



[1] דברים פרק ה פסוק ה

אֲנִי עֹמֵד בֵּין יְקֹנֶךָ וּבֵינֶיכֶם בְּעַת הַהוּא לְהַגִּיד לְכֶם אֶת דְּבַר יְקֹנֶךָ כִּי יֵרְאֶתֶם מִפְּנֵי הָאֵשׁ וְלֹא עֲלִיתֶם בְּהָר לְאָמֹר:

רש"י

לאמר - מוסב על (פסוק ד) דבר ה' עמכם בהר מתוך האש לאמר אנכי ה' וגו' ואנכי עומד בין ה' וביניכם:

[2] שמות פרק יט פסוק יט

וַיְהִי קוֹל הַשּׁוֹפָר הוֹלֵךְ וְחֹזֵק מְאֹד מִשָּׁה וַדְּבַר וְהָאֱלֹהִים יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּקוֹל:

רש"י

הולך וחזק מאד - מנהג הדיוט כל זמן שהוא מאריך לתקוע קולו מחליש וכוהה, אבל כאן הולך וחזק מאד. ולמה כך מתחלה, לשבר אזניהם מה שיכולין לשמוע: **משה ידבר** - כשהיה משה מדבר ומשמיע הדברות לישראל שהרי לא שמעו מפי הגבורה אלא (שמות כ ב) אנכי ולא יהיה לך והקב"ה מסייעו לתת בו כח להיות קולו מגביר ונשמע: **יעננו בקול** - יעננו על דבר הקול, כמו (מלכים א' יח כד) אשר יענה באש, על דבר האש להורידו:

[3] שמות פרק יט פסוק ט

וַיֹּאמֶר יְקֹנֶךָ אֵל מִשָּׁה הִנֵּה אֲנִי בָא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעַב הָעֲנָן בְּעִבּוֹר יִשְׁמַע הָעַם בְּדַבְרֵי עַמְּךָ וְגַם בְּךָ יֵאָמְרוּ לְעוֹלָם וַיִּגַּד מִשָּׁה אֶת דְּבַרֵּי הָעַם אֵל יְקֹנֶךָ:

רש"י

בעב הענן - במעבה הענן וזהו ערפל: **וגם בך** - גם בנביאים הבאים אחריו: **ויגד משה וגו'** - ביום המחרת שהוא רביעי לחודש: **את דברי העם וגו'** - תשובה על דבר זה שמעתי מהם שרצונם לשמוע ממך אינו דומה השומע מפי השליח לשומע מפי המלך, רצוננו לראות את מלכנו:

[4] דברים פרק ה

(יט) וַיְהִי כְשִׁמְעֶכֶם אֶת הַקּוֹל מִתּוֹךְ הַחֹשֶׁךְ וְהָהָר בַּעַר בָּאֵשׁ וַתִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי כָּל רְאֵשֵׁי שְׁבֻטֵיכֶם וְזִקְנֵיכֶם: (כ) וַתֹּאמְרוּ הֵן הִרְאָנוּ יְקֹנֶךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת כְּבֹדוֹ וְאֶת גְּדֻלוֹ וְאֶת קְלוֹ שִׁמְעָנוּ מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה רְאִינוּ כִּי יַדְבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם וְחַי:

[5] דברים פרק ד פסוק יב

וַיַּדְבֵּר יְקֹנֶךָ אֵלֵיכֶם מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּבָרִים אֲתֶם שֹׁמְעִים וְתִמְוָנָה אֵינְכֶם רְאִים זוֹלָתִי קוֹל:

[6] דברים פרק ד פסוק לה

אֲתָה הָרְאֵתָ לְדַעַת כִּי יְקֹנֶךָ הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד מִלְבְּדוֹ:

רש"י

הראת - כתרגומו אתחזיתא. כשנתן הקב"ה את התורה פתח להם שבעה רקיעים. וכשם שקרע את העליונים כך קרע את התחתונים. וראו שהוא יחידי, לכך נאמר אתה הראת לדעת:

[7] תהלים פרק סב פסוק יב

אֲחַת דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים שְׁתִּימָה זוֹ שִׁמְעָתִי כִּי עַז לְאֱלֹהִים:

רש"י

אחת דבר אלהים - ששמעתי מתוכה שתיים ומה הן שתיים כי עז לך לשלם לאיש כמעשהו, והשני כי לך ה' החסד ומאיזה דבור שמענו מדבור שני של ה' הדברות שמענו ממנו שהקב"ה פוקד עון ונוצר חסד שנאמר בו (שמות כ') פוקד עון אבות וגו' לכך בטוח אני שישלם שכר טוב לצדיקים ופורענות לרשעים, זו למדתי מיסודו של ר' משה הדרשן, ורבותינו דרשוהו בזכור ושמור בדבור אחד נאמרו:

[8] שמות פרק יט פסוק טז
 נִהְיֶה בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בְּהֵיטֵב הַבְּקָר וְנִהְיֶה קֹלֶת וּבְרָקִים וְעָנָן כְּבֹד עַל הַהָר וְקוֹל שִׁפְרֵי חֲזָק מְאֹד וַיִּחְרַד כָּל
 הָעָם אֲשֶׁר בְּמַחֲנֶה :
 רש"י
 בהית הבקר - מלמד שהקדים על ידם מה שאין דרך בשר ודם לעשות כן, שיהא הרב ממתין לתלמיד,
 וכן מצינו ביחזקאל (יחזקאל ג כב) קום צא אל הבקעה וגו', (שם כג) ואקום ואצא אל הבקעה והנה שם
 כבוד ה' עומד :

[9] שמות פרק כ פסוק טו
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל מֹשֶׁה דַּבֵּר אִתָּהּ עִמָּנוּ וְנִשְׁמָעָה וְאֵל דַּבֵּר עִמָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים פֶּן נָמוּת :

Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed* II:33 (S. Pines translation)

It is clear to me that at the *Gathering at Mount Sinai*, not everything that
 I reached *Moses* also reached all *Israel*. Speech was addressed to *Moses* alone;
 for this reason, in the whole *Decalogue* the second person singular is used,

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 been made clear,²⁵ *Onqelos* received these wondrous and sublime notions
 that he transmits *from the mouth of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua*
 who are the *Sages of Israel* par excellence. Know this and remember it.
 For it is impossible to expound the *Gathering at Mount Sinai* to a greater
 extent than they spoke about it, for it is one of the *mysteries of the Torah*.
 The true reality of that apprehension and its modality are quite hidden
 from us, for nothing like it happened before and will not happen after.
 Know this.

25. Literally: as they have made clear.

1 and he, peace be on him, went to the foot of the mountain and com-
 municated to the people what he had heard. The text of the *Torah* reads:
I stood between the Lord and you at that time to declare unto you the word
*of the Lord.*¹ It also says: *Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice.*²
 5 And it is explicitly said in the *Mekhilta*³ that he repeated to them each and
 every *commandment* as he heard it. Again a text of the *Torah* reads:
*That the people may hear when I speak with thee, and so on.*⁴ This is a proof
 that it was he who was spoken to and that they heard the great voice, but
 not the articulations of speech. About hearing | this great voice, it says:
 10 *When ye heard the voice.*⁵ And it also says: *Ye heard the voice of words, but*
*ye saw no figure; only a voice.*⁶ It does not say: *ye heard the words.* Thus
 every time when their hearing words is mentioned, it is their hearing the
voice that is meant, *Moses* being the one who heard words and reported
 them to them. This is the external meaning of the text of the *Torah* and of
 15 most of the dicta of the *Sages*, *may their memory be blessed*. However, they
 also have a dictum formulated in several passages of the *Midrashim*⁷ and
 also figuring in the *Talmud*. This is their dictum:⁸ *They heard "I"*⁹ and
*"Thou shalt not have"*¹⁰ *from the mouth of the Force.*¹¹ They mean that these
 words reached them just as they reached *Moses our Master* and that it was
 20 not *Moses our Master* who communicated them to them. For these two
 principles, I mean the existence of the deity and His being one, are knowable
 by human speculation alone. Now with regard to everything that can be
 known by demonstration, the status of the prophet and that of everyone
 else who knows it are equal; there is no superiority of one over the other.
 25 Thus these two principles are not known through prophecy alone. The text
 of the *Torah* says: *Unto thee it was shown, and so on.*¹² As for the other
commandments, they belong to the class of generally accepted opinions
 and those adopted in virtue of tradition, not to the class of the intellecta.

30 Taking into consideration whatever else they have said about this,
 the texts and the dicta of the *Sages* permit considering as admissible that all
Israel only heard at that *Gathering* one *voice* one single time—the *voice*
 through which *Moses* and all *Israel* apprehended *I*¹³ and *Thou shalt not have*,¹⁴
 which *commandments* *Moses* made them hear again as spoken in his own

1. Deut. 5:5. 2. Exod. 19:19. 3. Mekhilta, commentary on Exod. 20:1.

4. Exod. 19:9. 5. Deut. 5:20. 6. Deut. 4:12. 7. In the text: *Midrashoth*.

8. B.T., Makkoth, 24a; Midrash on the Song of Songs, 1:2.

9. I.e., the First Commandment. 10. I.e., the Second Commandment.

11. The Hebrew word *geburah*, here translated "force," sometimes designates the deity.

12. Deut. 4:35. 13. I.e., the First Commandment.

14. I.e., the Second Commandment.

1 speech with an articulation of the letters that were heard. The *Sages* said
 this, quoting in support of this assertion the dictum: *God hath spoken once,*
*twice have I heard this.*¹⁵ And they made it clear at the beginning of
*Midrash Hazith*¹⁶ that they had not heard another | *voice* coming from
 5 Him, may He be exalted. Thus too a text of the *Torah*: *A great voice,*
*and He added no more.*¹⁷ It was after they had heard that first *voice* that
 they, as is mentioned, were terrified of the thing and felt a great fear, and
 that they, as is reported, said: *And ye said, Behold the Lord [our God] hath*
shown us, and so on. Now therefore why should we die, and so on. Go thou
 10 *near and hear, and so on.*¹⁸ Thereupon he, who was greater than anyone
 born of man, went forward a second time, received the rest of the *com-*
mandments one after the other, descended to the foot of the mountain,
 and made them hear these commandments in the midst of that great
 gathering. Meanwhile they were seeing the fires and hearing the voices,
 15 I mean those voices that are said to be *voices and lightnings*,¹⁹ like thunder
 and *the loud voice of the trumpet*. All that you find mentioned about hearing
 many *voices*—as for instance the dictum: *And all the people saw the voices,*
*and so on*²⁰—refers only to *the voice of the trumpet*, the thunderings, and
 the like. As for *the voice of the Lord*, I mean the created voice from which
 20 the *speech* [of God] was understood, they heard it once only, according to
 what the text of the *Torah* states and according to what the *Sages* make
 clear in the passage to which I drew your attention. This was *the voice on*
hearing which their soul went out of them,²¹ and through which *the first two*
commandments were apprehended. Know that with regard to that *voice* too,
 25 their rank was not equal to the rank of *Moses our Master*. I shall draw your
 attention to this secret, and I shall let you know that this is a matter that is
 transmitted by tradition in the religious community²² and that is known
 to its men of knowledge. Thus in all the passages in which you will find,
And the Lord spoke [va-yedabber] to Moses saying, *Onqelos* translates: *And*
 30 *the Lord spoke [u-mallel]*. Thus: *And God spoke [va-yedabber] all [these]*
words,²³ is translated: *And the Lord spoke [u-mallel] all [these] words*. On the
 other hand, the words of *Israel to Moses*: *But let not God speak [yedabber]*
with us,²⁴ he translates: *[Speech] should not be spoken [yitmallel] with us*
 35 *on the part of the Lord*. Thus he, peace be on him, has made clear to you
 the proposition that we have set forth in detail. | You know that, as has

15. Ps. 62:12. 16. Midrash on the Song of Songs, 1:2. 17. Deut. 5:19.
 18. Deut. 5:21-24. 19. Exod. 19:16. 20. Exod. 20:15.
 21. Midrash on the Song of Songs, 5:6.
 22. Or: nation. 23. Exod. 20:1. 24. Exod. 20:16.