1 מסכת יבמות ס"ב:

ר"ע אומר למד תורה בילדותו ילמוד תורה בזקנותו היו לו תלמידים בילדותו יהיו לו תלמידים בזקנותו שנא' בבקר זרע את זרעך וגו' אמרו שנים עשר אלף זוגים תלמידים היו לו לרבי עקיבא מגבת עד אנטיפרס וכולן מתו בפרק אחד מפני שלא נהגו כבוד זה לזה

Rabbi Akiva says that the verse should be understood as follows: If one studied Torah in his youth he should study more Torah in his old age; if he had students in his youth he should have additional students in his old age, as it is stated: “In the morning sow your seed, etc.” They said by way of example that Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of students in an area of land that stretched from Gevat to Antipatris in Judea, and they all died in one period of time, because they did not treat each other with respect.

והיה העולם שמם עד שבא ר"ע אצל רבותינו שבדרום ושנאה להם ר"מ ור' יהודה ור' יוסי ורבי שמעון ורבי אלעזר בן שמוע והם הם העמידו תורה אותה שעה

And the world was desolate of Torah until Rabbi Akiva came to our Rabbis in the South and taught his Torah to them. This second group of disciples consisted of Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Yosei, Rabbi Shimon, and Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua. And these are the very ones who upheld the study of Torah at that time. Although Rabbi Akiva’s earlier students did not survive, his later disciples were able to transmit the Torah to future generations.

תנא כולם מתו מפסח ועד עצרת

With regard to the twelve thousand pairs of Rabbi Akiva’s students, the Gemara adds: It is taught that all of them died in the period from Passover until Shavuot.

2 משנה תורה לרמב"ם הלכות מלכים פרק י"א הלכה ג

וְאַל יַעֲלֶה עַל דַּעְתְּךָ שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ צָרִיךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים וּמְחַדֵּשׁ דְּבָרִים בָּעוֹלָם אוֹ מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים וְכַיּוֹצֵא בִּדְבָרִים אֵלּוּ [ב.] אֵין הַדָּבָר כָּךְ. שֶׁהֲרֵי רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא חָכָם גָּדוֹל מֵחַכְמֵי מִשְׁנָה הָיָה. וְהוּא הָיָה נוֹשֵׂא כֵּלָיו שֶׁל בֶּן כּוֹזִיבָא הַמֶּלֶךְ. וְהוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר עָלָיו שֶׁהוּא הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ. וְדִמָּה הוּא וְכָל חַכְמֵי דּוֹרוֹ שֶׁהוּא הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ. עַד שֶׁנֶּהֱרַג בַּעֲוֹנוֹת. כֵּיוָן שֶׁנֶּהֱרַג נוֹדַע לָהֶם שֶׁאֵינוֹ. וְלֹא שָׁאֲלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ חֲכָמִים לֹא אוֹת וְלֹא מוֹפֵת. וְעִקַּר הַדְּבָרִים כָּכָה הֵן. שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת חֻקֶּיהָ וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיהָ לְעוֹלָם וּלְעוֹלְמֵי עוֹלָמִים. וְאֵין מוֹסִיפִין עֲלֵיהֶן וְלֹא גּוֹרְעִין מֵהֶן:

It should not occur to you that the King Messiah must bring wondrous signs or perform marvels or invent new things or revive the dead or anything like what the fools say. It is not so. For Rabbi Akiva, one of the wisest of the Sages of the Mishna, was King Ben Coziba’s124 arms-bearer125 and said that he was the King Messiah. He and all the Sages of his generation thought that he was the King Messiah, until he was killed because of his sins126. Since he was killed, they then understood that he was not the one. The Sages never asked of him neither a sign nor a wonder. So, the essence of the matter is like this: The Laws and the Statutes of the Torah never change. We may not add to them nor detract from them. 127Anyone who adds to or subtracts from them or reveals some new dimension to the Torah or understands the Commandments differently than their plain meaning is, for sure, an evil person and an Apikoris.

3מסכת מנחות כט:

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 שעתיד להיות בסוף כמה דורות ועקיבא בן יוסף שמו שעתיד 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 כחו כיון שהגיע לדבר אחד אמרו לו תלמידיו רבי מנין לך אמר להן הלכה למשה מסיני נתיישבה דעתו

Moses **said before** God: **Master of the Universe, show him to me.** God **said to him: Return behind you.** Moses **went and sat at the end of the eighth row** in Rabbi Akiva’s study hall **and 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 רבונו של עולם יש לך אדם כזה ואתה נותן תורה ע"י אמר לו שתוק כך עלה במחשבה לפני אמר לפניו רבונו 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.**

4 מסכת שבת דף לג:

נְפַקוּ, חֲזוֹ אִינָשֵׁי דְּקָא כָּרְבִי וְזָרְעִי, אָמְרִין: מַנִּיחִין חַיֵּי עוֹלָם וְעוֹסְקִין בְּחַיֵּי שָׁעָה. כׇּל מָקוֹם שֶׁנּוֹתְנִין עֵינֵיהֶן מִיָּד נִשְׂרָף. יָצְתָה בַּת קוֹל וְאָמְרָה לָהֶם: לְהַחֲרִיב עוֹלָמִי יְצָאתֶם?! חִיזְרוּ לִמְעָרַתְכֶם! הֲדוּר אֲזוּל אִיתִּיבוּ תְּרֵיסַר יַרְחֵי שַׁתָּא. אָמְרִי: מִשְׁפַּט רְשָׁעִים בְּגֵיהִנָּם שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ. יָצְתָה בַּת קוֹל וְאָמְרָה: צְאוּ מִמְּעָרַתְכֶם! נְפַקוּ. כָּל הֵיכָא דַּהֲוָה מָחֵי רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, הֲוָה מַסֵּי רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן. אָמַר לוֹ: בְּנִי, דַּי לָעוֹלָם אֲנִי וְאַתָּה.

**They emerged** from the cave, and **saw people who were plowing and sowing.** Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai **said:** These people **abandon eternal life** of Torah study **and engage in temporal life** for their own sustenance. The Gemara relates that **every place that** Rabbi Shimon and his son Rabbi Elazar **directed their eyes was immediately burned. A Divine Voice emerged and said to them:** Did **you emerge** from the cave in order **to destroy My world? Return to your cave. They again went** and **sat** there **for twelve months. They said: The judgment of the wicked in Gehenna lasts** for **twelve months.** Surely their sin was atoned in that time. **A Divine Voice emerged and said** to them: **Emerge from your cave. They emerged. Everywhere that Rabbi Elazar would strike, Rabbi Shimon would heal.** Rabbi Shimon **said to** Rabbi Elazar: **My son, you and I suffice for the** entire **world,** as the two of us are engaged in the proper study of Torah.

בַּהֲדֵי פַּנְיָא דְּמַעֲלֵי שַׁבְּתָא חֲזוֹ הָהוּא סָבָא דַּהֲוָה נָקֵיט תְּרֵי מַדָּאנֵי אָסָא וְרָהֵיט בֵּין הַשְּׁמָשׁוֹת. אֲמַרוּ לֵיהּ: הָנֵי לְמָה לָךְ? אֲמַר לְהוּ: לִכְבוֹד שַׁבָּת. וְתִיסְגֵּי לָךְ בְּחַד! — חַד כְּנֶגֶד ״זָכוֹר״ וְחַד כְּנֶגֶד ״שָׁמוֹר״. אֲמַר לֵיהּ לִבְרֵיהּ: חֲזִי כַּמָּה חֲבִיבִין מִצְוֹת עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל. אִיְּתִיבָה דַּעְתַּיְיהוּ.

**As the sun was setting on Shabbat eve, they saw an elderly man who was holding two bundles of myrtle branches and running at twilight. They said to him: Why do you have these? He said to them: In honor of Shabbat.** They said to him: **And let one suffice.** He answered them: **One** is **corresponding to: “Remember** the Shabbat day, to keep it holy” ([Exodus 20:8](/Exodus.20.8)), **and** one is **corresponding to: “Observe** the Shabbat day, to keep it holy” ([Deuteronomy 5:12](/Deuteronomy.5.12)). Rabbi Shimon **said to his son: See how beloved the mitzvot are to Israel. Their minds were** put **at ease** and they were no longer as upset that people were not engaged in Torah study.