

The Daily Portion

- Sivan Rahav Meir

First of all – a term of endearment

We are on the eve of Pesach, and there are days filled with tasks, challenges and activity. How do you address someone when you ask them for something? How do we begin to instruct our children, or make a request at work or at home?

This coming Shabbat, the Book of Vayikra will begin to be read in synagogues throughout the Jewish world. And before all the laws and instructions that fill this book, Rashi comments on the very first word – VAYIKRA ("And He called"). Before God gave Moshe any commands, He simply called out to him:

”Before every statement, every utterance, and every command – a calling came first, a term of endearment.”

Before all the instructions and commandments, God calls to Moshe with warmth, with love, with gentleness. First comes closeness and a personal connection. Only afterward come dozens of commandments and detailed, practical instructions.

Our commentators explain: if this is how it is between God and Moshe –

then surely this is how it should be for each and every one of us. We should lead with a warm and affectionate tone, even when saying difficult things, even when making requests.

You are invited to put this into practice right now.

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