

The Kabbalah of Masculinity & Femininity | Part 2

Source Sheet by Reuven Ibragimov

1. בראשית א': כ"ז
.א
 (כז) וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵ אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם:
Genesis 1:27
 (27) And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

2. **The Two Types of Giving (Mashpia vs. Mekabel) (Active vs. Receptive Giving)** .ב
 Love is an act of Giving
 In what way is receiving also giving?

3. **Maharal Gur Aryeh Genesis 29:11** .ג
 A poor person has no source of life support coming from him only from others and therefore from his personspective he is considered like the dead.

4. **Nefesh HaChaim 1:3** .ד
 Elokim us used to refer to God in the story of Creation. Elokim refers to the creative aspect of God, and man, too, wold express his humanity through creativity. *This is the source for humans burning desire to give.*

5. **Talmud Pesachim 112a** .ה
 More than the calf wants to suckle the cow wants to nurse

In the biological model, it is the man who models the act of bestowal and the woman who models the act of receiving. She incorporates what he gives her into her being and then becomes a bestower to the fetus.

But the depth here, the often misunderstood but crucial point, is that though in this model, it is he who appears to be actively bestowing (he "gives" the sperm), it is her act of receiving from him that may personify the most potent way to give.

6. **Maharal Gur Aryeh 49:25**

Jacobs blessing to Joseph, the word *Shadayim*, breasts, refers to the male trait of giving, whereas *rechem*, womb refers to the female trait of receiving.

this underscores the awareness that mashpia and mekabel are essentially archetypes, and while they are often referred to in the sources as representative of the male and female respectively, those classifications are not rigid.

7. **Pirkei Avot 4:1**

(1) Ben Zoma says: Who is the wise one? He who learns from all men,...**Who is the mighty one? He who conquers his desires...**

8. **Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, Derech Hashem, trans. Aryeh Kaplan [New York: Feldheim Pb, 1997], Part 1, ch. 3**

Even before the soul enters the body and attains perfection through its deeds, it already has a high degree of intrinsic perfection. This intrinsic perfection and brilliance is so great... The soul, however, is held back by God's decree. Its power is obstructed, and its brilliance reduced, so that it cannot do everything in its power to accomplish this. The soul thus remains imprisoned and restrained to the degree required by God's plan and it can only act upon the body to the extent that God's wisdom allows

In a fascinating comparison, Ramchal draws a parallel between God restricting Himself from giving to us in this world and the soul restricting itself within our bodies — and for the very same reasons.

9. **Stephen R Covey's book, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People"**

Interdependence is a higher value than Independence.....**Dependence >> Independence >> Interdependence.** We all start out life as babies completely **dependent** on our parents or other person to take care of us. This is a state of weakness and powerlessness. As we grow up we work to become **independent**, moving out of our parent's home, earning money for ourselves, etc. A person at this level is able to do things for himself and does not need anyone else to survive. The greatest human achievements come from people working at the third level, **interdependence**. This is when people work together to achieve a common goal, and is the level of maturity of many people in a mature society or organization. This is how mankind has achieved things together that no single person could do alone. Interdependence is the state of human development of greatest maturity and power. As we develop our character as people, we grow in each of the seven areas described by the seven habits. In this process we move up the chart from dependence to independence to interdependence.

The story is told of someone who traveled to the East to study under a master who could teach him the wisdom of Eastern philosophy.
The first thing the master did was pour the Westerner a cup of tea.

The master poured and poured and poured some more until the tea began pouring out of the teacup onto the floor.

When the Westerner protested, the master said to him, "In the West, they teach you how to pour the tea. Here we will teach you how to be a vessel."

With all its technological, scientific, and academic advances, the male-oriented West is dismally retarded in its ability to love, to be vulnerable, to receive. Yet life, in the true sense, depends more on our female ability to open ourselves up to connection than on our male ability to stand alone, strong, and independent.

10. **Taanit 7a:12**

And this is what Rabbi Ḥanina said: I have learned much from my teachers and even more from my friends, but from my students I have learned more than from all of them.

Why should we be grateful to our parents - we didn't ask to be born and ultimately they're just giving to me because they have a need to give? Why should I be grateful to my teacher, when I am giving her more than she is giving me? Why should I be grateful to my spouse, when ultimately he is giving for his own pleasure? After all is said and done, is this person giving to me or taking from me? And there is a real danger in this question. When I begin to feel that the other person is "giving" for his or her own needs, it is easy to enter into that narrow state of mind where I feel taken advantage of. I begin to see everyone as having an ulterior motive — its all for their own benefit. I begin to view everyone around me as if they are vultures trying to suck the marrow out of my bones. A person in this state of mind becomes one huge, festering wound of resentment. He becomes suspicious and small-minded. Since he himself is divorced from the free flow of love—the spillover of goodness that results from feeling gratitude — he is sure that everyone else is out to get him and to take from him.

How do we navigate our way out of this constrictive, self-protective state of mind? How can one escape from the quicksand of resentment and anger, the miserly tightening of one's emotional Purse strings, that comes when one feels that someone else is taking from him?

11. **Rabbi Ezriel Tauber, a well-known writer and lecturer,**

During the Holocaust, a rich man in America comes up with an idea to bribe the German death machine to save the lives of a group of Jews. His plan works, and scores of his brethren are saved from extermination. The ecstasy at having been able to save these people is all-consuming—but the dry facts are that after paying out the bribe money, he is left destitute.

There are two ways this person can react. The first is the narrow view: God, I went out of my way to save Your people, and this is how You repay me? Don't I deserve more? How can You leave me destitute?

But the Jewish response—the response of the consummate receiver—would be: I am overflowing with gratitude to You, God, for giving me the idea and the wherewithal to save these people. So many people toss and turn in their beds with pain because, despite hearing about what's going on, there's nothing they can do to save anyone. Yet I was able to save the lives of scores of people. I am overwhelmed with Your kindness to puny little me for letting me be a part of this. Never can I properly thank You for this opportunity to do good, to save lives and to change the world. And really, this should be enough for me. I'm even embarrassed to ask for more, but still, can I please have some food to eat?

12. **Rabeinu Bachya, Exodus 1**

Whoever, does not acknowledge a gift from a friend will eventually come to reject God Himself .-7



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