

person (TB *P'sahim* 8a). Even if his motive is to "buy" Heaven's help for a sick child, if he gives to the poor only because he wants in return his son's health, something more precious than money, it is all right. He has done a good deed. Yet obviously it is not charity *lish'mah*, for its own pure sake. Neither this man nor a person who suddenly gives a million dollars to a hospital or a school, so that a building will bear his name, is necessarily training himself in generosity and compassion. He is not working to become a *baal tz'dakah*, a "master of charity," a man who knows he must answer the needs and the pleas of unfortunate human beings.²⁹

Think of an eight-day-old child, however, undergoing circumcision. He too is taking part in a mitzvah. He is entering the Covenant of Abraham. The pain of a minor bit of surgery is inflicted on him, only because the Almighty commended, *ובן שמונת ימים ימול לכם כל זכר* And he that is eight days old among you shall be circumcised — every male (Genesis 17:12). About this mitzvah you can be sure: it is *lish'mah*. Neither the father nor the *sandek* nor the infant has any ulterior motive. None of them gains any personal advantage. It is purely for a mitzvah.

Similarly the mitzvah of *pidyon ha-ben*. The young father has paid the hospital and the attending physicians. The nursery is well furnished and equipped, complete with diaper service. He has his wife and little baby at home, and by thirty days after the little fellow's entry into the world, he has become used to this new, miraculous addition to his life. "My baby boy," he thinks with pride and wonder, and carries pictures in his wallet. Then, because it is the very first child his wife has ever borne, when the infant is all of thirty days old a kohen comes; the child is brought in; and the kohen asks the young father in Aramaic, "What would you rather do: give me your firstborn son . . . or do you wish to redeem him for five shekels . . .?" All of a sudden the kohen, who might be a total stranger, tells the father that if he wants to keep the baby, he has to give him (the kohen) a lump sum of money. Why? Is it the kohen's baby somehow? Or is this some kind of hold-up?

Obviously this is a ritual that the Torah commands. There could be no other reason. For otherwise it would be a meaningless charade. So clearly it is a mitzvah done *lish'mah*, for its own pure sake, to obey the Almighty's order.

So, said the Hatham Sofer, the child is given the special blessing at these two occasions. At his circumcision and again at the *pidyon ha-ben*, he is blessed with the wish, the hope and the prayer that just as he has partici-

pated in these two mitzvot *lish'mah*, two pure acts of religious observance uncontaminated by any unworthy side interests, so may he merit to study the Torah *lish'mah* when he grows older, then marry *lish'mah*; and finally, as a married man, the head of a family, and a member of the community, may be develop ways and patterns of doing good deeds *lish'mah*.

In short, may he find his way to live in accord with the Almighty's wishes, to really "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might," and not to make this an afterthought, after he has set his sights on other, mundane life-goals.

WHEN THE MOUNTAINS DANCED

THE TRADITIONAL, AUTHENTIC JEW goes through life with his Torah — nothing less, nothing more. You shall not add to the word that I command you, neither shall you diminish from it (Deuteronomy 4:4). We add on nothing, we take nothing away. We need all the mitzvot, all the commandments and teachings; not one ever becomes outdated or superfluous for us; and nothing from the outside world is ever vitally necessary to go with it.

On the world scene the authentic traditional Jew has never really become an important, heroic figure. Behold, it is a people that dwells alone, and it shall not be reckoned among the nations (Numbers 23:9). No, among the nations we have never counted for much. Whenever the Jew received his neighbor's attention, he generally became an object of scorn and fun, a target of taunting and torment. We wore their badges of shame and suffered their outbursts of wrath or their studied cruelty.

Yet humbly, gently, quietly the spirit of the authentic Jew, learning his Torah, observing his mitzvot, lives on. Whatever he does during the day to earn his living, he finds his real calling in the hours given regularly to sacred study. Then he comes into his own. With the Torah he breathes and thrives, grows and survives. With the Torah the Jewish spirit lives on past every wave of anti-semitism that rises and seeks to engulf us.

LIFE

Where did the Jew learn this way of life: How did he learn to live so constantly, so faithfully with the Torah, indomitable in his modesty, unfinching in his humility? Who first taught the Jew to stick to our heritage through thick or thin, paying small heed to the clamors and distractions, the wiles and lures of the cultures in the world about him?

Perhaps he learned it at Sinai. After all, the Sages teach that every member of Jewry was there — not merely the Israelites alive and present at the time, but the life-spirit of every last Israelite, Hebrew and Jew ever destined to be born:³⁰ They (and we) were all there watching. And even before the Almighty revealed His presence on Mount Sinai to give the Torah (say the Sages) a little drama took place, that was really worth watching.

In the vision of the Psalmist, *When Israel went out of Egypt . . . the sea looked and fled . . . the mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs* (Psalms 114:1-4). And the Talmud explains: "the sea looked and fled" — when the Red Sea was divided; "the mountains skipped," etc. — at the time the Torah was given (TB *P'sahim* 118a).

So when the Almighty prepared to give the Ten Commandments, and the entire Torah that went with them, there was action. Things, as we might say, were jumping. O God, hymned the Psalmist, *when Thou didst go forth before Thy people, when Thou didst march across the wilderness . . . the earth trembled . . . Why are you dancing, O high-peaked mountains . . . ?* (Psalms 68:8-9, 17).

Why indeed were the mountains dancing or skipping about in a fine frenzy? In the Midrash, R. Yosé of Galilee explains:

בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁבָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא לְתַתּוֹת תּוֹרָה מִסִּיני, הָיוּ הַהָרִים רָצִים וּמְדַיְוִים אִלּוּ עִם אֱלֹהֵי: זֶה אוֹמֵר עָלַי הַתּוֹרָה תִּתֶּנּוּ, וְזֶה אוֹמֵר עָלַי הַתּוֹרָה תִּתֶּנּוּ. תְּבוֹר כָּא מִבֵּית אֱלֹהִים, וְכַרְמֵל מֵאַסְפִּמְיָא . . . זֶה אוֹמֵר אֲנִי נִקְרָאתִי, וְזֶה אוֹמֵר אֲנִי נִקְרָאתִי. אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא: לָמָּה תִרְצְדוּן הָרִים גְּבוּנִים (תְּהִלִּים ס"ו)? כִּלְכֶם הָרִים גְּבוּהִים, אֵלָּא גְּבוּנִים — הִיךְ מָה דָּאָתְּ אָמַר, אוֹ גִבְנָן אוֹ דַּק (וַיִּקְרָא כ"א). כִּלְכֶם נַעֲשֶׂת עֲבוּדָה-זָרָה עַל רַאשֵׁיכֶם. אָבֵל סִיני, שְׁלֹא נַעֲשֶׂת עֲבוּדָה-זָרָה עָלָיו, הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹהִים לְשִׁבְתוֹ (תְּהִלִּים ע"ט): וַיֵּרַד ה' עַל הַר סִיני (שְׁמוֹת י"ט ב'). (בְּרַאשִׁית רַבָּה ג' א')

At the time the Holy, Blessed One came to give the Torah at Sinai, the mountains came running, quarreling with one another. This one said, "On me will the Torah be given," and that one said, "On me will the Torah be

given." [Mount] Tabor came from Beth Elim, and [Mount] Carmel from Spain. . . . This one said, "I was called," and that one said, "I was called." Said the Holy Blessed One, "Why are you dancing about, you *harim gavnunim* (high-peaked mountains)? You are all high, tall mountains, yet nothing but *gavnunim* — cripples"; for so is it written, *or gibben, hunchbacked, or a dwarf* (Leviticus 21:20). "Idol-worship took place on the tops of all of you. But Sinai, which never had any idol-worship take place on it — that is the mountain that God has desired for His abode" (Psalms 68:17). So the Lord came down on Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:20) (*B'rëshith Rabbah* 99, 1).³¹

Evidently there was a furor of activity there in the wilderness, in the region of Sinai. In the words of the Midrash *Mechilta* (*bahodesh 5*), the mountains were in stormy agitation, and hills were collapsing. Think of it: Revelation was coming. The Creator was about to give His imperishable message, His Divine law, to mankind. So the tallest mountains came rushing breathlessly, skipping and dancing with excitement. Reaching high into the sky, rising above the clouds, each was certain that it had to be the site for the Almighty's unique, unforgettable Revelation. What else could give Him a setting of such majesty and grandeur? They were the *harim gavnunim*. The word *gav* means a back; but it is also at the root of the word *gavoah*, "high, tall." So *gavnunim*, as Rashi and Radak explain, means "very high"; but as Meiri writes, it also denotes "high-backed," or, in the case of mountains, high-peaked.

This they were indeed. Their peaks rose far above earth. So there they were, clamoring for the Almighty to bring His *shechinah*, His Divine Presence, to rest on them. Each one shrieked or bellowed, "I was called" — this is my manifest destiny. I must be the setting for the Revelation!

Since its earliest beginnings, mankind has striven to rise from its primitive levels, to ascend from ignorance and brutality to refinement and culture. Realizing that he walked on two feet instead of four, and that this made a difference, man has tried ever more to stop being so crude and imbecilic, and develop a civilization worthy the name. Human beings strove to ascend; and for one people after another — one civilization, culture, and religion after another — the mountain, rising tall in natural splendor and majesty, became an important symbol. In human systems of thought and belief, mountains assumed significance.

For ancient Greece, there was Olympus, rising nearly 10,000 feet into the air, covered with snow at the top most of the year, massive in appear-

So the test is simple: Are the ideals and goals of our life on a basis of Sinai? Do they fill us with pride, or can we live with them in humility? And above all, as Sinai was the setting for the Torah to be given, so must we ask ourselves if our life has the Torah for its base. Are we willing to make everything in our life subservient to the Torah's ideals? Then morally and spiritually we can have a healthy, normal life. Otherwise we are serving the ideals of some tall, imposing mountain that has bewitched us past all rational thought. We have made some other goal (or goals) more important than our immortal faith. And we would do well to remember that in the Almighty's sight all the other mountains were crippled — by their arrogance. Any other ideals, set above the Torah, can only tax and cripple our lives, making us haughty, and ultimately having no healthy purpose or healthy results.

On Sinai alone the Torah was given, and nothing but the Torah. To stay clear of other, bedazzling mountains, we have to keep the Torah the central element in our lives. It is for us to learn, and to have our children learn. But even more important, it is essential to maintain our gifted students and great scholars — and the yeshivoth where they study. For the Talmud has fascinating names for the two basic types of great scholars. One type, the Talmud calls *Sinai*; the other type, it calls *okér harim*, "an uprooter of mountains" (TB *Horayoth* 14a).

One kind of Torah student works like a natural sponge. He absorbs a knowledge of the Torah, phenomenally retaining its thousand and one details. He deserves the name *Sinai*: for through him, as it were, the Torah is given anew to our people. In a hundred ways he makes the people about him aware of the Torah all over again. Through his daily life, his everyday actions, the laws of the Torah come alive. When a person does not understand something in the Torah, he can ask a *Sinai* and learn the answer from this "walking encyclopedia."

But there is also another outstanding type of scholar: *okér harim*, an uprooter of mountains. He has a mind with a fine cutting edge. He can think coolly, incisively and brilliantly. By simple, rigorous, relentless logic he can upset and overturn a whole mountain of false thought and illusion. In the realm of the Divine word he pursues his goal of truth, and mountains of bedazzling delusion and claptrap get short shrift with him. About the *amora* R. Shimon b. Lakish the Talmud attests that whenever someone saw him in the *béth midrash*, the House of Study, it seemed as if he was uprooting mountains and grinding them to dust against one another. And about the

tanna R. Meir the Talmud attests that he seemed to do the same with the very tallest mountains (TB *Sanhedrin* 24a).

Perhaps it is not by chance that this was the way of R. Meir. Very possibly he learned his method from his master teacher, R. Akiva. R. Shimon b. Elazar once told about him: I will illustrate it with a parable for you. To what is the matter like? — to a stonemason who would do his cutting in the mountains. Once he took his axe in hand and went and sat down on a mountainside and kept hacking out thin splinters from it. So people came along and asked him, "What are you doing?" He replied, "I am going to uproot it and put in it the Jordan River." They retorted, "You cannot uproot the whole mountain." He kept cutting away, however, till he reached a large boulder. He got in under it [with his tools], dislodged it and pried it out, and sent it down into the Jordan, saying, "Your place is not here, but there!" (*Avoth d'R. Nathan* a 6).

Two types of Torah scholars have existed for us in every generation, as the study of our sacred heritage has continued uninterrupted. And with them the work of the Almighty in the wilderness lives on. With our "Sinais" the Torah He gave pulses and lives in our midst, as its thoughts and its truths echo and re-echo in our Houses of Study. And with our "uprooters of mountains" another important act of His lives on. When He came to give the Torah, He rejected the tall majestic mountains. He called them crippled in their arrogance, and disdained them. By their own Talmudic genius, our great Torah scholars have similarly "uprooted the mountains" of the world's "great" cultures and religions, grinding them into dust by showing how small is their value compared with the Torah. Learn to know and understand a phenomenal *talmid hacham*, a luminary of our time, and you will realize automatically how all the secular "mountains" of values and ideals in our modern world pale into insignificance.

The Almighty chose Sinai because it was the lowest and the lowliest of the mountains. It held itself humble. And this has remained a characteristic of our greatest Torah scholars and religious leaders. They have never felt it necessary to attain five university degrees and a full professorship, to fulfill their God-given task in the world.

It is told that a certain devout Jew who opposed the method and teachings of R. Menahem Mendl of Kotzk once sent word to this renowned *hassidic* leader, "I have attained such height in my learning that I now comprehend the seventh heaven." The *rebbe* of Kotzk sent back his reply, "I am so small that all the seven heavens bend down about me!"⁴⁴

Our great scholars do not grow grand in their learning and piety, to tower above us in imposing hauteur. They bring the holiness of heaven down about them, even as Sinai found the Divine Presence abiding on it — and through them our lives become tinged with holiness.

One last point is worth noting about Sinai. As the Midrash tells it, Mount Carmel came dashing in from Spain, and Mount Tabor from Béth Elim (*Midrash T'hillim* 68, 9). Well, the Midrash then logically asks, "And where did Sinai come from?" (If the other mountains traveled in from elsewhere, it must have done the same.) Said R. Yosé: It was plucked out from Mount Moriah, like a loaf-sized piece from a batch of dough, from the site where our father Isaac had been bound on the altar. Said the Holy, Blessed One: Since their forefather Isaac was bound on the altar on it, it is suitable for his descendants to receive the Torah on it.

Sinai was the very place where Abraham had shown his readiness to sacrifice his only son, in obedience to the Divine command, and Isaac had shown his readiness to be sacrificed.

This has remained the essential quality amidst our people that has kept the Torah alive, a living force, ever taught and renewed for us by our great scholars as the vital source of our spiritual energy. Every outstanding *talmid hacham* in our history achieved his place in our annals through his own dedication and self-sacrifice. And you have only to read a little intimate history of our people in Eastern Europe, a bit of the details of their ordinary daily lives, to know how much self-sacrifice it took by everyone, common laborers and small shopkeepers, farmers and peddlers, to keep Torah study going at a high level in a hundred academics and a thousand schools.

This remains our sacred obligation too, in our time and age. Every Torah school is precious and important, and must be maintained whatever the cost and the sacrifice involved. Only our Torah schools give us a base and a hope for great Torah scholars, Sinai and *okér harim* types, in the next generation too. We dare not risk letting either type become extinct.

When the Almighty was ready at last to give the Torah at Sinai, said R. Abbahu in the name of R. Yoḥanan, no bird cheeped, no wing fluttered, no cow lowed, no angels flew or hymned, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts* (Isaiah 6:3); the sea never stirred, and no humans spoke. The world was silent and still, as the voice proclaimed, *I am the Lord your God* (Exodus 20:2) (*Sh'moth Rabbah* 29, 9).

This is a voice that has never ceased calling, demanding of us to recognize His sovereign rule as the Creator, and to accept the Torah as His imperishable word. We can hardly expect the rest of the world to hear the call. People everywhere are far too busy with the delusionary, misleading "Torahs" of their own mountains — their own cultures, values and ideals that generate a cacophony of "sound and fury signifying nothing."

But if we fail to hear every day anew the Divine call from Sinai, there is another message that emanates from there daily, and Heaven help us if we ignore that. Said R. Joshua b. Lévi: Every single day a heavenly voice emanates from Mount Horev [= Sinai], proclaiming, "Woe to the people for the Torah's humiliation!" (*Avoth* vi 2).

If we fail to turn a deaf ear to the raucous or beguiling noises of the world about us, so that we can hear the call from Sinai and respond to it, we will leave the Torah disgraced and humiliated. And without the Torah we will not survive as Jews.

Every generation in every age has made its sacrifices to keep Torah study alive. Sinai, says the Midrash, was a part of Mount Moriah — the part where Abraham had bound Isaac in complete readiness to sacrifice him if that should be the Almighty's will. And we have kept the legacy of Sinai alive ever since, with the same dedication and devotion and readiness for sacrifice. This has been a key part of the authentic Jewish way of life, that requires us to love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our might.

And the day will yet come when we will see that all the dedication and sacrifice has not been in vain. The Midrash relates that one day Moses came to our people in Egypt and told them, "In this month you will be redeemed." Said they to him, "Our master Moses, how can we be redeemed? We have no good deeds to our credit." He replied, "Since He strongly desires your redemption, He will disregard your bad deeds. What will He regard instead? — the *tzaddikim* among you, and their activities." . . . The Sages said . . . they objected, "Our master Moses, how can we be redeemed, when all Egypt is befouled with our idol-worship?" He replied, "Since He strongly desires your redemption, He disregards your idol-worship and instead *He comes leaping over the mountains* (Song of Songs 2:8), and mountains signify nothing but idol-worship" (*Shir haShirim Rabbah* 2:8—1-2).

The prophet has promised us that the end of our present exile, in the era of the Messiah, will be like the liberation from Egypt in Moses' day. Very possibly, then too He may ignore what most of our people do, like

the prophetic experience of Moshe Rabbeinu.⁵⁸ Thus, immediately upon having participated in the unique experience of Revelation, the Israelites approached Moshe and said,

*Behold, the L-rd our G-d has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire; we have seen this day that G-d talks with man, and he lives.*⁵⁹

Indeed, the Ramban observes that the events surrounding Revelation occupy a place of such profound significance in Torah thought as the foundation and cornerstone of *emunah*, that the Torah therefore admonishes us, in the form of both a positive and a negative commandment, never to forget the magnificence of *Ma'amad Har Sinai*, and to be certain to convey the grandeur of these events to all future generations.

We have been instructed not to forget the event of Revelation at Sinai, and not to remove it from our thoughts; rather, we should keep it in mind constantly . . . This is a basic Torah principle . . . and the Torah admonishes us to relate these events to our children and grandchildren in all generations.⁶⁰

Moshe Rabbeinu conveys this message to the children of Israel in most forceful terms. It should be noted that the venerable leader places emphasis upon the personal participation of all the people in this entirely unique and unforgettable experience.

Only take heed to yourself, and guard your soul diligently lest you forget the things which your eyes saw, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known unto your children and your children's children.

The day that you stood before the L-rd your G-d in Chorev, when the L-rd said to me: "Assemble to Me the people, and I will make them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children."

(58) *Kuzari* 1:87; Ramban, Addendum to *Sefer haMitzvos* of the Ramban, *Mitzvas lo sa'aseh* 2, according to the Ramban, *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 95; See also *Sefer haTikkun* III:11.

(59) Deuteronomy 5:21.

(60) Ramban, *loc. cit.*: See also Ramban, Deuteronomy 4:9.

EVENT

*And you came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness.*⁶¹

Pinnacle of All Miracles

In his very famous *Iggeres Teiman* — the letter which brought about a resurgence of faith and which generated renewed hope for the oppressed Jews of Yemen — Maimonides explains that Revelation at Sinai was the pinnacle of all the miracles witnessed by the children of Israel.

So too shall you remember Revelation at Sinai, which the Creator instructed us to remember always. He also admonished us lest we forget it, and He commanded us to teach it to our children, so that they may be raised with an appreciation of it . . .

And it is fitting for you, our brethren, that you shall bring up your children with an awareness of that magnificent event, and that you shall recount in public assembly its magnificence and its glory. For this is the pillar upon which our faith revolves and the proof which leads to the truth. And you shall exalt that event greatly, even as the Almighty Himself exalted it.⁶²

And understand, my brethren, this covenant and this logical imperative, for this wondrous thing was seen in its actuality. Testimony concerning this event was rendered by the *choice of all witnesses*, the likes of whom never before existed nor will exist in the future — that a nation, in its entirety, should hear the voice of the Almighty and should behold His glory directly.⁶³

The twin events of Exodus and Revelation, of course, prove far more than the existence of the Creator alone. They testify also to His omnipotence, as well as to the intimate knowledge, concern, and guidance of Divine Providence regarding the course of human events. The Ramban clarifies this thought in his commentary on the Ten Commandments.

(61) Deuteronomy 4:9-11.

(62) See *Ibid.*, Verses 32-33.

(63) Maimonides, "*Iggeres Teiman*," *Iggeres haRambam*, in *Rambam laAm*, ed. Mordecai Dov Rabinowitz (Jerusalem: Mosad haRav Kook, 1960), pp. 131-32.

which is sustained continually is more remarkable than one which is interrupted. For through no conceivable deception can a nation which numbers almost two million people be sustained by nothing other than food which the Creator has devised for them from nothingness.⁵²

Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra makes a similar observation in his commentary on *Shemos*.

This miracle [of manna] was greater than all the miracles which were performed through Moshe Rabbeinu; for many miracles were contained within the miracle of the manna, and they were sustained for a period of forty years.⁵³

In the *Kuzari*, too, the *Chaver* arrives at a similar conclusion. After describing the magnificent miracles of the Exodus, the *Chaver* makes the following remark:

Even more marvelous was the fact that the Israelites remained for forty years in a desert, a place which was not sown, and the Almighty sent down for them bread which was created anew each day, except Shabbos, which they ate for forty years.

Whereupon the Khazar replied:

This, too, can certainly not be refuted — a thing which occurred to six hundred thousand men and to their dependents persistently over a period of forty years. Since the manna fell for six days and ceased on the seventh, there follows the obligation to observe the Sabbath, because a Divine sign was attached to it.⁵⁴

(52) Rav Saadiah Gaon, Introduction to *Emunos veDeos* (Bialystok: M. Glick, 1913), p. 50.

(53) Ibn Ezra, Exodus 16:35.

(54) *Kuzari* I:85-86. With certain variations, the story of the *Kuzari* is based upon a true historical incident. It is of interest to note that the arguments of the *Chaver* proved to have been so convincing to the Khazar king that he soon afterwards became a *ger tzedek* — a righteous Jewish proselyte. It was not very long before a large segment of the population followed their king's example. It has been historically recorded that for many generations thereafter an autonomous Jewish kingdom flourished in Southern Russia. (See "*Toledos haKuzarim*," which is included as an appendix to the *Kuzari* [Warsaw: Y. Goldman, 1880].)

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES": THE MESORAH APPROACH

Indeed, Daniel, it is because the story of the Exodus and all attendant miracles occupy a place of such central significance in Torah thought, that these events are included among the *Shesh Zechiros* — the six concepts which it is incumbent upon the Torah Jew to remember always.⁵⁵

*In order that you may remember the day on which you were brought forth from the land of Egypt all the days of your life.*⁵⁶

The Drama of Personal Revelation

In an even deeper philosophical sense, however, Daniel, there was yet another event whose significance far transcended that of all the other miracles of the Exodus.

I am referring, of course, to *Ma'amad Har Sinai* — the giving of the Law at Sinai — at which time the entire congregation of Israel, men, women, and children, were elevated to the sphere of prophecy, so that they might hear the voice of the Creator directly and without an intermediary, while they personally experienced the completely fascinating event of Revelation.

They approached Sinai, where they stood awe-stricken and trembling at the foot of the mountain, while they heard with their own ears the voice of the Creator and beheld with their own eyes the glory of G-d.

*And the entire nation saw the thundering and the lightning and the voice of the shofar and the mountain smoking, and when the people saw it they trembled and stood far off.*⁵⁷

Both the *Kuzari* and the Ramban observe that it was this magnificent event — unparalleled and unrivaled as it was in the entire human experience — which served to remove the last vestige of any lingering doubt concerning the ability of the human mind to experience prophecy, and which attested to the absolute authenticity of

(55) According to some authorities, all the *Shesh Zechiros* are to be recited daily. (See *Otzar haTefillos* [New York: Sefer, 1946], Vol. 1, p. 453.) The story of Exodus, of course, is recited twice daily in the third *parsha* of the *Shema*.

(56) Deuteronomy 16:3; See *Torah Temimah*, ad. loc., n. 22.

(57) Exodus 20:15.