



From the desk of
MORDECHAI MALKA
 Chief Rabbi of Elad, Israel
 Founder and President of Or Hamelech Institutions
 Member of Chief Rabbinate of Israel



Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

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OHR

Parashat Tzav

HAMELECH

Man is Asked to Say One Thing – “Thank You”

On the words from our *parashah* (7:12), “*Im al todah yakrivenu*, If he shall offer it for thanksgiving,” Rashi comments: “If [he is bringing the *korban*] over thanksgiving for a miracle that was wrought for him; for example, seafarers, desert travelers, people detained in prison, a sick individual who has been healed. For they must offer thanks, as the verse states about them (*Tehillim* 107:21-22), ‘They should give thanks to Hashem for His kindness and His wonders towards mankind.’ If for one of these things he vowed to bring these peace-offerings, they are peace-offerings of thanksgiving, and they require the bread that was stated regarding this [*korban*]. They can only be eaten for one day and one night.” Rashi continues to explain how there were four different types of bread, each one consisting of ten loaves.

From Rashi we learn two things about the *korban todah*, the thanksgiving offering: The first thing we learn is that an individual must bring a *korban todah* for each revealed miracle that occurs to him, to thank Hashem for His kindness. The second is that this *korban* varied greatly from all the other *korbanot* in the sense that he was required to bring 40 loaves of bread along with it. According to R’ Chaim Naeh the loaves amounted to 83 kilograms; according to the

Chazon Ish, 143 kilograms, a very large amount of bread.

Questions:

The Netziv asks two questions: 1 – Why does the Torah require that such an abundance of bread be brought for the *korban todah*? This is not something that we find by any other *korban*; 2 – All other *korban shelamim* are eaten for two nights and one day. Yet the *korban todah* is only permitted to be eaten one day and one night until *chatzot*, halachic midnight. Since there is so much bread to eat with the *korban todah*, shouldn't it be the opposite?

The Primary Thanksgiving is in Public

He answers by stating that the main purpose of the *korban todah* was in order to strengthen the faith of the Jews by his publicizing the miracle and the Providence of Hashem which helped saved him. This is accomplished by giving thanks publicly. Therefore the Torah requires that he bring 40 loaves, which according to R’ Naeh would be eaten by at least 330 people, assuming that each person would eat approximately a quarter of a kilogram of bread. According to the Chazon Ish's view, 572 men would be needed to eat all the bread. This way, the one for whom the miracle was wrought would be forced to offer his thanks before many people.



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None of the *Korbanot* Will Be Offered in the Future Apart From the *Korban Todah*

The Midrash states [*Vayikra Rabbah Tzav 7b*, *ibid. Emor 12a*, *Midrash Tanchumah Emor* (14)] that in the World to Come all of the *korbanot* will cease apart from the *korban todah*, and all of the prayers will cease except for the *Hodaah* prayer, offering of thanks. We must understand why the *korban todah* is more important than all of the other *korbanot*.

Hashem's Way is to Conceal the Miracle Behind Nature

At the end of *Parashat Bo*, the Ramban famously states that by experiencing revealed miracles one is led to thank Hashem even for the hidden miracles as well. He states that man does not have a portion in the Torah until he believes that **all the events which occur are truly miracles and not merely acts of nature**. Indeed, when man strengthens his faith and trust in Hashem, he will realize that his entire life is being directed by Hashem's Providence and that Hashem performs miracles for him each and every moment. This is as we recite in the *Shemoneh Esrei* prayer [*modim*], "For all of Your miracles that are with us each day and for all of Your wonders, night, morning, and midday." However, Hashem conceals the miracles inside nature so that man continues to be afforded free choice. For if man would constantly see open miracles and observe

a mitzvah rewarded and a sin punished immediately, he would lose free choice and no longer be deserving of reward. Rather, man must thank Hashem for the kindnesses that He performs for him each day – indeed, our Sages expound that one must praise Hashem for each breath he breathes – and not simply take it for granted. When one visits a hospital and sees how the ill struggle over each breath, he will learn to value his ability to breathe normally. This is as we recite in the *Nishmat* prayer, "If our mouths were filled with praise like the sea and our tongues with rejoicing like the many waves..., we would not sufficiently be able to thank You, Hashem *Elokeinu*, and to bless Your Name, our King, for one out of a thousand thousands, thousands of thousands, and multitude of favors that You performed for us and our forefathers." Sadly in present times, misfortunes are increasing, and each day there are new, strict decrees meted out, with both young and old passing away from seemingly ordinary occurrences: this one chokes, the other does not wake up in the morning; this one passes away from the flu, the other from pneumonia or from a seemingly ordinary fall. We see, therefore, that to rise normally each day is not to be taken for granted. Yaakov Avinu has already taught us this by stating [*Bereishit 32:11*], "*Katonti mikol hachasadim u'mekol ha'emet asher asita le'avdecha ki be'makli avarti et ha'Yarden ve'ata hayiti le'shnei machanot*, I have been



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diminished from all of the kindnesses and from all of the truth that You have done for Your servant, for I crossed the Jordan with only my staff and now I consist of two camps." We find an example of this earlier as well, when Yaakov requested [ibid. 28:20] "*Ve'im titen li lechem le'echol u'beged libbosh*, If You will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear." For an individual must not take for granted everything that takes place in his life and consider it a forgone conclusion that he will always have what he presently has. Just go out and see how many individuals have not found a spouse and even if they have, how many have not merited offspring? Even if they have children, how many of them have left the Torah path, as their parents bemoan and cry over them? Even if one is blessed with all of the above, how many are not healthy and struggle to remain alive day after day? How many lack a sufficient livelihood and are starving for bread to eat and lack clothing to wear? For the necessities of life are not a forgone conclusion. Only when an individual brings a *korban todah* for the revealed miracles and publicly thanks Hashem, will he learn to say "thank you" for all of the hidden miracles that occur each moment. He will not take for granted that everything is running smoothly in his life, and he will serve Hashem with gratitude and a completely devoted heart. Therefore the *korban todah* and thanksgiving prayer will never cease.

Story About Rav Elyashiv zt"l

When Rav Elyashiv zt"l passed away, there were no eulogies said, as per his request, except for the one delivered by his son-in-law, Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein *shlita*. He related that Rav Elyashiv was interred in the hospital several times and a specific doctor was flown in from *chutz la'aretz* to treat him. One day, Rav Elyashiv requested from his family members to teach him how to say "thank you" in English. They asked him why this was necessary. Rav Elyashiv answered that he wished to thank the doctor who flew in specifically to help him, and the doctor did not understand Hebrew. They responded that they could thank the doctor for him, and that he did not have to expend effort in learning English especially for this reason. So the Rav answered by posing the following question: Why is it that in the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei, the *chazzan* says the *berachot* and exempts the congregation, while when offering thanks in *Modim*, our Sages enacted that each member of the congregation must say it himself and not be exempted by the *chazzan*? Our Sages are teaching us, answered Rav Elyashiv, that to truly express gratitude, the recipient of the good must say "thank you" himself, and not have someone else do it for him.

Megillat Esther Will Remain Forever

According to this, we can understand the words of the Rambam [*Hilchot Megillah* 2:18] who states that all of the books of *Nach* will no longer be read upon the arrival of Mashiach apart from



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Megillat Esther. It will perpetuate similar to the Five Books of the Torah and the *halachot* of the *Torah Sheh Be'al Peh*. The main theme of Megillat Esther is that Hashem makes hidden miracles that are concealed within nature. Man must recognize this, and must therefore thank and praise Hashem for all that happens to him. This goes hand in hand with the theme of the *korban todah*, which will also remain upon the arrival of Mashiach.

Mazel Tov!

A young avreich approached Rav Schach and asked him if he should make a Kiddush for his newborn daughter who was born within a year after his *chatuna*.

Rav Schach said: Had she been born only 8 years after your *chatuna* and you would have had to spend 8 years waiting for your first child, would you have made a Kiddush? For sure! So now that you got a daughter, and you didn't even have to wait, should you not make a Kiddush?!

After 13 Years...

My neighbor told me a story of a friend of his who had kidney failure. For 13 years he needed dialysis. Finally a kidney donor was found and the transplant was performed.

After his first successful bathroom trip after 13 years, you should have heard that Asher Yatzar! The entire hospital ward heard it and can never forget it!

Had I Only Known...

Rav Yitzchak bar Merion teaches that when a person does mitzvot he should do them joyously. Had Reuven known that the Torah would write of him, "And Reuven heard and he saved him [Yosef] from their hands," he would have placed Yosef upon his shoulders and carried him to his father.

Had Aharon known that the Torah would write of him, "And he is going out to greet you; he will see you and be happy in his heart," he would have gone out with drums and dancing to greet Moshe!

Had Boaz known that the Torah said, "And he gave her roasted wheat kernels," he would have prepared for her fattened calves! (Vayikra Rabba 34)

Rashba (Responsa I:581) brings this Medrash and concludes that from here we see that it is appropriate to publicize those who do *mitzvot*.

We can suggest a number of reasons for this. One is that it brings honor to Hashem. Another is that it encourages others to follow suit. Additionally, it provides encouragement for these people themselves to continue to act piously.

Telling the Story

The Zohar teaches (Parashat Bo, p. 40): It is a mitzvah to tell over the story of *Yetziat Mitzrayim*. Each Jew is obligated to praise Hashem. Whoever speaks about *Yetziat Mitzrayim* and is happy about it, he will merit to be happy with the



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Shechinah in *Olam Habah*. Now, that is a real *simchah*! This man is happy with the *Shechinah*! Hashem is happy with that story.

When people tell over *Sipur Yetziat Mitzrayim* joyously, Hashem gathers together the Heavenly Hosts and tells them, "Come and hear the story of My praise that My children are telling and they are happy with My redemption."

All of the *malachim* gather around and come to hear Yisroel telling over *Sipur Yetziat Mitzrayim* etc.

We see that telling over praise of Hashem makes such a great impact upon all worlds. Similarly, in a Jewish home, when each spouse verbalizes his and her appreciation for each other, that accomplishes so much for the harmony of the home.

Reb Leib and the *Shoteh*

Reb Yehuda Leib Chasman was *Mashgiach* of Yeshivat Chevron. He was once delivering a mussar discourse, when he walked the town imbecile. He banged on the *bimah* and announced, "Rabbotai, I want to tell you that Rabbi Chasman is a *Gadol Hador*. He is a *tzaddik* and a true *Talmid Chochom*."

Before he could finish, a few of the *talmidim* grabbed hold of him and kindly showed him the door.

Reb Leib continued his discourse, first saying how much he appreciated the man's encouraging compliments.

One married couple was having difficulty in the realm of *shalom bayit*. They came to speak to a Rav and *Rabbanit*. It became clear that words of praise and endearment were almost non-existent in that home. The wife said that she did not feel loved and appreciated. The Rav asked the husband if he admired his wife. The husband responded in the affirmative.

The Rav asked how often the husband expresses his fondness for his wife. The husband shrugged his shoulders and said, "When we got married 18 years ago, I told her that I love her. If anything would have changed since then, I would have let her know!"

How sad!

Say Something Nice

We see that the Torah requires that a *Korbon Todah* be brought in a way in which Hashem's praise will be told in multitudes.

We went on to say that not only between man and Hashem, but also between man and his fellow and especially between husband and wife, it is so utterly important, even vital, to express appreciation and endearment, constantly and consistently.

May we merit to tell of Yetziat Mitzrayim happily and improve all of our relationships with positive words.

Chag Same'ach
Mordechai Malka