



RABBI JUDAH

MISCHEL

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Calling Out

Rebbe Moshe Leib of Sassov, *zy'a*, was known as a great lover of Am Yisrael and always looked for ways to help another in need. His *talmidim* wondered how their Rebbe had acquired his great level of *ahavas Yisrael*. One day, he gathered his students close, and shared an experience:

While traveling, I once stopped at a tavern for a rest, and overheard the conversation of a couple of local peasants, drinking their fill at the bar: “Ivan, tell me, are you really my friend? Do you really love me?” Ivan was taken aback. “Igor, what are you talking about? We have known each other for years and we’re the best of friends!”

After a few more drinks, Igor asked, “But Ivan, do you *really* love me?” Once again, Igor reassured him, “But of course, Igor, you’re my closest friend!”

Igor sat quietly for a few minutes. He shook his head, turned to Ivan and said,

“No... you couldn’t possibly love me. I know you don’t.” Ivan was hurt by the stinging comment. “How can you say that, Igor? I told you that I love you!”

Igor explained, “If you truly loved me you would know that I’m in pain... and you would know what’s hurting me.”

The *tzadik* Reb Moshe Leib concluded, “From these two drunken peasants I learned the meaning of love!”

Our sedra begins with HaKadosh Baruch Hu speaking from within the Ohel Moed, introducing the *avodah*, the holy service of *Korbanos*, sacrifices:

ויקרא אל משה

“And Hashem called out to Moshe...” (1:1)

Rashi points out the special way that Hashem summoned Moshe, using a *לשון חיבה*, a term of endearment — the fact that Hashem *קרא*, “called out” to Moshe was an expression of His love for him and the Jewish People. The *Korbanos* (literally, ‘drawing close’) are calls extended to Klal

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Yisrael to 'come close' in prayer, to turn to face Hashem in *teshuvah* and to make a *tikun* in our relationships with God and people. There are *korbanos* which express our gratitude, regret, and celebrate our love to our Creator. The *Vidui* that accompanies the offering of certain *korbanos* is an act of drawing near through vulnerability, openness and heartfelt sharing of what is hurting us. All of these gradually bring us into a state of unity with our Creator.

Reb Shneur Zalman, the Alter Rebbe, *zy'a*, in *Likkutei Torah*, at the beginning of Parshas Vayikra, addresses the unique modality of "calling" and its tone of love. Throughout Torah, Divine statements, declarations, and commandments are delivered in a way which also explicitly identify the 'name' of the Speaker: ... וידבר ה' ... ויאמר ה',

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“And Hashem spoke...” “And God said...” By contrast our Parsha says only ויקרא, “And He called...” not mentioning “Hashem”, nor any name of God. This is a calling that “emanates from a level which is above all names, *from God Himself*”.

This is a very deep level of endearment, for when two beloved friends speak, they have no need to identify themselves with their individual names. They are already in such unity with each other that they can even intuit what each other is experiencing, and no conventional communication is needed. They are together in a ‘tent of meeting’.

And this is also the reason that Hashem’s name, *Havayah*, is not explicitly mentioned in the *Megillah*. Says the Alter Rebbe, “On Purim, through their *mesirus nefesh*, self-sacrifice, Klal Yisrael transcended the name *Havayah*, reaching the Essence of *Ein Sof*, Hashem Himself.” The essential love and unity between Klal Yisrael and *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* was revealed, obviating any need for names.

Similarly, Mordechai calls out, לך כנוס את, כל היהודים “Go gather all the Jews together” (4:16). The theme of Purim is revealed in the *mitzvos ha-yom*: *achdus*, Jewish unity and intuitive sensitivity to needs of others. Each of the mitzvos of Purim is like a ‘calling’, a term of *chibah*, endearment, to one another. For example, on Purim we give *tzedakah* to anyone who extends their palm. On other days, we might need to

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listen to the person’s name, and seek out an explanation of their needs and their pain, but on this day of overflowing love, nothing even needs to be said. We are in such *achdus* with Klal Yisrael that we intuitively ‘call’ to others, reach out and pour out our pockets.

Rambam teaches in *Hilchos Megillah*, 2:17:

מוטב לאדם להרבות במתנות אביונים מלהרבות בסעודתו ובשלוח מנות לרעיו. שאין שם שמחה גדולה ומפוארה אלא לשמח לב עניים ויתומים ואלמנות וגרים. שהמשמח לב האמללים האלו דומה לשכינה שנאמר להחיות רוח שפלים ולהחיות לב נדכאים.

It is good for people to increase in their gifts to the poor more than they increase in their meal and the gifts that they send to their companions, for there is no greater or glorious joy than to bring happiness to the hearts of the poor and orphans and widows and strangers, for he who brings happiness to the hearts of these unfortunate people is compared to the Divine Presence, as it says, “To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (*Isaiah*, 57:15).

This Purim may we heed Hashem’s call of love, and call to each other endearingly, reviving one another with revealed *ahavas Yisrael*, essential unity and joy. *L’chaim!* ■

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