

# The Kabbalah of Masculinity & Femininity

Source Sheet by Rabbi Reuven Ibragimov

1. **Talmud Bava Batra 74b** א.  
Everything that God created, He created as male and female, since all creations are in pairs.
  
2. **Genesis 1:27-28** ב.  
(27) And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (28) God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth."  
**בראשית א': כ"ז-כ"ח**  
(כז) וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ  
בְּצַלְמֵ אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה  
בָּרָא אֹתָם: (כח) וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים  
וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ  
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּכְבֹּשׁוּהָ וּרְאוּ בְדֹגַת הַיָּם  
וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַי הָרֶמֶשׂת  
עַל־הָאָרֶץ:
  
3. **Genesis 2:18** ג.  
(18) The LORD God said, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him."  
**בראשית ב': י"ח**  
(יח) וַיֹּאמֶר יי אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הֵיזֶה  
הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה־לּוֹ עֹזֵר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ:
  
4. **Genesis 2:21-24** ד.  
(21) So the LORD God cast a deep sleep upon the man; and, while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that spot. (22) And the LORD God fashioned the rib that He had taken from the man into a woman; and He brought her to the man. (23) Then the man said, "This one at last Is bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh. This one shall be called Woman, For from man was she taken." (24) Hence a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, so that they become one flesh.  
**בראשית ב': כ"א-כ"ד**  
(כא) וַיִּפֹּל יי אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם  
וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח אַחַת מִצַּלְעֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֵר בָּשָׂר  
מִתַּחְתָּנָה: (כב) וַיִּבֶן יי אֱלֹהִים אֶת־  
הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה  
וַיְבִאָהּ אֵל־הָאָדָם: (כג) וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם  
זֹאת הַפֶּעַם עֲצָם מִעֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂר מִבְּשָׂרִי  
לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לָקַחְתָּהּ־זֹאת:  
(כד) עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו  
וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר  
אֶחָד:
  
5. **Rashi on Genesis 1:27** ה.

According to this Midrashic understanding, Man and Woman were one creature, attached back to back; in this rendering, the word tzela, usually translated as rib, would mean "side" (as in tzela hamishkan, the side of the Tabernacle). This original androgynous creature was called "HaAdam —The Man" (as opposed to another word in Genesis, Adam, which refers to the man named Adam). A hint to this is found in one of the blessings that we say at the marriage ceremony, under the chuppah: "Blessed are You, God, Lord of the Universe, for creating 'HaAdam.'" Interestingly, this blessing is said in the present— not "Blessed are You, God, who created HaAdam" long ago in the Garden of Eden, but "Blessed are You who creates HaAdam," since the wedding ceremony is the beginning of the reunion of the male and female.

6. **Talmud: Chullin 60b**

Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi asked: It is written, "And God made the two big luminarie" and [yet] it is written, "the big luminary and the small luminary." [If they are both big, why is one later called small?]

The moon said before the Holy One, blessed is He:

"Master of the world, two kings cannot share one crown."

He [God] said to her, "Go and make yourself small."

She said before Him, "Because I said something proper before you, I should make myself small?"

He said to her, "Go and rule by day and by night"

She said to Him, "What is the advantage in this?"

What is the value of a candle at noon time?

He said to her, "Go, so that Israel may count the days and years through you".

She said to Him, "The sun is also necessary for counting the times and the seasons, as it says, And they [both the sun and the moon] will be for signs and appointed times.

Go, that righteous ones will be called by your name: Yaakov the Small One, Shmuel the Small One, David the Small One....

He saw that she was still upset. The Holy One blessed is He, said: "Bring an atonement for Me that I diminished the moon."

"This is what Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: What is different about the goat offering of the new moon that the term "for God is used regarding it? The Holy One, Blessed is He, said: This goat will be an atonement for My having diminished the moon.

*The gemara tells us that the sun and moon were originally created equal, but the moon was later diminished. The moon, which in Hebrew is called levanah, contains the word lev, heart. The sun is called chamah, which contains the word mo'ach, brain.*

7. **Michtav MeEliyahu 4, p207**

The two great lights allude to two ways in which a person can grasp Hashem's light: through the intellect and through the heart. In the unblemished world, as Hashem originally wanted it to be, the intellect and the heart are equal powers and work together, and everything which the intellect grasps enters the heart immediately and completely. Both of these powers are equally important, for although it is essential to know the truth Intellectually, the Torah's goal is to have the truth in our hearts. The moon thought it should be the greater of the two because it wanted the world to respect the internal service of Hashem the service of the heart, more than intellectual achievement.

8. **The Zohar 1:338a, 2:153a, and 3:161b** .n  
The levanah, the moon, represents woman, because most women's main gift lies in emotional understanding. Men are represented by the chamah, the sun, because, generally speaking, man's main gift is his intellectual power.
9. **Tiferes Shlomo on Sukkos, the Ushpizin of Yosef (p. 57b)** .b  
And in each and every one of the Jewish people there is an aspect of Moshiach ben Yosef and Moshiach ben David, as is explained in the [Kabbalistic] books, and it is the aspect of male and female, as it says, "Male and female He created them" And the Sfas Emes, on Vayigash 5660, says that Yehudah, from whom David is descended, is the heart, while Yosef is the brain. This corresponds to the idea that malchus, which is considered feminine, is the heart, while Yosef is a male type, and therefore the brain. Both are necessary in everyone.

### **Feminine vs. Masculine (notes)**

**BOY:** The West/*doing*/male mode is about excellence, accomplishment, and progress, but is lacking in harmony, wholeness, and completeness. The male contribution is the active projecting of potential. His is an active role of bestowel. he implatants the possibility for life, projecting himself towards the future; and then disappears from the scene. The male force is the active driving force that keeps us accomplishing and progressing.

**GIRL:** The East/*being*/female mode is about being holistic, harmonious, and complete but it is static. The female contributes by entering into a process.. Hers is a reception of that bestowel and a long and drawn out state of being which allows the potential he bestowed to actualize, evolve and transform into a child. The female force, which lives the experience of mothering in real time, symbolizes being in the present; the process becomes the result. The female force is the one that invites us into a relationship with God.

These two traits, the striving, future focused drive for excellence and the present focused drive for wholeness are both crucial, and yet, if left on balanced by the opposite force they can lead to tremendous distortion. A person can live his whole life peacefully and harmoniously, yet remain static and passive without accomplishing or doing anything. Alternatively, one can spend his entire life running, doing, accomplishing, and conquering without ever actually living.

