

Vayikra- The Small Aleph II
By Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

One of the intriguing features of Sefer Vayikra is that it opens with the word Vayikra which is written in the Torah with a small aleph. Regardless of the reason, this small aleph is part of our mesorah and every sefer Torah must be written this way. Yet the fact that we have a small Aleph opens up for us the bolt to a number of lessons to be unlocked.

Many of the commentators address this issue of the small aleph. Most of them come to the conclusion that the small aleph is teaching us humility. Moshe Rabbeinu, who was called by Hashem, the very subject of the world Vayikra, attained his high level of prophecy and closeness to Hashem as well as all of his Torah knowledge from the fact he considered himself unworthy of his position as the agent for giving the Torah to Am Yisroel.

The Baal Haturim points out that the Aleph is small because Moshe Rabbeinu did not want it at all. Without the aleph the word would be *Vayekar* and he met which is the expression of communication used for Bilaam. Hashem, however, did want the aleph which denotes Hashem calling to Moshe as a sign of endearment. The small aleph was the compromise.

The Sfas Emes of Ger points out that Moshe Rabbeinu actually did feel he was worthy of only the same address as Bilaam Harasha. The Sfas Emes explains that Moshe Rabbeinu realized his greatness was only for the sake of Am Yisroel. If Hashem gave him such a high lofty level of prophecy, it was only because Am Yisroel deserved to have such a prophet among them. After the sin of the golden calf, Moshe felt Am Yisroel had sunk to such a low level that he no longer deserved such greatness in prophecy. Therefore, Moshe felt that there was no need for Hashem to use an expression of encounter that indicated such greatness and felt that he was no more worthy of being a prophet than Bilaam! He felt he did not deserve *Vayikra*, only *Vayekar*, We see the great magnitude of selflessness that Moshe Rabbeinu had for the Klal Yisroel. While we can not be on the level of Moshe Rabbeinu, perhaps we can learn the extent our connection to the rest of Klal Yisroel should be; all our achievements should ultimately be only for the benefit of Klal Yisroel.