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Everything We Own Belongs To Hashem

הכל וקונה הכל - Hashem is "Owner of everything".

It is written, "*The heavens are to Hashem, and the earth He gave to humans.*" Hashem owns the world, yet, He also "gave" it to us. So, to whom does the earth belong to? Does it belong to Hashem, or to us, whom He gave it to?

The answer is, when we first make a blessing over food, we are thanking Hashem for giving it to us. But then we make an after-blessing over the food (a *beracha acharonah*), in which we declare that Hashem owns everything - in other words, we return the world back to Hashem after we finish using it.

When a person uses any item on this world, there are two different attitudes which he can have. Either he considers himself to "own" the item, or he considers himself to be "borrowing" the item from Hashem. What is the difference? If I receive a present from someone, I thank the person as he gives it to me, but after I take it into my possession, I forget that it's a present. I look at it as my own acquisition which I have rightfully acquired. It's "mine." But when I borrow an item, even as I use the item, I am aware the whole time that it's not mine, and that I am just borrowing it.

All of us have things on this world which we "own." How do we look at these things? Do we look at these things as a "gift" that has been given to us for keeps (therefore, we feel that our things are "ours"), or do we view them as things that we are merely borrowing from Hashem?

Man is comprised of a body and soul. Our body has a certain perspective towards our acquisitions, while our soul has a different perspective when it comes to acquisitions. Our body's viewpoint is that our acquisitions are forever, that our acquisitions are like a part of us. Our soul, however, realizes that all our acquisitions on this world are just temporary. Our soul understands that our house is more like a place of lodging that we are given to sleep in, and that any of the items we possess are just being borrowed. Our soul understands that our stay here on this world is merely like a guest passing through a city. When a guest comes to a city, he doesn't buy things, because he knows he's going back to his hometown soon. He will borrow and rent things, of course, for what he needs at the moment; after all, he needs to use things to get by.

When a person lives life through the prism of the body, he feels that his various acquisitions on this world are totally "Mine." If he is given something as a present, or if he buys it from a store, he will be

able to recognize that there used to be another owner of this item, but he can only recognize this as he's actually being given the item. Soon after he gets it/purchases it, he feels that it is his 100%, that he "owns" his item. But when a person lives through the prism of his soul, he realizes that everything he has on this world is only being borrowed. He owns nothing.

When we say that Hashem is *קונה הכל*, the Owner of everything, we need to realize that Hashem owns the entire Creation – both heaven and earth. Everything goes back to Hashem in the end, as we express when we make a *beracha acharonah* after we eat.

Understanding Why We Do Chessed

Avraham Avinu personified the trait of *chedsed*. He was able to excel in *chedsed* because he realized that nothing he owned was really "his", but rather that everything being given to him was so that he should use it to give it to others. The depth behind why a person should do *chedsed* is because a person realizes that Hashem is Owner of everything, therefore, everything being given to me is so that I should do *chedsed* with it.

When a person does *chedsed*, either he does it with pure motivations, *lishmah*, or he does so with ulterior motivations, *shelo lishmah*. When a person does *chedsed* without the intention of *lishmah*, then he feels like "I" am doing *chedsed*. He awaits a reward for all his *chedsed*. But when a person does *chedsed lishmah*, he realizes that nothing belongs to "Me"; everything belongs to Hashem, and whatever I have is given to me so I can use it for what Hashem wants me to use it for.

All light comes from the sun. The sun is called *shemesh*, which is from the word *hishtamshus*, to "serve." The sun is a servant of Hashem, and this is alluded to in the statement, "The face of Moshe is like the sun." Moshe is called the "servant of Hashem", because the sun shines its light solely in order to serve Hashem, and therefore he is compared to the sun.

There is a kind of person who is a *baal chessed* (person who performs acts of kindness), but he doesn't realize that he is supposed to serve Hashem through his *chedsed*. He does *chassadim*, kindnesses – but he doesn't do *chassadim tovim*, "good" kindnesses. In other words, he is missing the element of serving Hashem in all his *chedsed* that he does.

We need to absorb the inner point of every situation. When it comes to *chedsed*, we must realize what the inner point of *chedsed* is. The inner depth to *chedsed* is to understand that everything I have, ***in actuality***, belongs to Hashem – not to me.

Chazal say that in the future, *Gehinnom* will cease, but Hashem will take the sun out of its sheath. The *tzaddikim* will benefit from its light, while the wicked will get burned and destroyed from the sun's full zenith. The depth behind this matter is that *tzaddikim* understood as they lived that they existed only to serve Hashem, and therefore they will be able to withstand the sun, because they are also like the sun, which exists solely to serve Hashem. But the wicked, who never realized that life is about serving Hashem, will not be able to bear the heat of the sun - Hashem's servant. In other words, because they won't be able to conceptualize with the idea of existing to "serve Hashem", they won't be able to bear the sun, which is the *shemesh* - the "servant" of Hashem. Thus, they will perish from the sun's zenith.

If a person lives life through his body, he feels that all that he owns this world are "Mine." But when someone lives through his soul, he realizes that all that he has was only given to him so that he can use it for a higher purpose, other than for himself.

The words here are not about a lofty level to acquire; they are not matters of *chassidus* (piety). It is rather on how to view life in the proper perspective. It is to be aware of the inner point of life. If someone does *chedsed* to others but he thinks he's giving away "his" money or possessions, he is

doing *chassadim* with others – but he is not doing *chassadim tovim*.

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/tefillah-023-owning-vs-borrowing-world>