

## **Moses Cordovero. Pardes Rimmonim (The Orchard of Pomegranates)**

*Provisional working translation by Stephan Claassen, 2024*

### **Gate 1. Chapter 2.**

Further, we will clarify this Mishna through a different explanation which the commentators have given on “five opposite five”, and it is more fitting and accepted, and it is also recognized as such in the words of Rashbi [Rabbi Shimon bar Jochai] of blessed memory in many places.

And the subject [is] five from the right and five from the left, the five from the right [being] the five Sefirot whose main inclination is towards the side of Chesed (Mercy) which is the right, and they are Keter, Chochma, Gedolah [here the Sefira Chesed is called Gedolah, as not to confuse it with the side of Chesed], Netsach and Tif’eret. And the five on the left, they are the five Sefirot whose main inclination is towards the side of Din (Judgement) which is the left, and they are Binah, Gevurah, Hod, Yesod and Malkut. And if it so that the essence of Tif’eret is [being] the central axis, if this is so, its essence is [still] Chesed as is known, as it is below, opposite Chesed, and its inclination is to the right. And Binah in its aspect is connected to Din (Judgement), as it is called “Performer of mighty deeds” [Morning Service, the Blessings of the Shema], because judgements are aroused from it, as we will explain in the Gate of Essence and Conduct [Gate VIII] chapter 6. And thus on Hod, it is said “And my splendor (Hod) was turned into destruction” (Daniel 10:8), [and] “all day misery (דוה)” (Lamentations 1:13), [misery has] the characters of Hod (הוד). And Yesod also thus the essence of its inclination is to the side of Gevurah, and thus Rashbi of blessed memory clarified in the Tikkunei haZohar (Tikkun 13, page 29b) an the ninth blessing etc., and this is its citation: “And the righteous one/Tsaddik [indicating Yesod] receives from the left, and the central pillar [indicating Tif’eret] receives from the right”.

And he further explains there (in Tikkunei Zohar Hadash, first Tikkun 28)] on this subject itself, and it says: “The righteous one/Tsaddik is he that moves to the left, [and] he is Isaac (יצחק), endpoint (קץ) of life (חי), living (חי) of the worlds/(or: eighteen (חי) worlds), attached to the left etc.”. And although this citation in its context needs a lengthy explanation and appropriate reflection, anyway from the generality of his words it follows for us that for Yesod the essence of its inclination [is] to the left, contrary to Tif’eret. And this subject is possibly the reason for the two harmonizers, apart from other reasons that there are for this matter, as we explain in the Gate of the Harmonizers [Gate IX], chapter 4, with help of HaShem.

And for Malkut similarly its essence is Judgement (Din), as its name is well-known in the mouth of all Kabbalists, which is “Degree of Weak Judgement”. And although there are some places that are apparently opposed to this subject, anyhow these words are absolute foundations, as nails inserted, and the rule is rule of truth.

And see, these Sefirot are as the arrangement of two hands, the right hand: they are Keter, Chochmah, Gedolah, Netsach, Tif’eret; and the five from the left [are] the left hand: Binah, Gevurah, Hod, Yesod, Malkut.

And see, Tif'eret is "the covenant of the tongue", because it is the one that harmonizes between Judgement (Din) and Mercy (Chesed), as is known. And it certainly belongs to the [same] species as the ten themselves. And thus "the covenant of the genitals", even if its essence is in Yesod, see, according to this it will also allude thus to Tif'eret, because "the body [referring to Tif'eret] and the covenant [of circumcision], we consider them as one" as is explained with the words of Rashbi of blessed memory in the Tikkunim [Tikkunei HaZohar] many times. And see, according to this it is found that between ten [fingers, in the world of Atsilut] and ten [toes, in the world of Beriah; see chapter 1 above] there is no harmonizing as there is between five and five, as we have explained above in Chapter 1. And see, this mishna has [now] been explained [with] a second explanation by means of what the commentators have explained on "five opposite five".

We will further explain this mishna [with] a third explanation of "five opposite five" in a way different from what was shown to us [until now]. Let one choose for oneself. And it [the explanation] is that when he says "five opposite five" he does not intend the fingers [which were already] mentioned, because he has moved away from the subject of the ten towards explaining to us the harmonizing between Judgement (Din) and Mercy (Chesed), and [towards] the arrangement of the harmonizing, and [towards] the subject of the need of [this] harmonizing. And to this he says that they are "five against five" [and] that Tif'eret harmonizes between Chochmah and Binah in the mystery of Da'at when it rises towards Keter, as we will explain in more detail in the Gate of the Harmonizers [Gate IX] with help of HaShem. See, the two of them are one opposite one: Chochmah opposite Binah, as this one [Chochmah] is the root of Chesed [Gedolah] and this one [Binah] the root of Gevurah. Furthermore Tif'eret harmonizes between Gedolah and Gevurah, as is known, and Rashbi, of blessed memory, explained it in the Tikkunim (Tikkun 30, page 75b) on the verse "and it was evening and it was morning, [one day]" [Genesis 1:6], and this is what it says [there]: "And God called the firmament 'heavens'" [Genesis 1:8]. "And God called", this is the Upper Mother, "the firmament 'heavens'", this is the Pillar of the Center, which is between right and left, and perfects them both. This is what is written: "and it was evening and it was morning" and these are the evening of Isaac and the morning of Abraham" – end of citation.

And although amidst the plain meaning of the words of the saying there is evidence for our intention, nevertheless 'now that it has come to our hands, let us say a small word on it', so that 'it will' not 'depart without staying overnight' [allusion to Babylonian Talmud, Chullin 91b]. And we need to examine it minutely. Firstly: its saying "'and God/Elohim called" this is the Mother', because hitherto we have not heard this, since all Elohim in the parasha of the Work of Creation refers to Binah. Secondly: what is his intention in saying 'Mother' instead of 'Binah', which is its better-known name? Thirdly: his saying 'Pillar of the center which is between right and left', and as after he said 'Pillar of the center' we don't know the intention that it is in the middle of right and left – which are Gedolah and Gevurah – unless it is required to explain it and to prolong with 'which is etc.'. Fourthly: that as soon as he gets down to the explanations that 'it is between right and left', why not say Tif'eret 'which is etc.' and keep silent of 'the Pillar of the center', which appears to be double. Fifthly: his saying that 'it is between right and left and perfects both of them', it ['it perfects both of them'] is double, as this is implied by 'which is between right and left'. Sixthly: his saying 'this is what

is written: “and it was evening and it was morning”, apparently there is no evidence at all for his intention in the biblical verse.

And let us say that Rashbi, peace be on him, found a difficulty in the verse “and God/Elohim called the firmament ‘heavens’”, because ‘firmament’ is Tif’eret and ‘heavens’ is also Tif’eret, if this is so, what is the intention of the verse in saying “and God/Elohim called the firmament ‘heavens’”, that ‘firmament’ and ‘heavens’ are not the same thing? And he answers to this and says: ‘God/Elohim, this is the upper Mother’. The explanation: as already saying you know that all Elohim which is [mentioned] in Bereshit [the first parasha of Genesis] is with Binah, and this Elohim [in the mentioned verse] is with Binah on the side of its aspect together with the lower ones, as it is the influencer, in other words: the one causing the emanations to emanate, and therefore it is called Mother, and this is what it says: ‘this is the upper Mother’. ‘[to] the firmament ‘heavens’, this is the Pillar etc.’ Explanation: Tif’eret has two realities. The first one is from the side of Chochmah, and this is a prestigious reality that is approximately somewhat the mystery of the Line of Compassion/Rachamim, which is what is emanated from Keter and extends itself to Chochmah, as we will explain in the Gate of the Arrangement of Atsilut [Gate V] with help of HaShem. And this is the reality for which Moses our teacher, of blessed memory, is the vehicle, as is explained in the Tikkunim (Tikkunei HaZohar, Tikkun 13, page 29a). And this is what it says: “And Jacob certainly [is] the likeness of the Pillar of the center from the exterior side. And see, Moses was [also] there. But he [is] from the interior side, and that one [= Jacob] from the exterior side (that one [= Jacob] from the body and this one [=Moses] from the soul)” – end of citation.

And see, this reality, which is its aspect in the property of Compassion/Rachamim, without carrying [the side of] Chesed/Mercy and Din/Judgement with it [thus: not totalizing/mediating the two sides], he will give the name ‘soul’ to the reality [of Tif’eret] that is being regenerated out of the mixing and the carrying. And this soul is called ‘firmament’. And we can call [firmament, רִקְיעַ] by means of Tseruf [that is: re-arranging the letters inside a word] יִרְקַע , “foundation/stretching of Yud”, which is the reality [of Tif’eret] that is stretched and is expanded from Keter by means of Yud which is Chochmah. And this reality he clarified with his citation ‘Pillar of the center’, wanting to say: the pillar and the middle Line which does not have any totality at all from Chesed/Mercy and Din/Judgement, but it is [only] between the two of them, and this is what he says: ‘which is between right and left’. And by means of Binah [indicated by ‘Elohim’] this ‘firmament’ is arranged, and they have clothed it [in] the totality of Fire (אש) and Water (מים) which is what is called ‘heavens’ (שמים), and this is “[He] establishes the heavens with understanding [תבונה, referring to Binah].”(Proverbs 3:19). And the aspect that is totalizing this reality is Binah, who is called ‘Mother’, which is the reality of the Heh (ה), which is [built up from] three Wavs (ו) [that is: one can see the letter ה as a composition of three ו, one left, one right and one (turned 90 degrees) above them] which are the three Lines Chesed/Mercy, Din/Judgement and Rachamim/Compassion, as will be explained in the Gate of Reality [Gate XIV]. And therefore he says: ‘totalizes/perfects both of them’, explanation: from the side of the Mother [it] totalizes the right and the left which is the garment that clothes and crowns the prestigious reality. And there is to this subject a proof from the book of the Zohar, parasha Yitro [Zohar II.84a]. And this is what it says: ‘In the biblical verse “Go out and gaze, o daughters of Sion [...] at the crown with which his mother

crowned him” [Song of Songs 3:11]. What is “at the crown”? Rabbi Isaac said: as what is written: “And Saul and his men encircled David” [1 Samuel 23:26]. Because he is crowned with white, red and green, with all colors that are totalized in him and are turned around him. Rabbi Yehuda said: “...at the crown with which his mother crowned him”. What is “the crown”? As is written: “Israel, with you I will glorify myself (פאר) [Isaiah 49:3], and it is written: “and the house of my splendor (תפארת, Tif’eret) I will glorify (פאר) [Isaiah 60:7]’ – end of citation.

And the explanation: King Solomon, with whom there is peace, he is Tif’eret, and Yesod is his peace. And the crown is the reality [of Tif’eret] that is called ‘heavens’, which surrounds his simple reality that is called ‘firmament’ [and] which emanated from Chochmah. And this corresponds to “at the crown with which his mother crowned him”, [his mother] who is the Elohim that was mentioned in our present discussion. And therefore he said earlier [in our text]: ‘which is the mother’, which is Binah, the mother of the children. And “crown” is an expression of surrounding and covering, as the subject: “And Saul and his men were encircling David”, which corresponds to surrounding. And the explanation: as this crowning is with three colors, which are white from the side of Chesed [here the Sefira Chesed/Gedolah] and red from the side of Gevurah, and green composed from both of them, which is the mixture that is mixed by means of the ‘man of the interspaces’ [an allusion to 1 Samuel 17:4] [which is] Tif’eret. And in order that we shall not err, saying that white and red are not in the reality of Tif’eret but only green [is in it], [therefore] he says: ‘and all of them are included in him and are turned around him’. Explanation: King Solomon, who is the spiritual aspect from the side of Chochmah – which is also called King Solomon, as I will clarify in the entries of the special names with help of HaShem – he is surrounded by the three colors, and they are actually turned around him. And he is white in the property of its aspect towards Chesed[Gedolah], and red in the property of its aspect towards Gevurah, and green in the aspect of both of them in the equilibrium of the mixture. And all of them are surrounding him and are crowning him.

And Rabbi Yehuda explained “the crown” with a different explanation that adds to [that of] Rabbi Isaac, and he says that it is not only this [explanation] but “the crown” is the totality of all six extremities [Chesed/Gedolah, Gevurah, Tif’eret, Netsach, Hod and Yesod], as in the property of this aspect is the special name of Tif’eret fitting, which is from the expression ‘ornaments’, as “the ornaments of the headgears” [Exodus 39:28 (the Hebrew text incorrectly refers to Ezekiel here)], and its explanation is: branches, intending to say that it branches out into six extremities, and the six extremities are its [= Tif’eret’s] branches. And this is what he says: “Israel, with you I will glorify myself” [Isaiah 49:3]. And the explanation is: Binah is speaking to Tif’eret, who is called Israel, that she [= Binah] is ornamenting herself with it [= Tif’eret] and is branching out in branches.

And he brings further proof from the biblical verse “and the house of my splendor I will glorify” [Isaiah 60:7], as she [Binah] is branching herself out and is ornamenting herself with her branches. And it intends to say: the house of Tif’eret above is Binah, as also there is its [= Tif’eret’s] resting place, as he [= Tif’eret] “is extending from one side to the other side” [Exodus 26:28], from the side of the heavens which is Binah to the side of the heavens which

is Malkut. And just as Malkut is the house for Tif'eret so also is Binah [the house for Tif'eret], and this is “the house of my splendor I will glorify”. Explanation: she [= Binah; the Hebrew text mistakenly has “he/it”] is branching out with the branches of Tif'eret which are a measure for it [= Tif'eret]. Or it intends [to say] that Malkut is a house for Tif'eret. And Binah says: “the house of my splendor” which [= the splendor] is Tif'eret, ‘[is] from my side’, because from the side of Binah it [= Tif'eret] totalizes the ornaments, and similarly for its house that is Malkut, it is possible [for Binah to say that] ‘I will branch out’ in the mystery that she [= Binah] totalizes the six branches from its [Tif'eret's] side, that it is clothing itself six in six [שש here could also allude to ‘fine linen’, which is used in the construction of the Mishkan, Exodus chapters 25 and further], and this corresponds to “with the crown”, which is this ornament and garment. Until here [the explanation of Rabbi Yehuda].

And this is what was intended in the biblical verse “And God/Elohim called”, as it is the Mother who is crowning “to the firmament” [with] the crown that is called ‘heavens’. And he brings in a proof to this from the biblical verse: “and it was evening and it was morning, one day”. And the explanation: evening [refers] to Isaac and morning to Abraham. In their totality together Tif'eret is becoming a reality and clothes itself, which is called “one day” which corresponds to ‘heavens’. And the totality of ‘heavens (שמים)’ corresponds to ‘day’, as it [consists of] fire (אש) and water (מים) [see earlier in this chapter for the Hebrew word ‘heavens’ thought as consisting of ‘fire’ and ‘water’], evening and morning. And to this he says ‘one day’, being united and uniting the two aspects [of Tif'eret]. And we could say that from there come the 12 hours. [The letter] Wav ו, referring to Tif'eret] can somewhat be seen in Milluy [filling out its pronunciation in Hebrew characters] [as] וואו, which has the same numerical value as אחד ‘one’ [namely: 13]. And its explanation: the two unifying faces/aspects, Wav from the right side [is] one face, Wav from the left side [is] one face, and the Aleph in the middle [thus forming וואו] unifies the two faces together. And this corresponds to ‘one’, and the two Wavs correspond to the twelve hours [of a day; the numerical value of each ו is 6], Wav from the rising of morning until mid-day, which is Chesed[/Gedolah], [and] Wav from noon until night, Gevurah, and this [together is] ‘one day’. And it is not necessary to expand [on this]. And it had already been possible to add [further] evidence to the subject of Tif'eret's harmonizing between Gedolah[/Chesed] and Gevurah, but since it is a simple and agreed-on matter [we have not done so]. And it is only necessary for us to understand this saying in its composition, and it follows for us [now] that Tif'eret harmonizes between Gedolah[/Chesed] and Gevurah, and the two of them are one ‘opposite’ one.