



דרכים בפרשה

יתרו

ויקרא אל משה וידבר ה' אליו מאהל מועד לאמר

And HaShem called to Moshe, and HaShem spoke to him from the Ohel Moed

לכל דברות ולכל אמירות ולכל צוויים קדמה קריאה, לשון חבה, לשון שמלאכי השרת משתמשים בו, שנאמר ויקרא זה אל זה, אבל לנביאי אמות העולם נגלה עליהן בלשון ויקר

Rashi explains that before speaking with Moshe or issuing him any commands, HaShem would first call for him, as a means of an introduction. The word used here, "Vayikra", says Rashi, is a term of affection, a term used by the Malachim when they call out to each other. By contrast, when HaShem calls out to the wicked Bilaam, it says, "Vayikar", And Hashem appeared, suddenly without warning. But in His love for Moshe, HaShem would preface every message to him with an introduction.

The *gemara* in *Mesechta Yoma* (4b) applies HaShem's example to everyone. ויקרא אל משה וידבר למה הקדים קריאה לדיבור לימדה תורה דרך ארץ – שלא יאמר אדם דבר להבירו אלא א"כ קורהו The Torah is teaching us *derech erez*. Don't initiate a conversation suddenly, rather first call out to him.

The same point is also made in *Mesechta Derech Eretz* (5) - וילמדו כל אחד ד"א מן המקום, שעמד על פתח הגן וקרא לאדם, שנא' ויקרא ה' אל אדם every person should learn proper *derech erez* from HaShem Who stood at the entrance of Gan Eden and called to Adam, as it says, *And HaShem called to Adam and said to him, "where are you?"*

Upon looking at these words of *Chazal*, the *Torah Temimah* wonders why the *gemara* in *Yoma* jumped all the way to our *possuk* in *Vayikra* to teach the lesson of *derech erez* from Moshe, when it could have chosen the earlier *possuk* from *Bereishis* with Adam *Harishon* that *Mesechta Derech Eretz* quoted.

The *Torah Temimah* beautifully explains that our *possuk* in *Vayikra* is a much broader lesson than that of *Bereishis*. HaShem's relationship with Adam was unlike that of Moshe. It is true that HaShem spoke with Adam many times, but in terms of closeness, the relationship with Moshe was much more intimate, as the Torah tells us that Moshe was the only person to speak with HaShem, "face to face".

The *gemara* specifically chose our *possuk* to teach us that even when one wishes to talk with someone whom he is very familiar with, with whom he is in contact with daily, and even extremely close and affectionate with, there are still rules of *derech erez* that must be observed when interacting with them. בכל -ביתי נאמן הוא ובמראה ולא בחידות אדבר בו *In my entire house he is trusted*, and still, HaShem would always formally address Moshe before every discussion.

The lesson of properly introducing oneself is of course just a representation of the many ideas in *derech erez*. Proper behavior between people, no matter how comfortable



they may be, is not just a nice thing to do and good etiquette. This is actually HaShem's way and what the Torah expects of every one of us. Close contact and communication in no way negates respect and proper behavior.

When we think of our *gedolim* and the great respect they had for people, I always recall the *levaya* of Rebbetzin Auerbach. The *minhag* is to ask forgiveness of the *meis*, but for Rav Shlomo Zalman z"l, things were different. He was able to proclaim publicly that he had nothing to ask forgiveness for, because he had never ever wronged his wife. Although at times it may be extremely challenging, it is much easier to put on a good front and treat others nicely when facing a casual acquaintance. But when in the presence of a spouse or one's own children, that is when the real test is. True *derech erez* begins at home!

Each weekday morning, as we wrap the tefillin straps around our fingers, we recite the words *וארשתוך לי לעולם*, which literally means *And I will betrothe You to me forever*. There are generally two ways to say *betrothe*. The term, *eirusin*, is used in the gemara to refer to the time of the engagement period, whereas *nesu'in* refers to the marriage itself. The question arises: If we are saying a tefilla that we shall merit to be bound to Hakadosh Boruch Hu forever, shouldn't we rather use the expression of *nesu'in*? After all, no *chasan* or *kallah* would ever want to remain engaged forever, so why do we use the word *v'airastich*?

Perhaps our tefillah is a request that indeed, we shall remain forever bound to HaShem, but with the same exuberance, excitement, reverence and respect that a *chosson* and *kallah* treat each other with during their engagement. The *velt* claims that familiarity breeds contempt. The Torah is teaching us that the opposite must be true. The most intimate relationship was that of Hashem and Moshe Rabbeinu, and it was specifically here that the Torah chose to teach us about *derech erez*.

Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפל



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