

The Unique Claim of the Jewish People

The following two scenarios can be acted out by the teacher in the classroom, or they can be used as a משל for the class.

First Scenario:

The Rebbe/Morah walks into class and says to the students:

You'll never believe what happened to me last night?!?! There was a knock on my door at around 9 pm. I opened it and there were a few men standing there.

They said to me, "Are you Morah_____/Rabbi_______? You won the raffle!! Remember you put in for a raffle in the mall to win a helicopter ride with the President? Well, you're the winner!!"

I kid you not, from 9 pm to 3 am, I was on a helicopter ride with the President! I saw the White House, the Capital, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and so much more, and it ended with an early gourmet breakfast with the President! It was AMAZING!!

Do you believe me?

Most likely, most of the class will not believe it. There may be some students who trust the Rebbe/Morah enough to believe it.

Second Scenario:

The Rebbe/Morah says the same story, but insists that the story happened to the whole class together. We all went on a helicopter ride.... Wasn't it AMAZING!?!....

Now who would believe it?

NO ONE!!!

Why is this so?

You may be able to convince people that something happened to YOU, but you will never be able to convince them that it happened to THEM. No one will believe you if you say that it happened to them.

In פרשת יתרו, we received the תורה. In the תורה, it says:

שמות י"ט ד'

אתם ראיתם אשר עשיתי למצרים

YOU have seen what I did to מצרים

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שמות כ"ו ט

אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם כִּי מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם דִּבַּרְתִּי עִמָּכֶם

YOU YOURSELVES saw that I spoke to YOU from the very heavens

דברים א' ו'

ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ דִּבֶּר אֵלֵינוּ בְּחָרֵב

'ה spoke to US at חרב

דברים ד' ט-

לֶקַח הַשְּׁמֶר לְךָ... פְּרִתְשֵׁנָח אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר־רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ... וְהוֹדַעְתֶּם לְבְנֶיךָ וּלְבְנֵי בְנֵיךָ: יוֹם אֲשֶׁר עָמַדְתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ בְּחָרֵב

But take utmost care... so that YOU do not forget the things that YOU saw with YOUR OWN EYES... And make them known to your children and to your children's children: The day YOU stood before your 'ה at חרב

דברים ד' לו

מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁמִיעָה אֶת־קוֹלֹ לְיִסְרָהּ וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ הִרְאָה אֶת־אֲשֵׁר הַגְּדוּלָּה וּדְבָרָיו שָׁמַעְתָּ מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ:

From the שמים, He let YOU hear His voice to discipline you; on earth He let YOU see His great fire; and from amidst that fire YOU heard His words.

It's amazing that throughout the תורה it says that we have heard and that we have seen all of the miracles that happened.

It's interesting that no other religion claims that all the people have heard G-d speak directly to the whole nation. What do they say? They say that G-d revealed himself to one prophet or one wise man alone and he received a message about the new religion. They all are based on one dreamer or prophet! The תורה alone is based on 3,000,000 witnesses hearing 'ה's voice and receiving the תורה at סני הר. As opposed to one witness, we have 3,000,000. How do we believe this? The first generation wouldn't have accepted the תורה if what it said about them was not true. And they wouldn't have passed it down to their children and lied about it together. Imagine 3,000,000 people agreeing on the same lie to tell their children! And future generations would never have believed such incredible stories about their ancestors if they had not heard them personally from their fathers. They would ask, "If such great things really happened, I would definitely have heard it. Why did I not hear of this?"

You get a book to remind you about the amazing events that happened in your life. If it wasn't true, what would you do with it?

You would burn it or throw it out. And if you kept it, would you ever pass it down to your children? Would you tell them to live by it? Would you tell them to die for it?

The first generation of 3,000,000 people accepted the תורה, kept the תורה, passed it down to their children, told them to live by it, and to die for it!

Teach to Reach is under the guidance of:

Harav Reuven Feinstein, shlit"א
Harav Sholom Kaminetsky, shlit"א

Harav Aaron Lopiansky, shlit"א
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Footnotes for the teacher:

If a student asks, “How do I know that someone 2500 years ago didn’t make up the Torah, bring it to us, and say, ‘I found this Torah and it dates back to your ancestors’?”

Answers:

1. If such a person would come, we would question why we had never heard about these great miracles if they really happened. Amazing supernatural events are not easily forgotten from history especially if they were seen by 3,000,000 people. Especially if the claim is that this occurred to our families.

2. The תורה itself says וְזָרְעוֹ כִּי לֹא תִשְׁכַּח מִפִּי זָרְעוֹ - for it will never be lost from the mouth of their offspring (דברים לא כא).

- o Imagine someone came with a claim that the Torah was lost and forgotten and he is reviving it. It would be very foolish for him to write in the document that it will never be lost and forgotten. It demonstrates for all to see that the document is not true. And people wouldn’t accept a document that is contradicting its premise?

3. There are נבואות that predict events that occurred much later in history that no human could have predicted.

a. דברים כח לז: וְהָיִיתָ לְשִׁמָּה לְמַשָּׁל וְלִשְׁנִינָה בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים

- i. You will become an object of stupefaction, be cited as an example, and become the subject of gossip
- ii. It’s so amazing that we are so small and everyone is always talking about us. We are in the news, discussed at UN meetings...

b. דברים כח סב: וְנִשְׁאַרְתֶּם בְּמִתֵּי מַעֲט תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הָיִיתֶם כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם לְרַב.

- i. You shall be left a scant few, after having been as numerous as the stars in the skies
- ii. Even though we have survived for all the years, we have remained small in number. Logically, a population should either increase or become extinct. It is very unlikely that a population should remain small, yet never become extinct.

c. דברים כח סד: וְהִפִּיצָךָ יְהוָה בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ וְעַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ

- i. ה' will scatter you among all the peoples from one end of the earth to the other
- ii. Every continent has reported and still holds today many Jewish populations (except maybe Antarctica)

d. דברים כח סה-סו: וּבְגוֹיִם הָהֵם לֹא תִרְגָּע וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מְנוּחַ לְכַפְיִרְגְלְךָ... וְהָיָה סִיּוֹן תְּלָאִים לְךָ מִנְּגִד וּפְחַדְתָּ לַיְלָה וַיּוֹמֵם

- i. And among those nations you will not be tranquil, there will be no rest for the sole of your foot; Your life will hang in balance, and you will be frightened night and day
- ii. There practically has not been a Jewish community in any era that has not felt the hostility of the dominant culture.

4. Everybody, including the historians, have heard of Moses and nobody ever heard of this person who you think may have come and introduced the Torah to the world.

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