, as a groom goes forth to greet his bride (Pirkei deRabi Eliezer Ch. 40). **The Jewish people, are, so to speak, the spouse of Hashem, and Hashem is constantly drawing us toward Him!**

4 Hashem’s existence is much more real and palpable than all else!

SOURCE If you start being realistic, and realize that Hashem is the true Reality, you will understand that we are not requesting levels beyond the ability of a human. We want you to appreciate that **Hashem’s existence is much more real and palpable than all else!** ...

5 When a person leaves this world, and is found meritorious in his judgment, he enters a real and perceptible place called Gan Eden.

SOURCE *Chazal* tell us that there is a dimension called *Gan Eden*, and it is real. There is a real place in which the soul delights. ... *Gan Eden* is a place whose delights are as perceptible as the delights of this world. ... **When a person leaves this world, and is found meritorious in his judgment, he enters a real and perceptible place called Gan Eden.** Just as it is clear to us that *Gan Eden* is a real and perceptible dimension of reality, and that one who is found meritorious will enter it and partake of the delights bestowed there, so too, and even more, should the existence of Hashem be clearly perceptible to the soul.

6 Closeness to Hashem [is] an absolute reality. In fact, it is more real than anything else.

SOURCE The Ramchal writes that even now, in this world, a person must cleave to his Creator. We learn from this that even here in this world one can sense Hashem as an absolutely real Being! We have shown that faith in the Creator is not only intellectual knowledge, but something real and perceptible. Just as the world we live in, and the world in the days of *Moshiach*, and *Gan Eden* can and will be personally experienced, so is **closeness to Hashem** – “to delight in Hashem and bask in the radiance of His presence” (*Mesillas Yesharim* Ch. 1) – **[is] an absolute reality. In fact, it is more real than anything else.**

7 You must take these words and review them, contemplating and fixing them in the mind, until they gradually enter the heart, cleave to your inner recesses, and generate a deep yearning to truly serve Hashem.

SOURCE Contemplate these ideas. Note what you have thought and understood until today, and what you now understand. If your *Torah*, *tefilos*, and *mitzvos* have not yet brought you to the state of feeling in your heart that Hashem is a real perceptible entity with Whom it is pleasant to live and cleave, these positive deeds were only performed with the mind. Your heart was not properly involved. ... **You must take these words and review them, contemplating and fixing them in the mind, until they gradually enter the heart, cleave to your inner recesses, and generate a deep yearning to truly serve Hashem.**