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# DAF KESHER

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## DVAR TORAH WHAT IS A DONATION?

Divine ownership of the world is a major theme of the Torah. Hashem is, in the words of Avraham Avinu and Malkitzedek the King of Shalem, “קונה שמים וארץ – the one who owns the Heavens and the earth” (Bereishit 14:19, 22). He created the world; it is His. As David Hamelech says, “לה' הארץ ומלואה, תבל ויושבי בה – Hashem's is the earth and all that is in it, the world and all that dwell in it” (Tehillim 24:1).

Yet human ownership is also an underlying principle of the Torah. Private ownership is the legal basis for the prohibition against all forms of theft. The thief cannot say, “What you think is your property is really G-d's, not yours; I will just relocate it by removing it from your house and bringing it to mine.” And numerous times Hashem, in the Torah, speaks of blessing us with many possessions that we will own. He says, “I will give the rain of **your** land in its proper time, the early and the late rains, and you will gather **your** grain, and **your** wine, and **your** oil” (Devarim 11:14). He has even given Man the entire world, as we read in Hallel, “השמים שמים לה' – והארץ נתן לבני אדם – The Heavens are Heavens to Hashem, but the Earth He gave to the children of Man” (Tehillim 115:16).

In his commentary on our Parshah, Harav Moshe Alshich, זצ"ל (1508-1593), shows how this tension is reflected in Hashem's call to Israel to donate all of the materials needed to build the Mishkan (Tabernacle), “דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לְבוּ תִקְחוּ אֶת תְּרוּמָתִי – Speak to the Children of Israel and they should take for Me an offering; from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering” (Shemot 25:2). Hashem requests that they donate the items; apparently they belong to Israel. Yet why does He call the donation תְּרוּמָתִי – **My** offering? The key to understanding this verse, says the Alshich, is to understand what our possessions really are.

We should view our personal possessions, says the Alshich, as a deposit that G-d has placed in our care. While we are alive on this earth, we are appointed to watch and care for Divine property. “לִי הַכֶּסֶף וְלִי הַזָּהָב נָאֵם ה' צְבָאוֹת – Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold, says Hashem of Hosts” (Chagai 2:8). He showers us with blessings and calls what He has given us a gift; but we, from our perspective, are to always treat it as ultimately His. Even when He calls it ours, we must call it His. That, say our sages, is the mindset of one who says a brachah. Rabbi Levi (Berachot 35a) asked how we resolve the contradiction between “Hashem's is the earth and all that is in it” and “The Earth He gave to the children of Man.” He answers that one verse refers to before a person makes a brachah and the second to afterwards. Our ownership is contingent on recognizing Divine ownership.

What, then, asks the Alshich, is a donation? The humble giver realizes that he is giving to Hashem what is already His. Israel's donation to the Mishkan was merely gathering, for Hashem, His gold, silver, copper, and other raw materials He had placed in their care to build, for Him, a dwelling place for their own benefit – so He could dwell among them. They were giving Him His own materials so His Mishkan could be built. “What, then, did Israel give to Hashem?” the Alshich asks. They were only able to give their נדיבות הלב, the generosity of their hearts. Only their enthusiastic generosity was their own, and Hashem treasured it as their true offering.

Also in this week's Daf Kesher: Source Guide – “Above and Below” · “Love and the Divine Word,” by Rabbi Mendel Farber

## SOURCE GUIDE: ABOVE AND BELOW

A bulk of the second half of the Book of Shemot is devoted to the Mishkan. Its components and the step-by-step process of its building and assembling are covered in great detail. What is the Mishkan and what is its importance for the Jewish People and the world? The Midrash, through creating a powerful collection of literary parallels to the verses of the Mishkan, gives us a direction to find answers to these questions. This source guide is built on a passage from Midrash Rabbah on Parshat Terumah.

### A. Above and Below

Rabbi Berechyah opened his teachings about the Mishkan by quoting a verse in Divrei Hayamim:

<p><b>1. Shemot Rabbah 33:4</b>          “Take for Me and offering” – Rabbi Berechyah opened: “To you is greatness and might ... for all in the Heavens and in the earth [is Yours]” (I Divrei Hayamim 29:11).</p>	<p><b>שמות רבה לג:ד</b>          “ויקחו לי תרומה” – רבי ברכיה פתח: “לך ה' הגדולה והגבורה וגו' כי כל בשמים ובארץ” (דברי הימים א' כט:יא).</p>
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He builds on the expression that pairs together “Heavens” with “earth”:

<p><b>2. Shemot Rabbah 33:4</b>          You find that everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created Above He created Below.</p>	<p><b>שמות רבה לג:ד</b>          אתה מוצא כל מה שברא הקב"ה למעלה ברא למטה.</p>
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He follows with an extensive list, drawn from all over Tanach, of Heavenly things and their parallels on earth:

<p><b>3. Shemot Rabbah 33:4</b>          Above there is a dwelling place and darkness, as it says, “See from Your holy dwelling place” (Yishayah 63:15). Darkness: “And Moshe approached the darkness” (Shemot 20:18). And it is written, “Do You judge through the darkness?” (Iyov 22:13). Below: “Then Shlomo said, ‘Hashem said to dwell in darkness’ (I Melachim 8:12), and it is written, “I have built a house that is a dwelling place for You” (I Melachim 8:13).</p>	<p><b>שמות רבה לג:ד</b>          למעלה זבול וערפל, שנאמר, “וראה מזבול קדשך (ישעיה סג), ערפל: “ומשה נגש אל הערפל” (שמות כ:יח), וכתיב, “הבעד ערפל ישפוט” (איוב כב:יג).          למטה “אז אמר שלמה ה' אמר לשכון בערפל” (מלכים א' ח:יב), וכתיב “בנה בניתי בית זבול לך” (מלכים א' ח:יג).</p>
<p>Above: “Fiery angels stand above Him” (Yishayah 6:2).          Below: “Standing shittim wood” (Shemot 26:15).</p>	<p>למעלה “שרפים עומדים ממעל לו” (ישעיה ו:ב).          למטה “עצי שטים עומדים” (שמות כו:טו).</p>
<p>Above: Keruvim, as it says, “The One who sits [among] the Keruvim” (Shemot 37:16).          Below: “The Keruvim were ...” (Shemot 37:9).</p>	<p>למעלה כרובים, שנאמר, “יושב הכרובים” (שמות לז:טז).          למטה “ויהיו הכרובים” (שמות לז:ט).</p>
<p>Above: “The Ofanim were high opposite them” (Yechezkel 1:20).          Below: “The work of the Ofanim was like that of the Ofan of the Chariot” (I Melachim 7:33). And similarly, “Behold there was one Ofan on the earth” (Yechezkel 1:15).</p>	<p>למעלה “והאופנים ינשאו לעומתם” (יחזקאל א:כ).          למטה “ומעשה האופנים כמעשה אופן המרכבה” (מלכים א' ז:לג), וכן “והנה אופן אחד בארץ” (יחזקאל א:טו).</p>
<p>Above: “Hashem was in His holy Temple” (Tehillim 11:4).          Below: “Hashem’s Temple” (I Shmuel 1:9).</p>	<p>למעלה “ה' בהיכל קדשו” (תהלים יא:ד).          למטה “היכל ה'” (שמואל א' ט:ט).</p>
<p>Above: “Kings of hosts wander and wander” (Tehillim 68:13).          Below: “All of Hashem’s hosts left [Egypt]” (Shemot 12:41).</p>	<p>למעלה “מלכי צבאות ידודון ידודון” (תהלים סח:יג).          למטה “יצאו כל צבאות ה'” (שמות יב:מא).</p>
<p>Above: “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water” (Bereishit 1:6).          Below: “The Parochet separated for you” (Shemot 26:33).</p>	<p>למעלה “יהי רקיע בתוך המים” (בראשית א:ו).          למטה “והבדילה הפרוכת לכם” (שמות כו:לג).</p>
<p>Above: “Hashem’s Throne” (probably referring to Yishayah 6:1 and similar expressions).</p>	<p>למעלה “כסא ה'” (כנראה הכוונה לישעיה ו:א וכדומה).</p>

Below: "The Throne of Glory, lifted up from the beginning, the place of our Sanctuary" (Yirmiyah 17:12).	למטן "כסא כבוד מרום מראשון מקום מקדשנו" (ירמיה יז:יב).
Above: "Is there any number to His legions?" (Iyov 25:3). Below: "And two men, officers of legions" (II Shmuel 4:2).	למעלן "היש מספר לגדודיו" (איוב כה:ג). למטן "ושני אנשים שרי גדודים" (שמואל ב ד:ב).
Above: "And count the stars" (Bereishit 15:5). Below: "And behold, today you are as numerous as the stars" (Devarim 1:10).	למעלן "וספור הכוכבים" (בראשית טו:ה). למטן "והנכם היום ככוכבי השמים לרוב" (דברים א:י).
Above: "Behold, the man dressed in linens" (Yechezkel 9:3). Below: "He (the Kohen Gadol) should wear a holy linen cloak" (Vayikra 16:4).	למעלן "והנה האיש לבוש הבדים" (יחזקאל ט:ג). למטן "כתונת בד קודש ילבש" (ויקרא טז:ד).
Above: "Hashem's angel encamps" (Tehillim 34:8). Below: "For he (the Kohen) is an angel of Hashem of hosts" (Malachi 2:7).	למעלן "חונה מלאך ה'" (תהלים לד:ח). ולמטן "כי מלאך ה' צבאות הוא" (מלאכי ב:ז**).
Above: "With a tongs he took it from upon the altar" (Yishayah 6:6). Below: "Make an altar of earth for Me" (Shemot 20:21).	למעלן "במלקחים לקח מעל המזבח" (ישעיה ו:ו). ולמטן "מזבח אדמה תעשה לי" (שמות כ:כא).
Above: "He stretched them out like a tent within which to dwell" (Yishayah 40:22). Below: "How good are your tents, Yaakov" (Bamidbar 24:5).	למעלן "וימתחם כאהל לשבת" (ישעיה מ:כב). למטן "מה טובו אוהליך יעקב" (במדבר כד:ה).
Above: "You extend the Heavens like a curtain" (Tehillim 104:2). Below: "Ten curtains" (II Shmuel 4:2).	למעלן "נוטה שמים כיריעה" (תהלים קד:ב). ולמטן "עשר יריעות" (שמות כו:א).
Above: "Light dwells with Him" (Daniel 2:22). Below: "Pure olive oil, crushed for lighting" (Shemot 27:20).	למעלן "ונהורא עמיה שרא" (דניאל ב:כב). למטן "שמן זית זך כתית למאור" (שמות כז:כ).

The Midrash closes with two additions:

<p><b>4. Shemot Rabbah 33:4</b></p> <p>Not only this (that what is below parallels that which is above), but what is below is more dear [to Hashem] than what is above. You should know that this is true, for He left all that is above and descended to that which is below, as it says, "Make for Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell among you." This is, "For all in the Heavens and earth [are His]" (I Divrei Hayamim 29:11). [And it says, "Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold," says Hashem of hosts" (Chagai 2:8).]</p>	<p><b>שמות רבה לג:ד</b></p> <p>ולא עוד אלא שחביבין כל מה שלמטן משל למעלן. תדע לך, שהניח מה שלמעלן וירד בשלמטן, שנאמר "ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם." הוי "כי כל בשמים ובארץ" (ד"ה א כט:יא). ואומר, "לי הכסף ולי הזהב אמר ה' צב-אות" (חגי ב:ח).</p>
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## B. Three Stages

The Midrash progresses in three stages:

**First** – Rabbi Berechyah adds a new level of meaning to the expression "כי כל בשמים ובארץ" in the verse he quotes. Not only 'All that is in the Heavens and the earth is Hashem's,' but, 'All that is in Heaven is also on the earth.'

**Second** – He then looks through Tanach, searches for Heavenly terminology, and collects seventeen literary parallels that emerge between "what is above" in the Heavens, and "what is below" down here on earth. The power of his collection lies in the length of his list, for it shows us how far-reaching this theme is. Whatever you can find in Heaven you can also find here on earth.

**Third** – His last comment is surprising, that the Heavenly elements here on earth are dearer to G-d than in Heaven. Why is this? What is the reason that "He left all that is above and descended to that which is below, as it says, 'Make for Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell among you'?"

Perhaps the answer is clear when we look at the world. Heavenly elements make up only a small minority of earth. Our lower world is, unfortunately, also full of evil and imperfection. The Heavenly elements of the world are more precious because they are rare. Furthermore, the Heavenly elements of our world are precious because they require human involvement. Hashem enlisted Israel to make His dwelling place, to weave the sky-like tapestries, to build the altar. In order for Him to dwell among us we must build His Mishkan.

This Midrash might give us an insight into the juxtaposition of Mishpatim and Terumah. Parshat Mishpatim sets the stage for Parshat Terumah's Mishkan. Through setting up a society based on Hashem's laws, governing both our interpersonal relations and how we relate to Hashem Himself, we prepare for a world with a Mishkan. To bring down Heaven to earth, we must make our earth a place fit for a Heavenly Divine dwelling place.

## LOVE AND THE DIVINE WORD BY RABBI MENDEL FARBER

The word of Hashem that came to Moshe from above was the most amazing thing about the Mishkan. It descended from above through the two Keruvim (angelic, child-like figures) that were carved out of the Kaporet that covered the Aron Kodesh (Holy Ark). The Aron Kodesh held the two Luchot (Tablets). Between the abstract word of Hashem that constantly came to Moshe from on high, and the words of Hashem that were engraved in the stone of the Luchot, stood the Kaporet and the Keruvim. The link between the transcendent word and the physical stone was the Kaporet and Keruvim.

Truly astounding! The transcendent word of Hashem enters into the world through the little boy and the little girl of the Keruvim (Shemot 25:22). The love between Hashem and man, as represented by the love between the two Keruvim (see Yoma 54a), serves as the vehicle through which the energy of life, Hashem's word, penetrates existence and gives it life. "ונועדתי לך שם ודברתי אתך מעל הכפרת מבין שני הכרבים אשר על ארן העדת את כל אשר אצוה" – I will meet with you there and I will speak with you from on top of the Kaporet between the two Keruvim that are on the Aron of Testimony – all that I will command you to the Children of Israel" (Shemot 25:22).

The metaphor for that love is the love between man and woman, between husband and wife. That love is also the vehicle whereby the word of Hashem, the energy of life, enters into the world of our people: שלום ביניהם – When there is harmony between the husband and wife, שכינה ביניהם – the Divine Presence dwells within them.

As one enters marriage, a relationship called Kiddushin, one must realize that the love that develops between the couple is real only to the extent that it serves as a vehicle through which Hashem's will, His Ratzon, will enter and penetrate into the world.

The inner essence of the Mishkan is the Shechinah, the Divine Presence in the Kodosh Hakodashim, (the Holy of Holies). And within the Kodosh Hakodashim, the Divine word comes down through boy and girl Keruvim that stand above the Aron Kodesh. This is the potential that exists within each Jewish home; the love between the husband and wife can be a vehicle for the Divine Presence to rest within.

### שבת שלום ומבורך

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The following digital Torah resources have been extremely helpful in researching and preparing the Shapell's Daf Keshet:  
DBS – Hataklitor Hatorani, Otzar Hachochmah, the Bar Ilan Responsa Project, Hebrewbooks.org, and the Tanach section of Chabad.org.

**We continue to pray for a refuah shleimah, a complete healing, for all those wounded in the attacks against our People.**