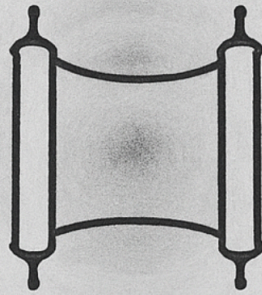


ד"ר

**The Maggid of Mezritch**  
**Ohr Torah**  
**Parshas Terumah**



*Dedicated To:*

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## Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezeritch

### Ohr Torah

### Parshas Terumah

### Siman #101

### Introduction

Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezritch (1704–1772), known as the Maggid of Mezritch, was the primary disciple and successor of the Baal Shem Tov and the architect of early Chassidic thought as a structured spiritual system. In this teaching on “ויקחו לי תרומה” (Exodus 25:2), the Maggid reveals that the true תרומה is not merely material donation, but the elevation of the entire human being into divine alignment, where body and soul unite in conscious service of Hashem.

#### “And they shall take for Me a contribution” (Exodus 25:2).

And behold, our Rabbis of blessed memory said: “for Me” means for My Name, that is to say, that My Name shall be elevated and magnified through you.

ויקחו לי תרומה (שמות כה). והנה אמרו רז"ל: לי לשמי, רצה לומר שיתרומם ויתגדל שמי על ידכם.

And this is specifically “from every man” from one who is entirely a man. That is, one who is wholly called “man.”

וזהו דוקא מאת כל איש — ממי שיהוא כל איש. פרוש שכלו נקרא איש.

And this is “whose heart shall make him willing,” that his heart is pure and clear for his Father in Heaven, he is called “every man.” As our Rabbis of blessed memory said: the righteous are called “clusters” (eshkolot), also meaning that he is wholly a “man.”

וזהו אשר ידבנו לבו, שכלבו זה וברור לאביו שבשמים, הוא נקרא כל איש. כמו שאמרו רז"ל: צדיקים נקראו אשכולות, גם כן פרוש שכלו איש.

For ordinary people are not called “adam” except the soul, but the body is called “the flesh of man.” But this one whose body and heart were refined together for His service, may He be blessed, is called “every man,” and therefore he is called “clusters.”

כי סתם בני אדם אין נקראים אדם רק הנשמה, אבל הגוף נקרא בשר אדם. אבל זה שגוף ונפש גופו וכלו כאחד לעבודתו יתברך נקרא כל איש, ולכך נקרא אשכולות.

And that which is written “and they shall take to you,” meaning together with you they shall exalt My contribution, as it is said: “Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name together” (Psalms 34:4). And understand all this very well.

ומה שכתוב ויקחו אליה, רצון לומר כיחד עמך ירוממו את תרומתי, כמו שכתוב גדלו לה' אתי וקבו כל זה. (Psalms 34:4) ונרוממה שמו יחדו. ה"טב מאד.

#### [NOTE Summary:

The verse “ויקחו לי תרומה” does not mean simply that Israel should give something to Hashem. The Maggid reads “לי” as “לשמי,” for My Name. The purpose of תרומה is that the Divine Name should become elevated and magnified through human action. The act of giving is not about transferring property, but about revealing G-dliness in the world.

However, this elevation can only come “מאת כל איש.” The Maggid emphasizes the phrase כל איש, every man, meaning one who is wholly integrated. Most people are not called “אדם” in their totality. Their soul may be

## Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezeritch

### Ohr Torah

#### Parshas Terumah

holy, but their body remains coarse and self-oriented. The body is then merely “בִּשְׂרֵי אָדָם,” flesh of man, not man himself. Such a person is fragmented: the soul aspires upward while the body pulls downward.

But when “אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לְבוֹ,” when the heart becomes refined, transparent, and directed solely toward the Father in Heaven, then body and soul are harmonized. The entire person becomes a vehicle for Divine service. That person is called כָּל אִישׁ, entirely man. This is why the righteous are called “אשכולות.” An אשכול is a cluster, a complete unit, something whole and gathered together. The tzaddik is not divided between spirit and matter; he is integrated.

Thus, the true תרומה is the lifting of the self. The Maggid then explains “וַיִּקְחוּ אִלֵּיָךְ” as meaning that the people elevate the offering together with the tzaddik. Spiritual elevation is communal. As King David says, “גִּדְלוּ לַיהוָה” (Psalms 34:4). The Divine Name is magnified not in isolation but in unified consciousness.

The deeper message is that Hashem’s Name is revealed in proportion to human refinement. When a person sanctifies both body and heart, he becomes a sanctuary. The Mishkan is not built only of gold and silver, but of purified human beings. The offering is the transformation of ego into alignment, fragmentation into wholeness.

#### Practical Takeaway:

The Maggid teaches that spiritual growth is not about escaping the body but about refining it. One must examine whether service of Hashem remains confined to prayer and thought while the body operates on habit and impulse. The עבודה is to bring the physical into holiness until the entire self serves with one intention.

True giving is self-elevation. When we give charity, time, attention, or kindness, we should ask: is this an act of partial self or whole self? The goal is כָּל אִישׁ, integrated service, where heart, mind, and action align.

#### Chassidic Story:

It is related about Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev, a disciple in the Maggid’s lineage, that once before prayers he observed a simple wagon driver giving a coin to charity. The man’s clothes were worn, his hands calloused, his face sunburned from labor. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak began to weep.

When asked why, he explained: “Look at this Jew. His body works in mud and sweat all day, yet his heart is soft toward Heaven. When he gives a coin, he gives not only money but himself.”

He then said: “This is the meaning of כָּל אִישׁ. When the body itself participates in holiness, Hashem’s Name is lifted higher than by angels.”

And so the Maggid’s teaching lived on: the greatest offering is not what leaves your hand, but what transforms your entire being.

#### Therapeutic Psychological Integration – The Maggid on Becoming “כָּל אִישׁ”

## Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezeritch

### Ohr Torah

### Parshas Terumah

#### The Fragmented Self

Most people live split lives.

Part of us wants to be spiritual, generous, aligned with higher values. Another part wants comfort, validation, control, distraction. The Maggid's reading of "מֵאֵת כָּל אִישׁ" confronts this split directly. He is not describing a legal donor. He is describing psychological integration.

When the Torah says the offering must come from "כָּל אִישׁ," it means from someone who is whole. Not someone whose soul is holy but whose body runs on autopilot. Not someone who prays with intensity but treats daily life as spiritually neutral territory.

Fragmentation creates internal tension. Integration creates strength.

#### Body and Soul Alignment

In modern therapeutic language, we might say: many people are cognitively committed but somatically disconnected. Their beliefs are elevated, but their embodied behavior lags behind.

The Maggid says ordinary people are not fully called "אָדָם." Only the soul carries that title. The body remains "בְּשַׂר אָדָם." That is not an insult. It is a diagnosis.

When the heart becomes clear, when desire is refined, when intention and action align, then the whole person becomes "כָּל אִישׁ." That is integration. That is congruence.

Psychologically, congruence reduces anxiety. Spiritually, it reveals G-dliness.

#### True Elevation

"וַיִּקְחֵהוּ לִי תְרוּמָה" means lifting something up. The Maggid teaches that the offering is not just money. It is the elevation of the self.

Therapeutically, elevation is not repression. It is transformation. You do not eliminate the body. You bring it into alignment. You do not crush desire. You refine it.

When body and soul move in the same direction, there is coherence. When they move in opposite directions, there is inner friction.

Inner friction feels like guilt, procrastination, inconsistency, burnout.

Inner coherence feels like quiet strength.

#### Community and Co-Regulation

The verse "וַיִּקְחֵהוּ אֵלַיךְ" is read by the Maggid as collective elevation. "גִּדְלוּ לְה' אִתִּי." Grow with me.

## Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezeritch

### Ohr Torah

#### Parshas Terumah

In psychological terms, transformation rarely happens in isolation. We regulate each other. We rise together. Being around people who are integrated increases the probability that we will become integrated.

Wholeness is contagious.

#### A Contemporary Story

A high school teacher once told me about a student who struggled deeply. He was bright, but inconsistent. Passionate in class discussions, careless in homework. Warm in conversation, withdrawn under stress.

One afternoon the teacher asked him gently, "What version of you shows up to school each day?"

The boy paused. "It depends which part wins."

That sentence was the breakthrough. They began working not on grades first, but on alignment. What do you actually want? What kind of person are you trying to become? How can your daily behavior support that identity?

Months later the teacher said, "He didn't become perfect. He became consistent."

Consistency is the modern language of "כָּל אִישׁ."

The Maggid's message is radical in its simplicity: holiness is not about having a holy soul trapped in a conflicted body. It is about becoming one person.

When you give, give as a whole self.

When you pray, pray as a whole self.

When you act, act in alignment with who you know you are meant to be.

That is the true תְּרוּמָה. And that is psychological and spiritual freedom.

**END NOTE]**