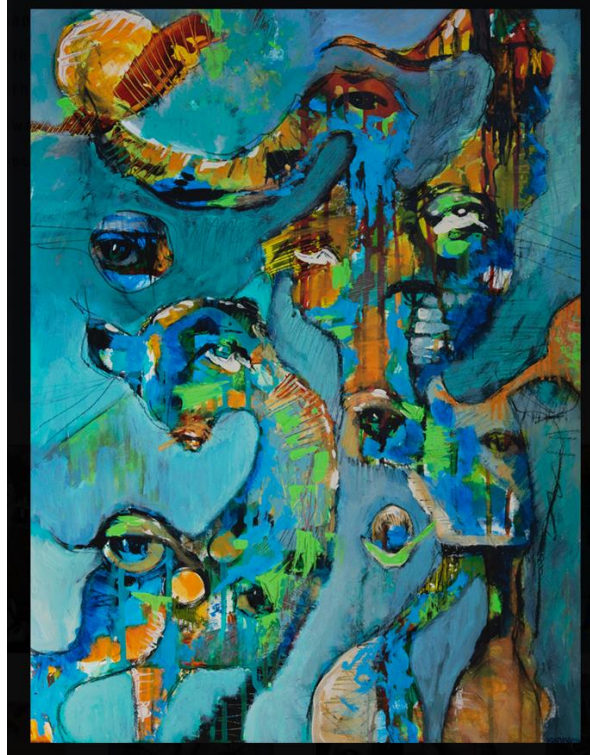


PARSHAT DEVARIM  
DEUTERONOMY 1:1 -3:22  
AV 9, 5782--AUGUST, 2022



*Stand On Your Own Two Feet*  
Acrylic On Canvas By  
Katie O'Sullivan

LOOKING BACK, STEPPING FORWARD

1. “The paintings become your story. As you look at them through your eyes, you breathe new life into them. From your perspective, you discover fragments from your own experience, make new connections, and see new possibilities. The paintings evolve from your personal interaction and become something new.—Katie O’Sullivan
2. “I have never been good with words, either in times past or now that You have spoken to Your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.” (Exodus 4:10)
3. “Action takes precedence over words. Can you do it?” (A Chinese Fortune Cookie)
4. “The world would be happier if men had the same capacity to be silent that they have to speak.” Baruch Spinoza- *Ethics*
5. “There is no book in all of holy writ that Moses wrote all by himself, but it does seem that ““These words’ are the words of our master Moses.” (Abravanel)

## 6. The Etymology of Parshat Devarim

*Parshat Devarim* is a moment for recapitulation and reflection. We can begin to reflect back on the journey through Torah as well. What has the journey been like for us?

דָּבַר

--Have we mostly been aware of our discomforts/objections/criticisms? If so, then maybe it's been mostly a **plague** for us.

דְּבוּרָה

--Has it been provoking, annoying? If so, then maybe it's been mostly a swarm of **bees**.

דּוֹבַר

--Has it been a nurturing environment? If so, then maybe it's been mostly a **pasture**.

דָּבַר

--Has it been a dynamic experience? If so, then maybe it's been mostly an **event**.

מְדַבֵּר

--Has it been bewildering? If so, then maybe it's been mostly a **wilderness**.

לְדַבֵּר

--Have I been silent too long? If so, then perhaps it's time **to speak**.

חֲזוֹן

--Does it all seem like pure fantasy that melts away with morning light? Then perhaps it's just a dream (*Chazon*).

תִּשָׁה בְּאֵב

--Are we primarily aware of the tragedies that we know befall upon the Jewish people over the thousands of years since the Torah was written? Then perhaps we're mostly aware of the unfulfilled/the losses (*Tisha b'Av*).

“If we're aware that the writing is never over, that the next chapters are for us to write, then perhaps we're mostly aware of Torah as a mystery we are not afraid to claim as our own. A mystery the details of which change a bit each time we revisit it to suit our needs of the moment.”

--Rabbi Steven Moskowitz