



THE SHALOM BAYIT JOURNAL



Parashat Beshalach

Why do Chazal compare finding a spouse and earning a livelihood to the splitting of the Sea?

Understanding the Torah and the Human Experience

Our Sages teach that arranging a match is as difficult as the splitting of the Sea (Sotah 2a). Similarly, Chazal compare a person's livelihood to the splitting of the Sea (Pesikta Rabbati 40).

At first glance, this is a difficult statement to understand. Nothing is difficult for Hashem. The Creator of the universe brought existence into being with a word. Why, then, would Chazal describe shidduchim, parnassah, and the splitting of the Sea as "difficult"?

The Midrash teaches that Nachshon ben Aminadav entered the water before the Sea split. He continued forward until the water reached his neck, and only then did the miracle occur (Mechilta, Beshalach; Sotah 37a).

In all three cases, Hashem can create the opportunity, but He does not force the outcome. A person can be introduced to the right spouse and still refuse to open their heart. A person can be given talents and opportunities and still fail to apply themselves.

Bnei Yisrael could stand before the Sea forever, but until someone was willing to move forward, the Sea would remain closed.

The miracle was waiting for participation. Perhaps this is why the water rose specifically to Nachshon's neck. Throughout Tanach, the neck represents stubbornness. Again and again, Bnei Yisrael are described as an "am keshei oref"—a stiff-necked people. The neck symbolizes our resistance to change, our fears, our need for certainty, and our reluctance to surrender control.

Before the Sea could split, that stubbornness had to be overcome through commitment.

The same is true in marriage. Many people pray for a successful relationship while holding tightly to the very fears, resentments, expectations, or defenses that prevent true connection. They want the blessing without the vulnerability. They want the relationship without the commitment. They want certainty before taking a risk.

But healthy marriages are built by people willing to enter turbulent waters with faith.





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Perhaps this is the meaning of Chazal's teaching. These things are "difficult" for Hashem because He has chosen to leave a crucial piece in our hands. He can bring two people together, provide opportunities for livelihood, and place us at the edge of our own Sea. Yet the final step requires us to move forward with faith in the face of uncertainty and commitment in the face of fear.

*Only
when Nachshon entered the water
did the Sea split*

Sometimes the blessing is already waiting. What is missing is our willingness to take the next step. In our own relationships, we are often standing at the water's edge.

The opportunity for connection may already be there, but it requires us to move first—to be vulnerable first, to forgive first, to listen first, to trust first, and to commit first.

The lesson of Nachshon is that the sea does not always split before we step in.



About The Shalom Bayit Journal

The Shalom Bayit Journal explores the intersection of Torah, psychology, relationships, and the human experience. Through thoughtful essays and practical reflection, the Journal seeks to make timeless wisdom meaningful and accessible for everyday life.

