

תרומה Terumah Gift/Offering  
Exodus 25.1—27.19 /  
1 Kings 5.12—6.13 /  
Mark 10—11



A Gift for God In Exodus 25.2,  
 God tells משה Mosheh Moses to  
 ask ישראל Yisra'el Israel for a תרומה from

everyone who is willing. The root of תרומה is רום room to rise up/be lofty/be exalted. We choose something, lift it up, and set it apart as a gift for God. This can be a day such as שבת Shabbat or a מועד mow'ed appointed time (feast), or a place, such as in this portion, building a Home for God. If we don't set apart times and places, then nothing is holy and everything is common.

God shows us how. First He builds us a planet inside a universe, and then gives us bodies (to experience the physical world), souls (minds, wills, and emotions), and spirits (to commune with Him). God writes in Genesis for 32 verses about how He made everything. Here He devotes about 450 verses to how His kids built Him a Tabernacle. In a sense, it's more important to God what we do for Him than what He does for us. Are you setting aside times and places for God out of willing heart?



תרומה is lifting something up as a gift, setting it apart. In Numbers 21.5-9, after many die from poisonous snakes, Moses lifts up a serpent of brass, and all who look at it recover. ישוע Yeshua Jesus/salvation says in John 3.14-15 that just as Moses lifted up that snake in the desert, so the Son of Man will be lifted up, and all who look to Him will receive eternal life. In John 8.28, ישוע says that when we lift Him up, we will know who He really is, and in John 12.32, He will draw all men to him. Who are you lifting up, ישוע or yourself? If the Church doesn't lift up ישוע, who will be drawn to Him? We either lift up ישוע or we make Him common, the opposite of holy.

**What is a Home for God?** First, there's a difference between a house and a home. We don't want to live in a house; we want to live in a home. "Home is where the heart is." When we build a home for God, it should be a place for our hearts to meet.

In [2 Chronicles 6.18](#), Solomon recognizes the difficulty in thinking that God can live with men, God who made heaven and the heaven of heavens! [Isaiah 66.1](#) adds to this, wondering where we can build a place for God, whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is earth. Nevertheless, God says in [Exodus 25.8](#) to let the people make a מקדש *mikdash* sanctuary that He may dwell with them. And in [Exodus 25.9](#) it is called a משכן *mishkan* dwelling place/tabernacle. There is one more name used later:

Names for the Tabernacle Built by משה				
Hebrew	Transliteration	Sample Verse	Literal Meaning	Translation
מקדש	<a href="#">Mikdash</a>	<a href="#">Exodus 25.8</a>	Holy Place	Sanctuary
משכן	<a href="#">Mishkan</a>	<a href="#">Exodus 25.9</a>	Dwelling Place	Tabernacle
אהל מועד	<a href="#">Ohel Moed</a>	<a href="#">Exodus 27.21</a>	Tent of Appointment	Tent of Meeting

מקדש has a root of קדוש *qadosh* consecrate/sanctify/prepare/dedicate/be holy.

משכן has a root of שכן *shaqan* settle down/abide/dwell/tabernacle/reside. From this root another word is developed, שכינה *shekhinah* dwelling/settling. שכינה is a word developed to describe what happens, for example in [Exodus 40.35](#), when the cloud will שכן on the משכן and the glory of יהוה *YHVH* the LORD fills it.



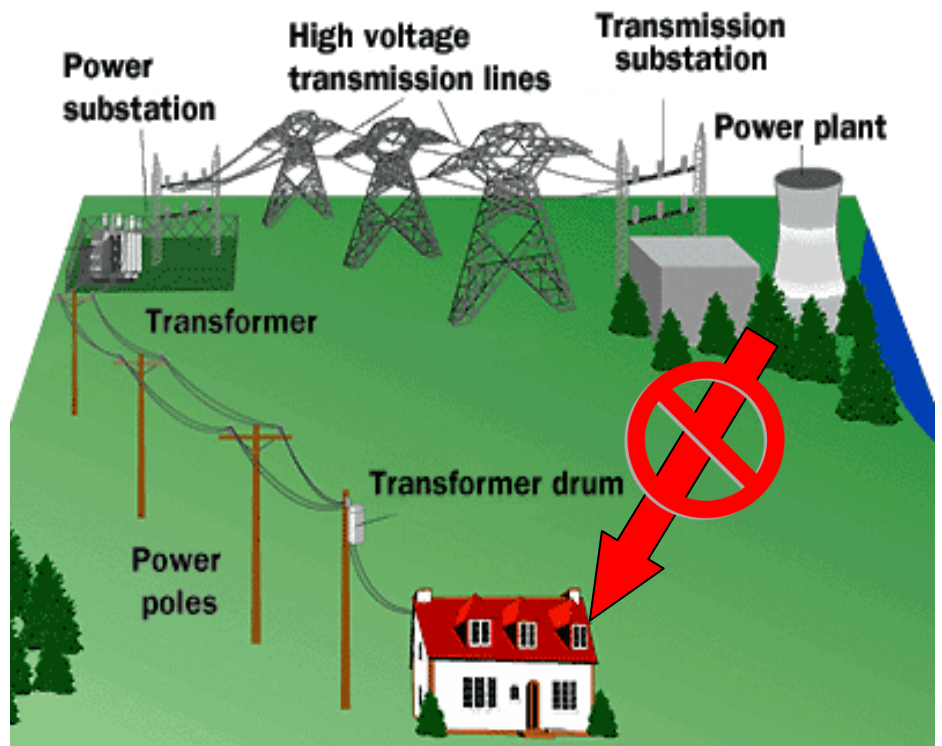
God is קדוש and wants to שכן with ישראל.  
 God wants ישראל to make a מקדש in their משכן. When we join with ישראל, we experience the שכינה of God in us.

**A Little Sanctuary** Is it taking it to far to compare the **שכינה** present at the **משכן** with God's indwelling in us? No. Ezekiel is a prophet to **ישראל** in exile. In [Ezekiel 11.16](#), even though **ישראל** is scattered among the nations, God promises to be for them a **מקדש מעט** *miqdash me'at* little sanctuary wherever they go. As we join with **ישראל** in the New Covenant of [Hebrews 8.8](#), we receive this promise as well. Just as it was up to **ישראל** to build the Tabernacle in the wilderness and set aside times for God, so it is our responsibility to preserve holy places and times wherever we live.

When **ישראל** willingly offers gifts to make a home for God, the items they bring are unsanctified, yet God transforms the building into a **מקדש**. When we come to **ישוע** with a broken body and spirit that have been polluted by the world and an old nature which is contrary to God, God takes our old lives and makes them **קדוש**.

But just as God destroys the Tabernacle at Shiloh as well as the two Temples in Jerusalem, all of which had been **קדוש** at some point, so we should be careful not to treat casually the offerings we give to God, our bodies and spirits. This is a warning repeated over and over in the New Covenant, such as [Romans 6](#), [Hebrews 6](#), and [Hebrews 10](#), all chapters worth studying again and again. Don't be complacent!

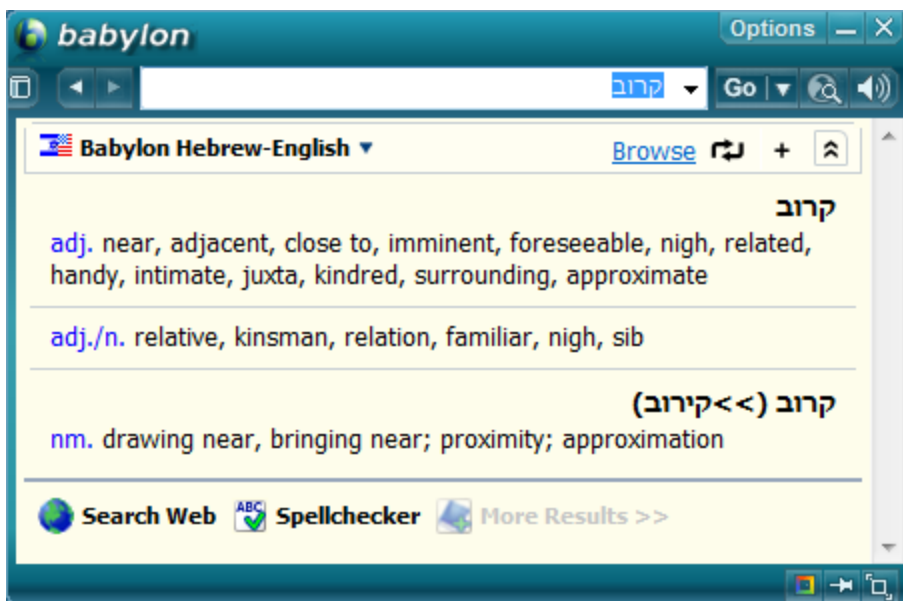
**How Close to God?** Many people say they want to get close to God. But we must get close to God in God's way. Consider the example of a power plant delivering electricity to a private home. Everything works fine as long as the power is reduced through various methods along the way. But a direct transmission from the power plant to the home would result in destruction. In the same way, "let us be thankful and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire,'" [Hebrews 12.28-29](#), quoting [Deuteronomy 4.24](#) and remembering God descending on Mt. Sinai.



**Who Benefits?** When we make an effort to offer up times and places to God, does God benefit from our efforts?

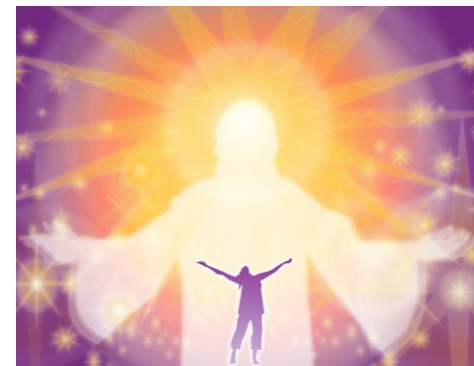
I saw an author in some anti-Bible literature quote the [Isaiah 66.1](#) verse above, about how silly it is to think that we can build a house for God, whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is earth. Then he quotes some passages about the building of the Tabernacle and Temple as a house for God. He says the Bible is contradicting itself.

He's missing the point. The sacrifice involved in setting aside times and places doesn't benefit *God*, it benefits *us*. And we can see this answer right in the Hebrew language. In his book *Buried Treasure*, author Daniel Lapin shows that [קרבן qorban](#) (sounds similar to carbon, which we get when we burn something) offering contains the root [קרב qarav](#) to come near/approach/enter into/draw near. A related word is [קרוב qarov](#) relative/kinsman as shown in the *Babylon* result. In other words, when we make a [קרבן](#) to God, burning it up so to speak, it makes us [קרב](#) to God so that we become like a



[קרוב qarov](#). When we offer something up to God, God doesn't benefit, we do. It brings us closer to Him. Sacrificing time to a company doesn't make the company feel closer to us. Offering help to someone who dislikes us may not change that person's attitude. But in each case our own hearts change. When we invest ourselves into others, we feel closer to them, because now they have part of us. God wants us to make a [קרבן](#) to Him so that *we* benefit!

**It is Good to קרבה** [Psalm 73.28](#) says that it is good to [קרבה qarabah](#) draw near to God. [Isaiah 58](#) explains what this means, with God speaking to "My people" who are practicing false religion, though they seem to take delight, [verse 2](#), in [קרבה](#) God. The passage tells how true fasting and honoring [שבת](#) cause us to [קרבה](#) God. We can be physically close to someone but distant emotionally, or emotionally close to someone who is physically far away. In the same way, we can go to church and pretend to [קרבה](#) God, or we can truly be close to God whom we can't even see.





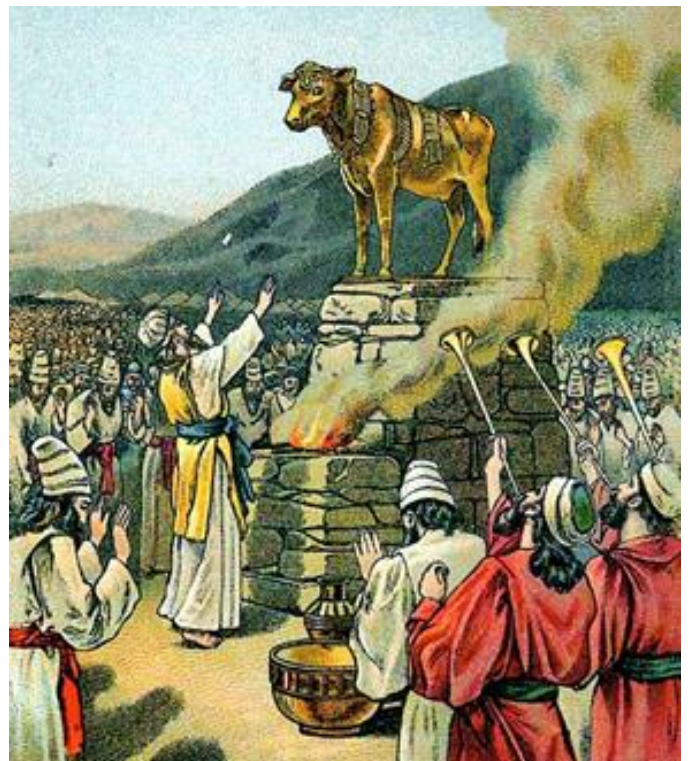


**What's the Standard?** In offering times and places for God, what does God think of our efforts? We know from [Genesis 1.26](#) that we are made in God's image. In [Matthew 6.9](#), **שׁוּע** instructs us to pray to God, "Our Father in heaven..." And in [Romans 8.15](#), Paul says that we have received a Spirit by which we call God  $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha$  [Abba](#) Father. So we can deduce that God looks on our efforts to honor him the same way a loving Dad would view his child's finger-painting. He doesn't say, "What a mess!" Instead he sees the heart that motivated the work and says, "Nice job!"

**The Risk of Misusing תרומה** As **משה** goes up Mt. Sinai to receive **תורה** [Torah](#) Law/instruction over a 40-day period, the people grow anxious. Finally, Aaron in [Exodus 32](#) has the people make a **תרומה** of gold which he fashions into the golden calf, a remnant of Egyptian idolatry. Pagan revelry erupts. When **משה** comes down and sees this, what does he do after breaking the tablets of the Law? In verse 20 he burns the calf, grinds it to powder, pours the powder in the river, and makes the people drink the water.

Some could argue this is a perfect waste of a lot of gold—gold that could have been used in the **מקדש**! But God doesn't want leftovers from paganism. We can say a prayer over a pagan practice, such as changing **שבת** to the first day of the week, or set a new appointment with God contrary to [Leviticus 23](#), but that doesn't make these practices **קדוש**. If a woman's husband is unfaithful and she remarries, the new husband doesn't want the wife wearing the first husband's wedding ring. When we die to sin and begin a new relationship with God, God doesn't want us reverting to pagan practices.

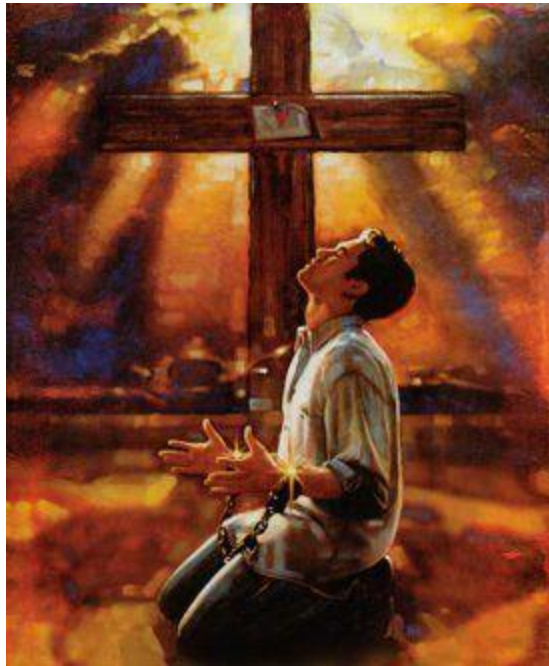
Notice in the picture how Aaron is praying to the golden calf. Remember this image the next time you hear, "I prayed about it and..." Praying about something contrary to God's Word doesn't make it **קדוש**!



**Parable of Two People** Two people buy tickets for the Powerball lottery. One of them wins! The winner dreams night and day about what to do with the money. The loser thinks it would be great to win, but isn't consumed with thinking about it like the winner.

Like the winner, don't we want to be consumed with קרבה God?

תרומה in a nutshell is building a home for God. The Temple no longer exists and ישראל is scattered around the earth. But we can build a מקדש מעט wherever we are. Our hearts can be a משכן for the שכינה of God to settle on us. One way to do this is to set aside times and places that are קדוש to God. We must do this according to the Word of God, or we will simply be repeating the error of Aaron and the sin of the golden calf. But if we lift up ישוע, then we and others will be drawn to Him.



Glossary, in order of appearance:

תרומה	<i>terumah</i>	gift/offering
משה	<i>Mosheh</i>	Moses
ישראל	<i>Yisra'el</i>	Israel
רום	<i>room</i>	to rise up/be lofty/be exalted
שבת	<i>Shabbat</i>	Sabbath
מועד	<i>mow'ed</i>	appointed time/feast
ישוע	<i>Yeshua</i>	Jesus/salvation
מקדש	<i>mikdash</i>	sanctuary
משכן	<i>mishkan</i>	dwelling place/tabernacle
אהל מועד	<i>ohel moed</i>	tent of appointment/meeting
קדוש	<i>qadosh</i>	consecrate/sanctify/prepare/dedicate/be holy
שכן	<i>shaqan</i>	settle down/abide/dwell/tabernacle/reside
שכינה	<i>shekhinah</i>	dwelling/settling
יהוה	<i>YHVH</i>	the LORD/Holy Name of God
מקדש מעט	<i>miqdash me'at</i>	little sanctuary
קרבן	<i>qorban</i>	offering
קרב	<i>qarav</i>	to come near/approach/enter into/draw near
קרוב	<i>qarov</i>	relative/kinsman
קרבה	<i>qerabah</i>	draw near to God
אָבבא	<i>abba</i>	father
תורה	<i>Torah</i>	Law/instruction