




The Rabbinic Mind (RD) Menachot 29b

Menachot 29b	מנחות כט.ב
--------------	------------

<p>Why was God attaching crowns to the letters of the Torah?</p> <p>Why does Moshe get upset in the classroom and what calms him down?</p> <p>Moshe presents two concerns to God, what are they and how does God respond to them?</p> <p>What do you make of the twice repeated statement by God, שתוק כך עלה במחשבה לפני?</p>	<p>Rabbi Yehudah said, "Rav said, "When Moshe ascended to the heavens, he found the Holy One, Blessed be God, sitting and attaching crowns to the letters (of the Torah).</p>  <p>Moshe said to God, "Master of the Universe! Why are You doing that?"</p> <p>God said to him, "There is one man who will exist many generations from now, and Akiva the son of Yosef is his name. In the future, he will comment on every crown and from them create many laws."</p> <p>Moshe said to God, "Master of the Universe! Show him to me."</p> <p>God said to Moshe, "Turn backwards." (As soon as Moshe turned around he found himself standing in Rabbi Akiva's classroom in the future.)</p> <p>Moshe went and sat at the end of eight rows [of students in Rabbi Akiva's Beit Midrash], and he did not know what they were talking [about]. Moshe got upset. Just then, Rabbi Akiva's students said to him, "Our teacher, from where do you learn this?" He said to them, "It is a law [that was taught] to Moshe at Sinai." When Moshe heard this he calmed down.</p> <p>Moshe returned and came before the Holy One, Blessed be God, and said to God, "Master of the Universe! You have a man like this, and You are giving the Torah through me?"</p> <p>God said to him, "Be silent. This is what I have decided."</p> <p>Moshe said to God, "Master of the Universe! You have shown me his Torah; show me his reward."</p>	<p>Who was Rav Yehuda?</p> <p>Judah bar Ezekiel (220–299 CE) (Hebrew: יהודה בן יחזקאל; also known as Rav Yehuda bar Ezekiel) was a Babylonian amora of the 2nd generation. He was the most prominent disciple of Rav, in whose house he often stayed, and whose son Hiyya was his pupil.</p> <p>Who was Rav?</p> <p>In the Talmud, the title Rav generally precedes the names of Babylonian Amoraim, whereas the title Rabbi generally precedes the names of ordained scholars in Palestine (whether Tannaim or Amoraim).</p> <p>In the Talmud, Rav (used alone) is a common name for Abba Arika, the first Amora, who established the great yeshiva at Sura, which, using the Mishnah as text, led to the compilation of the Talmud.</p> <p>Who was Akiva?</p> <p>Akiva ben Yosef (עקיבא בן יוסף), c. 50 – c. 132 CE), widely known as Rabbi Akiva (רבי עקיבא), was a <i>tanna</i> of the latter part of the first century and the beginning of the second century (the third tannaitic generation). Rabbi Akiva was a leading contributor to the <i>Mishnah</i> and to Midrash halakha. He is referred to in the Talmud as</p>
--	--	---

	<p>God said to him, "Turn backwards."</p> <p>Moshe turned backwards, and saw that they were tearing Akiva's skin with iron combs. Moshe said to God, "Master of the Universe! Such Torah, and such reward!"</p> <p>God said to him, "Be silent. This is what I have decided."</p>	<p><i>Rosh la-Hakhamim</i> "Chief of the Sages". He was executed by the Romans in the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt.</p>
--	---	---

<p>What essential (big) questions is this text addressing?</p> <p>What questions does this text raise for you?</p>	<p>What are the practical implications of this gemara, today?</p>
--	--