

# THE CALL

*by Shlomo Katz*

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Edited by Shlomo Katz**

**Vayikra: The Call  
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Today's Learning:  
Keritot 4:1-2  
Orach Chaim 1:1-3  
Begin new cycle of Halachah Yomit today!  
Daf Yomi (Bavli): Avodah Zarah 2  
Daf Yomi (Yerushalmi): Beitzah 6

This week's parashah opens, "He called to Moshe." It does not say, "G-d called to Moshe," because, explains Rabbeinu Bachya z"l (14th century; Spain), it is understood that our parashah continues where last week's parashah left off. There we read (Shmot 40:34-35), "The cloud covered the Ohel Moed / Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Hashem filled the Tabernacle. Moshe could not enter the Ohel Moed, for the cloud rested upon it, and the Glory of Hashem filled the Tabernacle." Our parashah opens, "He" - meaning that same "Glory of Hashem"- "called to Moshe." The call to Moshe

was an indication that the Glory of Hashem had constricted itself into the Kodesh Ha'kodashim / Holy of Holies, thus informing Moshe that he now could enter the Ohel Moed.

Rabbeinu Bachya adds: This call came from the small letter "heh" in the word (Bereishit 2:4) "be'hibarram" / "when they were created." This also is the reason for the small "aleph" in "Vayikra" / "He called" (at the beginning of our parashah). What does this mean? R' Zev Hoberman shlita explains: As just noted, we find a verse in the Torah that contains a small letter "heh". There also is a verse (Devarim 32:6) that contains a large letter "heh". The Vilna Gaon z"l explains that these two letters, each of which has a gematria of five, allude to the five similarities between G-d and man's soul (see Berachot 10a). Of course, G-d is greater than we can conceive, and any divine qualities that the soul has are infinitesimal compared to G-d. Thus, the one "heh" is large and the other is small. Says R' Hoberman: for G-d to make room for Moshe in the Ohel Moed, so-to-speak, G-d had to constrict His Glory to a mere shadow of Himself, just as the divine qualities that the soul possesses are a mere shadow of G-d Himself. This is what Rabbeinu Bachya meant when he wrote that the small "heh" called to Moshe. For the same reason, the "aleph" of "He called" is small, for were G-d to reveal Himself in all His Glory, even Moshe could not enter the Ohel Moed. (Heard from R' Hoberman, 4 Adar II 5763)

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*"Vayikra / He called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him . . ." (1:1)*

Rashi comments: "One might think that for the hafsakot (the breaks between paragraphs of the Torah) there was also such a kri'ah / call! Therefore it states, '[He called to Moshe] and spoke [to him],' thus intimating that there was a call preceding a dibur / an occasion of speech, but not preceding a hafsakah."

What does this mean? R' Yaakov Lorberbaum z"l (author of Netivot Hamishpat, Chavat Daat and numerous other significant halachic works; died 1832) explains: Moshe achieved his exalted position only in the merit of Bnei Yisrael. However, after Bnei Yisrael donated wholeheartedly to the construction of the Mishkan, they achieved such a lofty level that even Moshe could not reach it. This is the meaning of the verse at the end of last week's parashah (Shmot 40:35), "Moshe could not enter the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of Hashem filled the Tabernacle." The Divine revelation that Bnei Yisrael brought about was too awesome for even Moshe to see.

In many places, the root "kra" means, "to make great." For example, we read (Yishayah 42:6), "I am Hashem, I have called you with righteousness," which the ancient Aramaic translation renders, "I have made you great." Our verse, "Vayikra to Moshe," means that Hashem made Moshe even greater than he was so that he could enter the Ohel Moed despite the presence of Hashem's Glory there.

Rambam notes in Moreh Nevochim (The Guide to the Perplexed, Part I, Ch. 21) that a person who achieves a lofty level, for example, great wisdom, may die if he is separated from that level. The only

way to avoid this is to receive G-d's aid. Therefore, writes R' Lorberbaum, we might have thought that Moshe needed a kri'ah before a hafsakah. (In Rashi's words: "One might think that for the hafsakot / breaks there was also such a kri'ah / call!") In other words, we might have thought that whenever Hashem paused from speaking to Moshe, Moshe fell from his lofty level and needed to be raised up anew by G-d to avoid the fate of which Rambam wrote. Therefore Rashi informs us that this was not the case. Ruach Hakodesh / The Divine Spirit did not leave Moshe during the hafsakot. Rather, Rashi explains, the purpose of the breaks between the Torah's paragraphs was to allow Moshe to review what he had learned.

(Nachalat Yaakov)

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The word "Vayikra" is written with a small letter "aleph." R' Akiva Yosef Schlesinger z"l (rabbi in Hungary and Yerushalayim; died 1926) writes that this alludes to the verse (Tehilim 8:6), "You have made him but slightly less than the angels." Our Sages speak of 50 Gates of Understanding, and Moshe merited to enter 49 of them. (The small "aleph" - whose gematria equals one - alludes to the missing Gate.)

Why couldn't Moshe enter that fiftieth gate? Because, explains R' Schlesinger, that gate can be attained only in Eretz Yisrael.

(Torat Yechiel)

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Purim  
*"And those who were close to him were Karshina, Sheitar, Admata, Tarshish, Merres, Marsina, Memuchan . . ." (Esther 1:14)*

The Midrash writes that corresponding to King Achashveirosh's seven advisors whose names are listed in the above verse were seven angels who stood before G-d and defended Bnei Yisrael against Achashveirosh's plots. Each angel pleaded with Hashem using words related to the name of one of the seven advisors.

One said, "If Achashveirosh defeats Bnei Yisrael, who will sacrifice one year-old calves before You?" ("One year-old calf" = "Par ben shanah" => "Karshina")

The second said, "Who will sacrifice two doves before You?" ("Two doves" = "Shte Torim" => "Sheitar")

The third said, "Who will build an earthen altar for You?" ("Earthen altar" = "Mizbach Adama" => "Admata")

The fourth said, "Who will wear the garments of the Kohen Gadol (which contain a gem called

"Tarshish")?

The fifth said, "Who will stir the blood of the sacrifices?" ("Stir" = "Memarres" => "Meres")

The sixth said, "Who will stir the flour offerings?" ("Stirs" = "Memarres" => "Marsina")

The seventh said, "Who will prepare the altar before You?" ("Prepares" = "Maicheen" => "Memuchan")

When the angels concluded their pleas, Hashem answered, "Bnei Yisrael are My sons. They are My friends. They are My beloved . . ." Apparently, the angels' pleas were successful.

Why, of all of the mitzvot, did the angels single out these seven? Why didn't they ask, for example, "Who will put on tefilin? Who will lift the lulav?"

R' Eliyahu Hakohen Itamari z"l (died 1729) explains: Chazal teach that the day on which the Mishkan was completed was as happy in G-d's eyes (so-to-speak) as the day on which He created the world. When Adam was created, G-d had great expectations for his future. However, using his G-d given free will, Adam "frustrated" G-d's plans. But mankind was given a second chance when Bnei Yisrael received the Torah and built the Mishkan. The day on which the Tabernacle was dedicated was therefore as auspicious as the very day on which the world was created.

Achashveirosh recognized the importance of the Mishkan. As the Gemara notes, the purpose of the party described at the beginning of the Megillah was to celebrate the fact that, according to Achashveirosh's calculations, the appointed time for the end of the exile had come and gone without the Bet HaMikdash -- the successor to the Mishkan -- being rebuilt. Achashveirosh therefore donned the garments of the Kohen Gadol (which had been captured in Nevuchadnezar's war on Yerushalayim) and defiantly celebrated the apparent victory of evil over good. [The Talmud explains how Achashveirosh miscalculated the date of Bnei Yisrael's redemption.]

The angels said to G-d, "Achashveirosh is celebrating the demise of the Mishkan and its service. Haman says You are sleeping. Tell us: Whose plan for the Mishkan will stand -- Achashveirosh's or Yours?"

(Sefer Midrash Talpiot)

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R' Chaim Biberfeld z"l

R' Chaim (Eduard) Biberfeld was born in Breslau, Germany in 1864. He studied under R' Dr. Esriel Hildesheimer, head of the Rabbinical Seminary in Berlin. Upon graduating, R' Biberfeld held a number of rabbinic positions, first as rabbi of the Beth Hamedrash of Karlsruhe, then as Dayan of the Adath Yisroel Congregation in Berlin, and later as rabbi of the Heidereutergasse Beth Hamedrash in Berlin, succeeding his father.

In the 1890's, when stores in Germany were required to be closed on Sunday, R' Biberfeld was one

of the foremost promoters of the counter "Pro-Shabbat Movement." He published the monthly Der Sabbath from 1910 to 1914, until publication was stopped by World War I.

In 1901, together with R' Yonah Bondi of Mainz, R' Gershon Lange, and R' Yitzchak Issac Halevi (author of the history Dorot Harishonim), R' Biberfeld established the Frankfurt-based Society for Jewish Literature. The aim of this society was to further the study of Jewish history in a manner that respected the Torah, as portrayed in Dorot Harishonim. The Society published a yearbook containing articles and monographs dealing with a range of historical material.

At the age of 37, R' Biberfeld began to study medicine. In a short time he passed his examinations and became a physician in Berlin, where he practiced for more than 30 years. At the same time, he continued to hold his rabbinic positions.

On Kristalnacht, R' Biberfeld remained in his Beth Hamedrash. The strong gate of the building withstood the battering of the Nazis and the shul with thousands of books was temporarily spared. Shortly afterward, R' Biberfeld emigrated to Yerushalayim, where he died in 1939.

In 1905, R' Biberfeld published Sabbath Vorschriften. This work was translated into Hebrew and was published in Yerushalayim in 1946.

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