



The Truth of Maamad Har Sinai: A *Brief Overview*

In addition to all the emotional and psychological issues involved in keeping our students and children in line, there is another major issue of critical importance. They must be familiar and very well versed in the testimony and evidence that exists for the truth of Torah from Sinai. The degree to which they are convinced and confident that, in fact, the Creator and Almighty Master of the Universe revealed Himself publicly, at Sinai, to the entire Jewish people, and gave them His Divine directives, is the degree to which this concept will guide them and keep them from falling prey to a host of negative influences and pressures in their lives.

This information should not be presented to them as an effort to convince them of the truth, rather it should be presented gently, over a long period of time, in a way that just seems to take these truths for granted but yet shares with them the basis for our knowing these facts.

The key words in this process are testimony and evidence. Our Torah includes in itself a system for recognizing and transmitting the testimony of the original generation of eyewitnesses, to the revelation at Sinai, down to this very day. An understanding of this system, provides a very credible basis for the truth of Torah from Sinai.

The second word, evidence, refers to the fact that the Torah, both the written and the oral. Torah, is full of information that no-one other than the Creator and Ruler of the Universe could have known at the time the document was written. The Torah is also replete with indications of the Creator's control of the world.

Both of these concepts are unique amongst the religions of the world, only to be found in Judaism. Even though the other major religions came after Judaism and copied so much from it, no religion ever dared to claim eyewitness testimony to a public event of revelation by G-d, in front of millions of live witnesses. This can only be understood by the realization that this claim is extremely difficult to fabricate and if, in fact, it did not happen, then it will not be accepted or believed.

In fact, the major religions, in a desire and need to base their religion on more than the claim of one person to a private revelation, also acknowledge that the only public revelation was by the Creator to the Jews at Sinai. They then go on to claim, however that G-d changed His mind about Torah and the Jewish people.

This claim, of course, is very tenuous, because G-d Himself, commanded in the Torah, that no prophet, even with the performance of amazing miracles, could be believed to change the Torah or lead us astray.

The other major religions do not fare better when it comes to evidence for the truth of Torah. Most of their pronouncements refer to future events in the world-to-come, or very vague statements, not very testable in this world. The Torah, however, is full of very specific information and prophecy of future events in this world that no one can deny.

This information is so compelling that the Talmud states, in "Chullin", that this type of information, that no human could have known at the time, serves as an answer to anyone who would question whether or not the Torah is from G-d.

To properly convey the dual concepts of testimony to the events of Sinai and evidence for the Divine truth of Torah requires a detailed sophisticated analysis of a wide range of material, which is beyond the scope of this work. It also requires serious training for the parent and teacher in the most effective ways of conveying this information to others.

For the purpose of this work, some highlights of the basic concepts are presented here with the advice to the reader to do further research and be exposed to some training in this area, before presenting these concepts to skeptics.

The only religion that claims a revelation in front of an entire nation, millions of witnesses, is Judaism, the others, if they claim revelation, like Islam and Christianity, claim a private revelation to one person with no other witnesses. This story underscores the difference in credibility between the two approaches. Anyone can claim that he had a private revelation; no one can claim a public revelation unless it, in fact, really happened.

When the Torah, which describes this public revelation in detail, clearly states that the people of that generation witnessed these events and heard Hashem speaking to them and to Moshe, then the fact that they all passed this document on to their children, is a powerful testimony to these events.

Parents do not lie to their children, millions of parents certainly don't tell the same lie to their children. If a parent tells a child that a certain event took place, then the child knows that his parent honestly believes that the certain event took place. If a parent says, "I saw that event take place" then the child knows that, in fact, it did actually take place.

The Torah was passed from generation to generation, always publicly read and always prohibited from even the slightest change. Not only was the document passed down and preserved, but it was always read and studied by a nation that performed many observances, generation after generation, based on the text. To date, the text survives, all over the Jewish world without differences in text of any significance, unlike the New Testament, which has hundreds of significant differences in text. This process can be seen in action when a Baal Koreh, makes a mistake in the public Torah reading; the listeners, yell out corrections and never let a reading mistake go by. If and when there is a written error or peeling of the letter in the Torah, the Torah is put away, with the "gartle" on the outside, announcing its inappropriate status and must be fixed within thirty days. This system has preserved the Torah throughout the ages.

The Torah abounds with evidence of its Divine authorship, in the form of information both prophetic and scientific that no author could have known, when the Torah was first given. All sources, including secular historians, admit that this was, at least approximately 2,250 years ago, because then it was translated into Greek.

The Torah clearly prophesizes the events of the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash, the exile, the Holocaust, the return to Israel, in intricate detail, leaving no room to question the prophetic ability of its author. The Torah gives us vast amounts of modern scientific information, both in the written and oral Torah, no human could have known without Divine revelation.

That fact that the pig is the only animal ever, anywhere in the world, that has split hooves and does not chew its cud, could not have been known to Moshe Rabbeinu, without Divine revelation. Nor could he have known that never will there be a species of fish that has scales but does not have fins.

Who could have dared to say that the Western Wall of the Bais Hamikdash will never be destroyed and who could have known that during the 20th Century, our enemies will use poisonous gas against us. Or who could have known, thousands of years ago, that the final determination of whether an embryo is male or female only takes place after the 40th day after conception. It goes on and on. This is what the Talmud says in "Chullin", that the scientific information that no one could have known at that time, serves as an answer to anyone who would say that Torah is not from Heaven. Chazal do not say this is how we know the truth of Torah, but rather, an answer to anyone who might question its veracity. We know Torah is Divine, because of the unbroken chain of testimony from generation to generation, with no skipping of a generation. However, if anyone still harbors any doubts, how can he explain the extensive, detailed and accurate information that we find in our Torah?