

Parsha Ponders

Tzav | Mar 28, 2024 | 19 Adar II 5784

Thanks¹

וזאת תורת זבח השלמים אשר יקריב ליקוק: אם על-תודה יקריבנו

This is the law of a *shelamim* offering, which shall be brought for Hashem: If you'll bring a thanksgiving offering...²

Our Sages teach us³ that there are four people that need to express thanks by bringing a *korbon Todah*, a thanksgiving offering. One of them includes someone who was critically ill and recovered. The reason they are obligated is so that they keep in mind that true healing comes from Hashem. A person could, G-d forbid, make a mistake and assume everything was natural or due to modern medicine, leaving Hashem out of the picture. True, Hashem gives us the permit⁴ and option to heal ourselves using doctors and modern medicine. However, to avoid forgetting Hashem, one must bring an offering upon healing.

What is going on in a person's mind when they bring this offering? Besides thanking Hashem, they admit that they probably aren't deserving of health. After all, when a person becomes ill, it can be because of their sins. However, if that's the case, the illness is there to atone for the sin. How then can a person go to the doctor to get better, when they are taking away their atonement? Maybe when they become better, they're still deserving of more punishments?

This is another motivation for requiring a *korbon Todah*. When a person thanks Hashem and admits they aren't deserving, they are in effect completing their atonement. They no longer have to endure any more suffering for what they've done. This is similar to a concept called *modeh b'kenas, patur*⁵. Essentially, if someone does something wrong, and has to pay a fine, there's an escape clause. For example, if someone steals, the Torah fines them and makes them pay back double what they stole. However, if they admit that they stole, and return what they stole, they are exempt from the fine.

By admitting, it's as if they've paid off the fine⁶. So too when we admit that our health comes from Hashem and we aren't necessarily deserving, we pay off any further illness we may deserve. The *korbon Todah* allows for the proper introspection, enabling the person to not only have a clean bill of health, but a clean spiritual slate as well.

Good Shabbos

¹ Based on a piece by [Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach](#), printed in [Mizmor L'Sodah](#) p. 182

² [Leviticus](#) 7:11,12

³ [Berachos](#) 54b

⁴ [Bava Kamma](#) 85a, based on [Exodus](#) 21:19

⁵ See [Bava Kamma](#) 75a

⁶ See [Chiddushei Meir Simcha ad. loc.](#) and [Ohr Somayach Hilchos Nizkei Mammon](#) 10:14