

YOU HAVE BECOME A PEOPLE TO ADONAI*

וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה וְהַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם אֶל־כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר
הִסַּבְתָּ וּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִהְיִיתָ לְעַם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

And Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying:
“Keep silent, and hear, O Israel;
this day you have become a people to Adonai your God.”

*And Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying:—*The priests were included because of their responsibility to teach Torah to the people (Sforno). No longer were only the leaders to be the “representatives and keepers of the Torah” but the people themselves had been made responsible for it (S.R. Hirsch). “*Keep silent, and hear, O Israel*”—Close your mouths and open your minds, so that your “imagination” will allow you to understand your covenant with God (Sforno)—because if you do this you will keep the mitzvot and survive. Each day of your life should be lived as if “today you have entered into a covenant” with God (Rashi). “*This day you have become a people to Adonai your God*”—It was only at this point that the people had received all of the commandments, without which the covenant could not fully guide their lives. The teaching was that it is the Torah that makes you a nation, that will unite you even if you should lose the land—the Torah will bind you together, keep you holy, and sustain you when dispersed in the land (S.R. Hirsch 24:1 and 27:11).

* Deuteronomy 27:9 (in Ki Tavo)