

Mencahot 29b

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב בשעה שעלה משה למרום מצאו להקב"ה שיושב וקושר כתרים לאותיות אמר לפניו רבש"ע מי מעכב על ידך אמר לו אדם אחד יש שעתידי להיות בסוף כמה דורות ועקיבא בן יוסף שמו שעתידי לדרוש על כל קוץ וקוץ תילין תילין של הלכות

§ Rav Yehuda says that Rav says: When Moses ascended on High, he found the Holy One, Blessed be He, sitting and tying crowns on the letters of the Torah. Moses said before God: Master of the Universe, who is preventing You from giving the Torah without these additions? God said to him: There is a man who is destined to be born after several generations, and Akiva ben Yosef is his name; he is destined to derive from each and every thorn of these crowns mounds upon mounds of *halakhot*. It is for his sake that the crowns must be added to the letters of the Torah.

אמר לפניו רבש"ע הראהו לי אמר לו חזור לאחורך הלך וישב בסוף שמונה שורות ולא היה יודע מה הן אומרים תשש

did not understand what they were saying. Moses' strength waned, as he thought his Torah knowledge was deficient. When Rabbi Akiva arrived at the discussion of one matter, his students said to him: My teacher, from where do you derive this? Rabbi Akiva said to them: It is a *halakha* transmitted to Moses from Sinai. When Moses heard this, his mind was put at ease, as this too was part of the Torah that he was to receive.

חזר ובא לפני הקב"ה אמר לפניו רבנו של עולם יש לך אדם כזה ואתה נותן תורה ע"י אמר לו שתוק כך עלה במחשבה לפני אמר לפניו רבנו של עולם הראיתני תורתו הראני שכרו אמר לו חזור [לאחורך] חזר לאחוריו ראה ששוקלין בשרו במקולין אמר לפניו רבש"ע זו תורה וזו שכרה א"ל שתוק כך עלה במחשבה לפני

Moses returned and came before the Holy One, Blessed be He, and said before Him: Master of the Universe, You have a man as great as this and yet You still choose to give the Torah through me. Why? God said to him: Be silent; this intention arose before Me. Moses said before God: Master of the Universe, You have shown me Rabbi Akiva's Torah, now show me his reward. God said to him: Return to where you were. Moses went back and saw that they were weighing Rabbi Akiva's flesh in a butcher shop [*bemakkulin*], as Rabbi Akiva was tortured to death by the Romans. Moses said before Him: Master of the Universe, this is Torah and this is its reward? God said to him: Be silent; this intention arose before Me.