

דרכים בפרשה ויקרא

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ויקרא אל משה וידבר ה' אליו

And He called to Moshe, and HaShem spoke to him

כל דברות ולכל אמירות ולכל צוויים קדמה רש"י ש"א שנתמר, לשון שמלאכי השרת משתמשים בו, לשון חבה, קריאה אבל לנביאי אמות העולם נגלה עליהן בלשון, וקרא זה אל זה ויקר

Before speaking with Moshe or issuing him any commands, Hashem would first call out to him, as a means of an introduction. The word used here, "Vayikra", 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 Maseches Yoma (4b) applies Hashem's example to everyone. ויקרא אל משה וידבר למה הקדים קריאה לדיבור לימדה תורה דרך ארץ שלא יאמר אדם דבר - לחברו אלא אם כן קורוהו The Torah is teaching us *derech erez*. Don't initiate a conversation with another person suddenly; rather, first call out to him.

The same point is also made in Maseches Derech Eretz (5) — וילמדו כל אדם דרך ארץ מן המקום שעמד על פתח הגן — ויקרא לו לאדם שנאמר (בראשית ג) ויקרא ה' אלהים אל האדם - ויאמר לו איכה *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 *pasuk* in Vayikra to teach the lesson of *derech erez* from Moshe, when it could have chosen the earlier *pasuk* from Bereishis with Adam Harishon that Maseches Derech Eretz quoted.

The Torah Temimah beautifully explains that our *pasuk* 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 *pasuk* 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 one example of the numerous attributes of *derech erez* that one must try to attain. 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 each and 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 Reb-betzin Auerbach. The *minhag* is to ask forgiveness of the *meis*, but for Rav Shlomo Zalman zt"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 where 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' in *Lashon Kodesh*. 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 *tefillah* 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 *chosson* 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*.

מרדכי אפפל, Good Shabbos