

'Bashert' – Destiny or Choice?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. THE TALMUDIC DEBATE	2
(A) DESTINY.....	2
(B) DEEDS AND EFFORTS.....	2
(C) URGENCY	3
II. THE MATCHMAKING PROCESS IN TALMUDIC LITERATURE	3
1. 'FIRST PAIRING' AND 'SECOND PAIRING'	3
2. HUMAN INTERVENTION.....	4
III. PREDESTINED MATCHMAKING: THE DETAILS	5
(A) SCOPE OF INTERVENTION THROUGH PRAYER.....	5
(B) DESTINY AND MERITS.....	6
(C) MAZEL AND EFFORT	7
(D) FREE CHOICE AND MAN'S DEEDS	7
(E) BASHERT AND REINCARNATION	8
IV. PERSONAL EFFORT IN THE MATCHMAKING PROCESS	9

Question

Is a person's *zivug* preordained from Heaven, or is it a matter of choice? Does one have the choice to choose whomever he or she would like to marry, or is one's soul-mate destined from Heaven?

Some say it's *bashert* – a matter of destiny. Does that mean that one can just wait for his or her *bashert* to arrive, or is effort required to find it?

*

Answer

Rabbinic literature provides a number of perspectives on this subject. Below is an overview of the foremost sources, followed by a summary of the different approaches found throughout the works of *chazal*.

