

Call Them In

וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֵלָיו מֵאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר:

“And He **called** to Moshe and Adonai spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying....”

([Lev. 1:1](#))

Why first call and then speak? Why not go right to speaking?

Talmud suggests that in this, the Torah was trying to teach us etiquette, that a person should not say anything to another person before calling him first (*Talmud Bavli, Yoma 4b*). But why is this good etiquette and what can we learn here as we work to promote a Shmita conscious and Earth focused culture?

Moshe is called to speak within the Tent of Meeting, a place built by the community in a bid to create a sacred center for themselves. Incidentally, that place is also representative of Creation itself, and by taking care of their sacred Center, *Am-Israel* is also taking care of the world. But that’s for another time. For now, it is important to notice that when Adonai wants to speak to Moshe, God first **calls** to him and by doing so is teaching us an important lesson in bringing people into the causes and places we deem important.

We can’t assume people hear us. And even when they hear us, we can never assume they understand the words or concepts we use. Our inner jargon, our taken-for-granted notions and catch phrases often mean nothing to those outside our group. What’s more, there are multitudes who even when they understand, don’t agree with us.

But to bring about the hugely important changes that must take place for humanity to prosper and for Earth to heal, we need everyone (or at least, almost everyone) on board. We need to make it our priority this year to learn how to call out **to** people, to bring them in. This calling can be in the sense of waking up, but it can also be in the sense of catching someone’s attention and making eye or ear contact with them. Demonstrating you see them and want to speak specifically to them. This calling is a way of indicating we are not just randomly lecturing the world but rather, we are speaking to create connection.

If there is anything Shmita is about, it is about bringing down fences between fields, between creatures, between us and the Earth. It is about connection.

May we learn how to extend our voice and our hands in ways that bring truly diverse voices, even those we don’t agree with, into our sacred work.

Shabbat Shalom.