

Vayikra 2013

1.

Humility

Nachlas Tzvi page 256

“Hashem called to Moshe” (1, 1) "ויקרא אל משה."

Why is the letter Alef small in the word Vayikra? The Baal Haturim explains that **since Moshe was very humble**, he did not want to publicize that God frequently and consistently spoke with him. Rather Moshe wanted to write the word ויקר which means happened upon. Meaning Moshe wanted to state that Hashem only occasionally spoke to him similar to how Hashem spoke to Bilaam as stated in Bamidbar (23, 4). Hashem responded and said that the Alef must be written. Hashem wanted to demonstrate that He constantly spoke to Moshe. Therefore a compromise was made; and a small Alef was written. (See also the commentary of the Rosh)

The question on this explanation of the Baal Haturim is; why is there no small Alef in any other places in the Torah where the word Vayikra is used?

The Nachlas Tzvi explains that the underlying difference is; whether it was prior to the building of the Mishkan or after. Meaning, prior to the Mishkan being built, God spoke to Moshe in an isolated location away from Bnei Yisroel. Therefore, since the rest of the Jewish nation could not hear God’s words, Moshe wouldn’t assume that he was so great. However, after the Mishkan was built, God spoke to Moshe in the presence of all Jews. Moshe was able to hear Hashem whereas the rest of the nation was unable to hear God’s words. **There existed a potential concern of Moshe having haughtiness due to the fact that he was able to hear Hashem and everyone else couldn’t. Therefore this small alef demonstrates that he was still nevertheless very humble.**

Similarly, Tosfos (Megilah 12a) explains that when someone sees something visually there is more concern of jealousy. The same would apply here as well; that more haughtiness will most likely exist.

2.

Accountability

Nachlas Tzvi page 262

“He called to Moses, and Hashem spoke to him from the tent of the meeting saying.” (1, 11)

The Medrash states that Rabbi Eliezer says that even though the Torah was given to the Jews at Sinai they were not punished until the Torah was repeated again at the ‘tent of meeting.’ (אהל מועד)

The question on this Medrash is; the Jews were punished for the sin of the golden calf which occurred before the ‘tent of meeting’? The Gemara in Makkos (23b) states that ‘the gematria (numerical value) of Torah (תורה) is 611, the first two mitzvos of “I am Hashem, your God, Who has taken you out of the land of Egypt, etc.” and “You should not have other gods in My presence, etc.” were heard directly from God.’ These mitzvos essentially represent and try to make us realizing the essence of Hashem. Therefore Rabbi Eliezer clarifies that even though the Torah aka 611 mitzvos were given at Sinai, they were not punished until the Torah was repeated again at the ‘tent of meeting’. However the two mitzvos that they

heard directly from Hashem are not included in the category of the 611 and therefore the Jews were punished before the 'tent of meeting' for the golden calf.

Nowadays which is obviously after the Ohel Moed, we are held accountable for all of the 613 mitzvos and the mitzvos drabanan (rabbinic). Therefore we must be very scrupulous with these mitzvos.