

After teaching Moshe the Laws of building the Mishkan, HaShem teaches him the Laws of the korbonos and services in the Mishkan.

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהֵי-מִשְׁכָּה וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֵלָיו מֵאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר:

“And He called out to Moshe, and HaShem spoke to him from the Ohel Moed (Tent of Meeting) saying.” (Vayikra 1:1).

Why does the Torahs Kohanim, Sefer Vayikra, commence with “*And He called?*” Further, why does the passuk not say *And HaShem called to Moshe*, instead of *He called to Moshe, and HaShem spoke to him*. Was the “He” in the passuk different from HaShem? If not, it should have used HaShem and then said *and He spoke to him from the Ohel Moed saying*. Also, why the double statement of “*He called*” and “*HaShem spoke?*”

Gemara Sanhedrin says *a person who practices witchcraft in order to heal a wound has no place in the World to Come.*<sup>1</sup> This includes if he uses pesukim of the Torah as the witchcraft. Even an unrelated passuk like “*HaShem spoke to Moshe.*” (Vayikra 1:1).

This Gemara quotes our passuk, but only to rule that it has nothing to do with healing. Why was this passuk specifically used in the Gemara?

Gemara Yoma 4b says, “*And He called Moshe, and HaShem spoke to him.*” (Vaykra 1:1). *Why does the passuk mention calling before speaking? The Torah is teaching etiquette: A person should not say anything to another unless he calls him first. This supports the opinion of Rabbi Chanina, that a person should not say anything to another unless he calls him first. On the word “Saying,” Rabbi Musya, grandson of Rabbi Masya, said in the name of Rabbi Musya the Great, ‘From where is it derived with regard to one who tells another some matter, that it is incumbent upon the latter not to say it to others until the former explicitly says to him, “Go and tell others?’ As it is stated in our passuk, “HaShem spoke to him from within the Ohel Moed, saying.”’ Saying is a contraction of lo emor, meaning: Do not say. One must be given permission before transmitting information.*

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<sup>1</sup> I note that the World to Come is not the same as the days of Moshiach. Moshiach is the anointed king of King David’s bloodline that will emerge and rescue the Jewish people and all Bnei Yisroel from this long exile. There will be a period where the people of the world will live in harmony with a Davidic king ruling in the Land of Israel. The World to Come is at the *end of days* as described in Devorim 31:29, Yishayahu 2:2 and others.

“לֵאמֹר” can just as easily mean לֵאמֹר, *to say*, and HaShem was giving Moshe permission to give it over. This seems a clearer understanding of the myriad of times the Torah uses the word after giving instructions. Certainly, HaShem would want Moshe to tell it over. It is pointless to teach Moshe but that he should not teach it to others.

Rashi learns from this passuk, based on the Midrash Torahs Kohanim, *all times HaShem spoke to Moshe, be it through ‘said’ or ‘spoke’ or ‘commended’ were all preceded by a call to the Ohel Moed. It is similar to how Yishayahu describes how the heavenly malachim call to each other. (Yishayahu 6:3).*

Ibin Ezra says, *HaShem does not need korbonos of mankind. Instead, it is a bond or a covenant between HaShem and man. HaShem is showing man that man can serve HaShem in a special way and can connect to HaShem through voluntary and mandatory offerings.*

Ramban and Tur HaAroch learn that *this took place after HaShem filled up the Ohel Moed. Moshe could not enter there. So HaShem had to call Moshe for him to come close to there. This is similar to how after the Revelation at Har Sinai, Moshe waited for seven days and then HaShem called to Moshe to come up onto the mountain. (Shemos 24:16).*

Sforno also learns *HaShem called from the cloud. Similar to what happened at Har Sinai.*

Chizkuni and Rashbam learn this as well and say, *specifically this verse follows one of the last ones in Sefer Shemos that “Moshe could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud rested upon it and the glory of HaShem filled the Mishkan.” (Shemos 40:35). That is why the Torah did not say “HaShem called out to Moshe” but only “He called out” as this is a mere continuation.*

Rashi and Chizkuni both learn *the words ‘spoke to him’ are mentioned because it was only Moshe that heard the commands, not Aharon or Bnei Yisroel.*

Daas Zekeinim says, *this passuk is showing HaShem’s courtesy to Moshe. Moshe built the Mishkan so HaShem was calling Moshe to come inside.*

Kitzur Baal HaTurim says, *the ך of ויקרא is written as a small letter because Moshe wanted to write ויקר (and it happened), the way it is written regarding Bilaam, which implies HaShem appeared to him only as a chance occurrence. Hashem, however, told him to write the ך which indicates His love, but Moshe made it small.*

This is a perplexing explanation. How could Moshe write the Torah with falsehood? He already wrote down “from words of falsehood stay far, far away.” (Shemos 23:7). Even Moshe’s humility would not excuse him changing the narrative that HaShem happened upon him. HaShem

does not *happen* upon people or things. It would be false to change an active *called* to a passive *happened upon*. Additionally, there were two other instances when HaShem called out to Moshe; by the burning bush (see Shemos 3:4) and Har Sinai (see *ibid* 24:16). Those say “called out” not *happened upon*.

Ohr Chaim points out that *only three occasions does ‘call’ precede ‘spoke to Moshe.’ First was by the burning bush, second by Har Sinai, and third here. However, there is no common denominator between the three. The burning bush was the first time HaShem spoke to Moshe, so He called him. Har Sinai was after a revelation to the entire Bnei Yisroel. The first two were through fire. This last time is through a cloud.*

To understand the passuk, explore the three times HaShem called to Moshe. The first was, “And HaShem saw that he had turned to see, and the Lord called to him from within the thornbush, and He said, "Moshe, Moshe!" And he responded, "Here I am!"” (Shemos 3:4). The second is, “And the glory of HaShem rested on Har Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days, and He called to Moshe on the seventh day from within the cloud.” (*Ibid* 24:16). Both of these passukim are different from our passuk in two ways. First, as Ohr Chaim points out, they both were when HaShem called from fire. Second, both say “HaShem called.” Our passuk says *He* called.

When looked into deeper, the episode of the burning bush had another being present at the time. “And an angel of HaShem appeared to him in a flame of fire from within the thornbush, and behold, (Moshe realized) the thornbush was burning with fire, but the thornbush was not being consumed.” (*Ibid* 3:2). It was the malakh of HaShem that saw that Moshe was worthy for he realized the thornbush was not being consumed. Moshe had the vision. He could see holiness there. Fire was there but it was not destructive fire. Fire can be something else. Fire can be used for purity, like the fire of the mizbeach. Then “HaShem saw Moshe turned to see” (*Ibid* 3:4), *that he passed the test*, and that is when HaShem called to him.

This is similar to when Avraham bound Yitzchok. By the akeida, *the binding*, “Avraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife, to slaughter his son.” (Bereishis 22:10). Then it follows, “And an angel of HaShem called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham! Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."” (*Ibid* 22:11). It was an malakh of HaShem that tested Avraham and saw that Avraham passed. By the thornbush, it is clear that though the malakh of HaShem appeared as the fire, it was HaShem *Himself* that called to Moshe.

By Har Sinai it says, “And Moshe went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain.” (Shemos 24:15). Moshe was already in the cloud. He had already told the Bnei Yisroel that he is taking leave of them and will be gone for a time. (Ibid 24:14). Moshe waited for six days. (Ibid 24:16). Then HaShem called to Moshe.

By the thornbush, it says HaShem called to Moshe because it was the malakh of Hashem that first appeared to Moshe. By Har Sinai, HaShem had to call to Moshe because Moshe was already beckoned, he was up on the mountain waiting six days. On the seventh day, HaShem called to Moshe to commence the teaching.

If our passuk follows that of Shemos perek 40, then why did HaShem call to Moshe? It cannot be that Moshe was afraid of the cloud and Glory. Moshe already stood in it by Har Sinai. (Ibid 24:15). If HaShem was giving instruction to Moshe, there was no reason to *call* to him? Further, it would say “HaShem called Moshe” not “*to Moshe.*” Similar to beckoning Moshe. Not calling out *to* Moshe, like Moshe was some distance away. Additionally, if this connected to the very previous pessukim then it would say “HaShem called to Moshe” or it would say “He called to Moshe and He spoke to him.” However, it says “He” at first and then uses “HaShem.”

“And” in our passuk connects the subject to something previous. However, what is the previous connection? It does not say “He called Moshe” summoning him. It says “He called *to* Moshe.” This implies a calling out from a distance. The malakh of HaShem did so with Avraham from heaven. HaShem did so from the thornbush which was a distance away from Moshe. HaShem did so again on Har Sinai as Moshe was lost within the cloud on the mountain. If our passuk is a continuation of commanding Moshe about the Laws of the service of the Mishkan, then there is no distance, no need to call *to* Moshe.

The passuk goes on, “And HaShem spoke to him from the Ohel Moed (Tent of Meeting) saying.” Which Ohel Moed is this? The Torah refers to the Ohel Moed many times in the instructions of the Mishkan. HaShem tells Moshe how to inaugurate Aharon, where to put the keilim, and how to set up the Mishkan. However, the first Ohel Moed that is built is Moshe’s own tent. “And Moshe took his tent and pitched it for himself outside the camp, distancing it from the camp, and he called it the Ohel Moed, and it would be that anyone seeking HaShem would go out to the Ohel Moed, which was outside the camp.” (Shemos 33:7). This took place after the episode of the chet haeigel (the sin of the golden calf). HaShem tells Moshe that “an angel of HaShem” (i.e. the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire) will lead the Bnei Yisroel through the desert to the

Promised Land. (Ibid 33:2). While HaShem forgave the people, He says “if I go up into your midst for one moment, I will destroy you; but now, leave off your finery, and I will know what to do to you.” (Ibid 33:5). HaShem cannot go into their midst. Moshe understands this, and he takes his tent and pitches it outside the camp. There Hashem can go. And those that seek HaShem come to the first Ohel Moed; Moshe’s seminary.

It says further, “And it would be that when Moshe entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and He would speak with Moshe.” (Ibid 33:9). Clearly, Moshe was able to summon HaShem, and talk to HaShem without being specifically called. The narrative is broken and it goes on to talk about how Moshe went up again on Har Sinai to get the second luchos. Then it talks about how the parts of the Mishkan was actually constructed and built. Finally, it talks about how, “On the day of the First Month, on the first of the month, you shall set up the Mishkan of the Ohel Moed.” (Ibid 40:2). “It came to pass in the First Month, in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the Mishkan was set up.” (Ibid Shemos 40:17).

The passuk does say, “Moshe could not enter the Ohel Moed because the cloud rested upon it and the glory of HaShem filled the Mishkan.” (Ibid 40:35). In this case, even calling to Moshe would not allow him to enter, as the passuk is clear: Moshe *could not* enter. He wanted to but could not. Moshe was not awaiting an invitation; he was awaiting room.

The tutelage of the korbonos had to have come prior to Moshe actually setting up the Mishkan. It is illogical to think Moshe assembled the Mishkan, inaugurated it, sanctified it, then spent the rest of the day teaching about the korbonos. The teaching of the korbonos took place prior. The ‘vav’ *and* in our passuk connects the teaching, *not* to the immediate prior pessukim. However, it is back to Moshe’s Ohel Moed, between his visits to Har Sinai. The Ohel Moed referred to in our passuk is not the Mishkan. It cannot because the Mishkan was not assembled yet. It was Moshe’s Ohel Moed, his tent that stood outside the camp.

In order for Moshe to fully understand how the korbonos worked, Moshe asked HaShem to show him His glory. “And now, if I have indeed found favor in Your eyes, pray let me know Your ways, so that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your eyes; and consider that this nation is Your people.” (Ibid 33:13). Moshe asked to know HaShem’s ways in order to understand how the Laws of the korbonos worked on the spiritual and practical levels.

Thus, is the understanding of our passuk. And He called out to Moshe: *And after Moshe took his tent outside the camp, the malakh of HaShem that was manifest by the pillar of cloud*

*called out to Moshe as it hovered on his Ohel Moed;* and HaShem spoke to him from the Ohel Moed (Tent of Meeting) saying: *HaShem spoke to Moshe, commanded him of all the Laws of the korbonos at Moshe's Ohel Moed.* The pillar of cloud that would descend on Moshe's tent (ibid 33:9) was the malakh of HaShem. It was the pillar of cloud that called out to Moshe. Since our passuk connects to those pessukim, the "He" is referring to the noun those pessukim were talking about: the cloud/malakh of HaShem. Gemara Sanhedrin uses this passuk to talk about witchcraft because a person may think that using a "He" that only hints at an angel could be akin to recognizing Hashem. The Gemara is teaching this is not so, and referring even to an malakh of HaShem as a healer is heresy.

Moshe was outside the camp. That created the distance. The pillar of cloud had to come to Moshe. Moshe went into his Ohel Moed and the cloud would come. The cloud called out to Moshe. HaShem then taught Moshe the laws of the korbonos. The Torah corroborates this when it says "Then HaShem would speak to Moses face to face." (Ibid 33:11). The passuk uses the word "diber" like ours does.

Now, also, the explanation of the Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 52:5) brought down by Rashi and Kitzur Baal HaTurim is understood. The little  $\aleph$  and the word then meaning the passive *happened* is because at the thornbush or Har Sinai, it was not HaShem that called to Moshe in voice. The calling was passive. The malakh of HaShem called, and not with voice; it called by appearing in a cloud on top of the Ohel Moed. This was passive and Moshe wanted to record it as such. The Midrash is teaching that HaShem wanted it to be known—through a malakh or Himself—it was an active calling. How He called to Balaam was purposeful, but done without the love and affection as He called to Moshe.

## BONUS SHTIKEL

When does the teaching of the korbonos take place? Many rishonim (Rambam, Rashbam, Chizkuni) take the view that it succeeded the final pesukim of Shemos. Their view is because Vayikra commences with referring to the Ohel Moed. They all take the view that Moshe was summoned inside the Mishkan.

This cannot be. Shemos ends off with Moshe actually assembling the finished Mishkan. “On the day of the First Month, on the first of the month, you shall set up the Mishkan of the Ohel Moed.” (Shemos 40:2). “Thus, Moshe did; according to all that HaShem had commanded him, so he did.” (Ibid 40:16). Specifically, the Torah says, “It came to pass in the First Month, in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the Mishkan was set up. Moshe set up the Mishkan, placed its sockets, put up its planks, put in its bars, and set up its pillars.” (Ibid 40:17-18). It further makes clear that after Moshe actually assembled the Mishkan, he could not enter; invited or otherwise. “Moshe *could not* enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud rested upon it and the glory of HaShem *filled* the Mishkan.” (Ibid 40:35). Even if HaShem called to Moshe, Moshe *could not* enter.

Moshe could not be taught the Laws of the korbonos *after* the Mishkan was erected. It would take time that first day of the First Month of the second year, to erect the Mishkan. Sefer Vayikra is very large and all of the Laws would take the day to learn, at the very least. Then Moshe would have to teach the Laws to the kohanim and Bnei Yisroel.

Something else happened that first day of the First Month of the second year. “And it was that on the day that Moses finished erecting the Mishkan, he anointed it, sanctified it, and all its vessels, and the altar and all its vessels, and he anointed them and sanctified them.” (Bamidbar 7:1). Besides for erecting the Mishkan he also sanctified it and all its keilim. Even more happened that day as well. “The chieftains (nesiim) of Yisroel, the heads of their fathers' houses, presented korbonos to be offered. They were the leaders of the tribes. They were the ones who were present during the counting. They brought their offering before HaShem: six covered wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for each two chieftains, and an ox for each one; they presented them in front of the Mishkan.” (Ibid 7:2-3). HaShem accepts the offerings. “Take from them, and let them be used in the service of the Ohel Moed (Mishkan). You shall give them to the Leviim, in accordance with each man's work.” (Ibid 7:5).

The Torah emphasizes that these korbonos were all brought to be offered on that first day. “The chieftains brought [offerings for] the dedication of the altar on the day it was anointed; the chieftains presented their offerings in front of the mizbeach.” (Ibid 7:10). On that first day, one set actually was brought up as offerings. “The one who brought his offering on the first day was Nachshon the son of Aminadav of the tribe of Yehuda.” (Ibid 7:12).

Two things are improbable if HaShem taught Moshe the Laws of the korbonos that same day that Moshe assembled and sanctified the Mishkan. The Leviim and Aharon and his family did not already know what to do. And they could not bring up the korbonos of the Nesiim (chieftains) if they did not yet know the Laws. Even if Moshe were to be the one to start off as priest for the inauguration period, Moshe himself did not yet know the Laws.

The Torah says further, “When Moses would come into the Ohel Moed to speak with Him, he would hear the voice speaking to him from the two cherubim above the covering which was over the aron haedus (Ark of Testimony).” (Ibid 7:89). This passuk clearly states the Moshe was able to enter the Mishkan, and he would come by himself. Either he seeking HaShem or HaShem seeking to teach Moshe. Therefore, the calling in the very first passuk of sefer Vayikra must refer to a different place and different time.

The end of Shemos is all about what Moshe “shall” do. What he should do in the future. “You shall anoint the altar.” (Shemos 40:10). “You shall anoint the washstand.” (Ibid 40:11). “And you shall bring Aaron and his sons near.” (Ibid 40:12). This goes on for many pessukim. Clearly, a future tense. Parshas Vayikra goes back to reiterating the instructions.

The Ohel Moed it refers to is Moshe’s Ohel Moed. Moshe came down from Har Sinai with the Luchos. Then he destroyed the Luchos upon seeing the people engaging in feasting over the eigel hazahav. After the episode of the chet haeigel (the sin of the golden calf) HaShem tells Moshe, “if I go up into your midst for one moment, I will destroy you (the Bnei Yisroel); but now, leave off your finery, and I will know what to do to you.” (Ibid 33:5). HaShem cannot go into their midst because they did not deserve HaShem’s presence at present. Moshe understands this, and he takes his tent and pitches it outside the camp. There Hashem can go. And those that seek HaShem come to the first Ohel Moed; Moshe’s seminary. “And Moshe took his tent and pitched it for himself outside the camp, distancing it from the camp, *and he called it the Ohel Moed*, and it would be that anyone seeking HaShem would go out to the Ohel Moed, which was outside the camp.” (Shemos 33:7).



It is this Ohel Moed that the passuk is referring to. Between the two visits to Har Sinai and the first day of the First Month of the second year was several months. There was time to learn the Laws of the korbonos. Further, it only makes sense to teach Moshe about the Laws of korbonos after HaShem already taught Moshe the Laws of the Mishkan on Moshe's first visit up Har Sinai.

There is another connection. "And now, if I have indeed found favor in Your eyes, pray let me know Your ways, so that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your eyes; and consider that this nation is Your people." (Ibid 33:13). Moshe not only wanted to know the Laws of the korbonos, but wanted to understand the entire purpose and function of the Mishkan. The Mishkan is all about correcting errors. (See Vayikra 2-5 generally). Moshe learned this at that time, between visits to Har Sinai.

After teaching the Laws of the Mishkan the Torah skips ahead to when it is assembled. It then digresses from that tangent and Vayikra commences by retuning to that time period and teaches the Laws of the Korbonos.