

## I MADE IT ACROSS THE OCEAN SAFELY! THANK YOU HASHEM!

### PARSHAS TZAV

**Rabbi Yissocher Frand** brings a beautiful insight from the **Avudraham**. When the chazan repeats the *Shmoneh Esrei* the congregation listens silently. They merely respond to each bracha by saying *baruch hu uvaruch shmo*, blessed be Hashem and blessed be his name, and *amen*. However, while the chazan says *Modim*, the congregation does say a prayer. Why is *Modim* different? The **Avudraham** says that for all the other blessings in the *Shmoneh Esrei* the chazan can represent us and say the blessings for us. However, nobody else can say 'Thank you' for us. Thanks, must come from ourselves.

Parshas Tzav introduces the laws of the *Korban Todah*, the Thanksgiving offering (Vayikra 7:12). **Rashi** explains that a *Todah* offering is brought by someone who experienced a personal miracle. **Rashi** lists four examples. One who traveled across an ocean or through a desert and safely reached his destination, one who was thrown in jail and then was released, or one who was seriously ill and then recovered.

**Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld** makes an interesting point. Parshas Vayikra lists all the sacrifices that an individual may bring. However, the laws of the *Korban Todah* are left out. Why? Furthermore, Parshas Tzav discusses the details of the sacrifices, instructing the kohanim what to do. It is like an instruction book for the kohanim. Yer, surprisingly, this Parsha does talk about the *Korban Todah*. Why?

**Rav Sonnenfeld** further asks why **Rashi** uses the word "miracle" to describe the four circumstances that require one to bring a *Korban Todah*. Each of these situations may involve risk or danger but they are not miracles.

"If he brings it as  
thanksgiving  
offering..." (Vayikra  
7:12)

Truthfully, these examples are not open miracles. However, they, too, are miracles! They are examples of hidden miracles that Hashem performs behind the veil of Nature.

We take certain things for granted because we become accustomed to them but they are also miracles. The birth of a baby, being healed after an illness, and the ability to do successful heart surgery are truly miracles!

**Pirkei Avos** (5:5) lists several miracles that were a daily occurrence in the Beis HaMikdash. Two examples are that although flies are typically attracted to raw meat, flies were never attracted to the animals that were slaughtered as *korbanos*. Also, the wind never blew the smoke that rose from the Altar. The kohanim saw miracles constantly. When someone lives with miracles on a daily basis, he may get used to the miracles and may no longer appreciate them. This, **Rav Sonnenfeld** says, explains why the *Korban Todah* is listed in Parshas Tzav. It is a reminder to the Kohanim who witness miracles on a daily basis and is to remind us that even

frequent miracles and even acts of Nature are all miracles from Hashem. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand on Torah.org)

**Rav Avrohom Pam** zt”l says that nowadays, since we no longer have *korbanos*, when one is saved from any of the above-mentioned four circumstances, he says a bracha during the time that the Torah is read in shul בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ד' אֱלֹהֵינוּ. מְלַךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַגּוֹמֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבוֹת, שְׂגָמְלֵנִי כָּל טוֹב.  
“*Blessed is Hashem Who bestows good things upon the guilty and Who has bestowed every goodness upon me.*”

When one is saved from a crisis that necessitates this bracha, he experiences goodness from Hashem. While he is in the midst of a crisis it is very hard for him to see the kindness of Hashem. He must realize that the crisis itself is for his benefit even if he doesn't immediately see its benefit! That is the meaning of the last part of the bracha, “*Who has bestowed every goodness upon me.*” The entire situation, not just the salvation from the crisis, was good for him.

For example, when a young child is given an injection to protect him from contracting a grave

illness, he cries bitterly and often refuses to cooperate with the “bad” person who wants to prick him with a needle. He doesn't understand that the pain will be temporary and the benefit will be long lasting. (Messages from Rav Pam by Rabbi Sholom Smith)

**Ksav Sofer** says a similar idea. There is a pasuk in Tehillim (50:2), “זָבַחַ תּוֹדָה יִכְבְּדֶנִּי.” “One who offers a thanks offering, honors Me.” **Midrash Rabbah** (9:2) quotes Rabbi Huna who says in the name of Rabbi Acha that the Hebrew word, “יִכְבְּדֶנִּי” “is written with an extra letter “nun”. That teaches us that we must give thanks for being saved from the crisis as well as giving thanks for the crisis itself because all that Hashem does is good. The crisis that Hashem put us in is either to awaken us to return from our evil deeds or to give us goodness through it.

The second part of the pasuk says, “*and to one who sets out on the proper way I will show the salvation of G-d.*” One who believes with his whole heart that the crisis was good for him and thanks Hashem for it, then Hashem will show him how goodness resulted from the crisis. (Yalkut Lekach Tov by Yaakov Yisroel Beifus)

**Hashem loves each and every one of us so much! When Hashem saves us from a crisis or a dangerous situation, we must thank Hashem. Ideally, we should also thank Hashem for giving us the crisis, although that is very difficult to do. Everything that happens from Hashem is for our best!**

**If it happens it was willed by Hashem.  
If it was from Hashem, then by definition it is good.  
If it is good then I want it.  
So thank you Hashem!**

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Rabbi Yaakov Finestone is the director of JEP Queens. For almost 50 years JEP Queens has been in the forefront of kiruv. JEP has changed the lives of thousands of Jewish children enrolled in public schools and kiruv schools. Many are shomrei Torah and mitzvos today because of JEP.

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