

## "And Avraham said to his slave... and take a wife for my son for Yitzchak." (24:2-4 )

The *Torah* devotes a large amount of space to the process of Yitzchak seeking a wife and subsequent marriage. This is indicative of the importance that is attributed to this major event. Indeed, there is no event in the life of a Jewish father which is more important than the marriage of his child. No details are left to chance. Avraham elaborates for Eliezer the specific criteria required for Yitzchak's wife, who is to carry on the mantle of Jewish motherhood. The *Torah* details the fact that this first Jewish marriage was arranged through an intermediary or in the classical term, "*shadchan*." In fact, the *Torah* seems to emphasize the virtue of this method of choosing life mates.

The *Michtav M'elياهو* explains Avraham's rationale for entrusting a third party, albeit his faithful slave, with the task of seeking the next Matriarch. The Jewish approach to marriage recommends this method as the route to marital happiness. The man who looks for a wife on his own leaves himself open to external influences or temporary feelings which may very well vanish after the marriage. Objectivity in choosing a mate is a prerequisite which cannot be compromised. The consequences of choosing based upon external pressures are tragic. A third party, who has the advantage of age, experience, and wisdom is more likely to be objective. A third party's decision can be free from internal prejudices and emotional factors. Hence, his choice represents a better guarantee of mutual understanding for the couple's future. Perhaps this first recorded "*shidduch*" should serve as a paradigm for later generations.