## Receiving and Owning Torah

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## Deuteronomy 29

דברים כ"ט

(9) You stand this day, all of you, before your God, the Eternal—your tribal heads, your elders, and your officials, every householder in Israel, (10) your children, your wives, even the stranger within your camp, from woodchopper to waterdrawer— (11) to enter into the covenant of your God, the Eternal, which your God, the Eternal is concluding with you this day, with its sanctions; (12) in order to establish you this day as God's people and in order to be your God, as promised you and as sworn to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (13) I make this covenant, with its sanctions, not with you alone, (14) but both with those who are standing here with us this day before our God, the Eternal and with those who are not with us here this day.

(ט) אַשֶּׁם נִצְבִים הַיּוֹם כִּלְּכֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהֹוֶה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
רָאשֵׁיכֶם שִׁבְטֵיכָם זִקְנֵיכֶם וְשְׁטְרֵיכֶם כֹּל אִישׁ יִשְּׂרָאֵל
י) טַפְּכֶם נְשֵׁיכֶם וְאֲרָבְרָה בַּכֶּרַב מַחֲנֶיה מֵחֹטֵב עֵצֶיׁה
עַד שֹׁאֵב מֵימֶיהּ (יא) לְעָבְרְה בַּבְּרִית יְהֹוֶה אֱלֹהֶיה
וּבְאָלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִהוֹה אֱלֹהֵיה כֹּרָת עִמְה הַיְּוֹם (יב) לְמַעוֹ
הַקִים־אֹתְה הַיּוֹם וּ לוֹ לְעָם וְהוּא יְהְיֶה־לְּהְ לַאַבְּרָהָם
בְּאַשֶּׁר הַבְּרִית הַבּּרִית הָּאֹלְה הִיּאֹם לְבַּדְּכֶם אָנֹכִי כֹּרַת לְיִצְקְבּי (יג) וְלֹא אִתְּכֶם לְבַּדְּכֶם אָנֹכִי כֹּרַת עָמֶר הַיְּאַשֶּׁר אָשֶּׁר הַיְּיִם לְפִנֵי יְהֹוֶה אֱלֹהֻיְנוּ וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁנִוֹ פֹּה עִפְנִוּ הַיִּוֹם לִפְנֵי יְהֹוֶה אֱלֹהֻיְנוּ וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁנִוֹ בֹּה עִפְנִוּ הַיְּוֹם לִפְנֵי יְהֹוֶה אֱלֹהֻיִנוּ וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר אֵיִנְנוּ הַיְּוֹם לִפְנֵי יְהֹוֶה אֱלֹהֻיִנוּ וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר

- What is this text saying?
- What can we learn from this text about the communal experience at Mount Sinai?
- What does it do for us today to see ourselves as having been at Mount Sinai?

## **Shemot Rabbah 28:6**

## שמות רבה כ"ח:ו'

..And it was not only of the prophets who receive their prophecy from Sinai, but also the sages who arise in each generation - each of them received what was theirs from Sinai. And so [too] it states (Deuteronomy 5:19), "These things did the Eternal speak to your entire congregation, [...] a great voice and it did not cease": Rabbi Yochanan said, "One voice was split into seven voices and they were divided into seventy languages"; Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said, "From it prophesied all of the prophets who arose." The Sages said that it did not have an echo. Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan, "What is [the meaning of] 'The voice of the Eternal is in strength' (Psalms 29:4)? Can one really say this?

(ו)...iןלֹא כֶּל הַנְּבִיאִים בָּלְבָד קִבְּלוּ מִסִינֵי נְבוּאָתָן, אֶלָּא אַף הַחֲכָמִים הָעוֹמְדִים בְּכָל דּוֹר נְדוֹר כָּל אֶחָד אֶלָּא אַף הַחֲכָמִים הָעוֹמְדִים בְּכָל דּוֹר נְדוֹר כָּל אֶחָד יְטֻ: אֶת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה דִּבֶּר ה' אֶל כָּל קְתַּלְכֶם. קוֹל נְיֹן וְלֹא יָסָף, רַבִּי יוֹחָנֶן אָמַר קוֹל אֶחָד נֶחְלַק לְשִׁבְעָה לְזֹלוֹת וְהֵם נֶחְלָקִים לְשִׁבְעִים לְשׁוֹן. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן לְקִישׁ אָמַר שֶׁמְמֶנּוּ נִתְנַבְּאוּ כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים שֶׁעָמְדוּ. רַבָּנֶן אָמְר שָׁמְמֶנּוּ נִתְנַבְּאוּ כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים שֶׁעָמְדוּ. רַבָּנֶן אָמְר שָׁמָּא הָיָה לוֹ בַּת קוֹל. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחְנַבְּאוּ כָּל הַנְּלִים כְט, ד): קוֹל ה' נַחְנַבְיּה בְּנִלוֹן מָהוּ (תהלים כט, ד): קוֹל ה' בַּנִייָה לַנְתְר לוֹמֵר בֵּן, וַהֲלוֹא מֵלְאָך אֶחָד אֵין כָּל בְּרִיָּה יְכוֹלְת בְּלוֹלוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֲמֵר (דנִיאל י, ו): וּגְוַיְתוֹּ בְּקוֹלוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֲמֵר (דנִיאל י, ו): וּגְוַיְתוֹ

Isn't it true that, with even one angel, no creature can stand up to his voice, as it states (Daniel 10:6), 'And its body was like beryl (tarshish) [...] and the voice of its words was like the voice of the multitude.'

- What is this text saying?
- What can we learn from this text about the individual experience at Mount Sinai?
- What do you think of as your personal experience having received Torah (whatever that means to you)?

Pirkei Avot 1:6 משנה אבות א':ו'

(6) Joshua ben Perahiah and Nittai the Arbelite received [the oral tradition] from them. Joshua ben Perahiah used to say: appoint for yourself a teacher, and acquire for yourself a companion and judge all humans with the scale weighted in their favor.

(ו) יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה וְנִתַּאי הָאַרְבֵּלִי לִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוֹשָׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה אוֹמֵר, עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב, וּקְנֵה לְךָ חָבֵר, וֵהֵנִי דֵן אָת כֵּל הַאָדִם לְכַף זָכוּת: