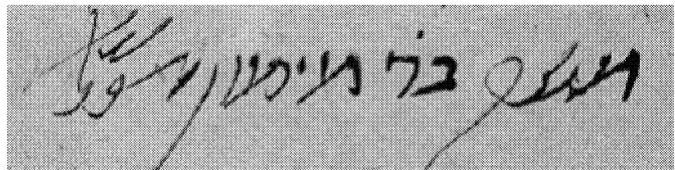


# מקורות התורה 47 - הראשונים - הרמב"ם

מכללת מבשרת ירושלים



ממשה עד משה לא קם כמשה



Original Signature of the Rambam



“Maimonides is the most influential Jewish thinker of the Middle Ages, and quite possibly of all time” (*Time Magazine*, December 23 1985)

## 1. Biography

- 1135 March 30; 14 Nissan - 1.00 pm: Born Cordoba, Spain - "the Bride of Andalusia" - home to 150,000 Jews and cultural capital of Southern Spain and the Golden Age of Jewish Spain  
 Son of Rabbi Maimon, dayan in Cordoba. Some claim that the family was descended from David Hamelech. Nothing is known of Rambam's mother. It is thought that she died in childbirth  
 Rambam had 1 brother, David and 3 sisters, including one called Miriam
- 1141 Brought as a boy of 6 to the deathbed of the Rav Yosef ibn Migash for a beracha. Rambam attributed his later success to this beracha
- 1140-50 Educated in the Spanish Sefardi model - Torah, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy
- 1150 Almohad conquest of Cordoba - the Jews were faced with a choice of conversion or death - most fled. Maimon family flee to the South of Andalusia
- 1151 Almohads conquer all of Southern Spain including Andalusia and the Maimon family flees to Christian Spain in the North suffering anti-Jewish persecution by the Christians there
- 1158 The Rambam begins work on the **Perush HaMishnah**
- 1160 The Maimon family leaves Spain for Fez, Morocco. Although also under Almohad rule, most Jews there practiced Jewish lives in private whilst being public Moslems - even the Rav and Rosh Yeshiva of Fez was a public Moslem! The Maimon family however were not forced to convert publicly.
- 1163 Under increasing Almohad persecution in Morocco, a great Talmudic authority rules that Jews must rather suffer martyrdom than profess Islam publicly. Many despaired and stopped keeping Torah privately since they felt like hypocrites. Others prepared to die. Rambam stepped in and wrote **Iggeret Hashmad**. Highly critical of the other rabbi's view, the Rambam ruled that the Jews should try to flee Morocco but could publicly pretend to convert to Islam whilst remaining Jews in private. The Iggeret caused him severe problems remaining in Fez.
- 1165 Rambam escapes Fez bound for Eretz Yisrael. Surviving terrible storms, Rambam landed in Acco on 3 Sivan, which he vowed to keep as a personal 'Purim' of rejoicing, feasting and tzedaka. Rambam visited Chevron and Yerushalayim and write that he entered the 'Bayit Hagadol Vehakadosh' on 5 Cheshvan - see sources 1 and 2 below. There is some debate as to whether he actually went up onto Har Habayit or not. (He clearly rules in halacha that Har Habayit retains its kedusha today but there are some areas which it may be permitted to enter)
- 1165 Rambam left Acco for Egypt and moved to Alexandria. Egypt was then a community divided between the Karaites and Rabbinic Jews. Rambam becomes a very prominent critic of the Karaites
- 1167 Due to hostility and pressure from rich Karaite community members, Rambam leaves and resettles in Fustat, near Cairo
- 1168 Rambam completes the **Perush Hamishna**
- 1167-69 His wife, two sons and father all die
- 1170 Rambam begins work on his **Sefer HaMitzvot** and writes the **Iggeret Teiman**
- 1171 Saladin overthrows the Moslem Fatimid dynasty in Egypt  
 As part of the Saladin wars, many thousands of Jewish captives needed redeeming. Rambam spearheaded this effort and was later appointed by Saladin's government as the Leader - Nagid - of the Jews of Egypt
- c.1173 Rav Shmuel Bar Ali in Babylon seeks to abolish the position of the Exilarch in Bavel and re-establish the role of the Geonim. Rambam is at the forefront of the opposition to this move and insisted that the Torah world was no longer bound the authority of the Babylonian Geonim. This made him enemies - see later on the Great Maimonidean Controversy
- 1176 Rambam pronounces a public takana in Fustat against the Karaites and in particular that women were not allowed to follow the Karaite customs for Taharat haMishpacha or risk divorce and loss of their ketuba
- 1176 His brother, David, is lost at sea in a shipwreck - dealing an intense personal and financial blow to the Rambam. The Rambam takes to his bed for a year, sick and deeply depressed at his loss - see source 3  
 Rambam then requalified as a doctor and works to support his family and that of his brother

- 1181 Rambam completes work on the **Mishneh Torah**. He also remarries in that year. His second wife is from a highly regarded Egyptian family
- 1185 Birth of his son - Avraham. He also had a daughter who died in infancy.
- 1190 Became the personal physician to al-Afdahl, son of Saladin and Grand Vizier of Egypt. This released the financial pressures and gave Rambam great influence in Saladin's court
- 1190 Completes work on **Moreh Nevuchim**
- 1193 Saladin dies and leaves a bitter war of succession. Rambam backs al-Afdhal, eldest son of Saladin, who eventually wins
- 1194 Rambam begins to weaken physically - his daily schedule was gruelling - see source 4 below
- 1198 Al Afdahl rules Egypt and appoints Rambam as Chief Court Physician
- 1200 Rambam was mainly bedridden
- 1201 Visited and consulted by famous Babylonian physician Abd Al Latif
- 1201-03 Egypt struck by famine, plague and earthquakes
- 1204 (December 13; Tevet 20) Rambam dies in Fostat and is brought for burial to Teveriah. 3 days of mourning were proclaimed in Fostat by Jews and Moslems who revered the Rambam as *Abu 'Imran Musa ben Maimun ibn 'Abd Allah*. A fast was proclaimed in Yerushalayim and the Tochacha was read in shul together with the Navi relating the capture of the Aron Kodesh by the Pelishtim
- He was survived by one son - Rav Avraham - who became the author of the great ethical work **Hamaspik L'Ovedei Hashem** and was a staunch defender of his father during later controversies
- 1237 Rambam's son, Rav Avraham dies aged 51. Rambam's family remain the Naggidim of the Jews of Egypt for 5 generations. None of the Rambam's descendents are known past 1400

1. ויום השלישי בשבת, ארבעה ימים לירח מרחשון שנת כ"ו ליצירה יצאנו מעכו לירושלים תחת סכנה ונכנסתי לבית הגדול והקדוש והתפללתי בו ביום חמשה ימים לירח מרחשון

ספר חרדים מצות תשובה פג

2. On Sunday evening, 4 Iyar, I went to sea; On the Sabbath, 10 Iyar in the year 4925, a heavy gale arose, the sea was turbulent and we were in danger of drowning. I vowed to observe these two days as strict fast days for myself, my family and all my household and to order my descendents to keep the fasts also in future generations and to give charity in accordance with their means. I further vowed to observe 10 Iyar in complete seclusion and to devote the day to prayer and study. On that day G-d alone was with me on the sea, so upon the anniversary of this day I wish to be alone with G-d and not in the company of man, unless I am compelled to.

On Sunday evening, 3 Sivan, I landed safely in Acco and thus escaped persecution. The day on which we set foot in the Land of Israel I vowed to observe as a day of festivity and joy accompanied by the distribution of gifts to the poor, I as well as my offspring in future generations.

Tuesday 4 Marcheshvan in the year 4926 we arrived in Jerusalem from Acco after a dangerous journey. I entered the site of the great and holy Temple and prayed there on Thursday 6 Marcheshvan

from Sefer Haredim by RE. Eleazer Askari of Safed (pub 1588)

3. In Egypt I met with great and severe misfortunes. Illness and material losses came upon me. In addition, various informers plotted against my life. But the most terrible blow which befell me, a blow which caused me more grief than anything that I have experienced in my life was the death of the most perfect and righteous man, who was drowned while traveling in the Indian Ocean.

For nearly a year after I received the sad news I lay ill on my bed struggling with fever and despair. Eight years have since passed and I still mourn, for there is no consolation. What can console me? He grew up on my knees; he was my brother my pupil. He was engaged in business and earned money so that I might stay at home and continue my studies. He was learned in the Talmud and in the Bible and an accomplished grammarian. My one joy was to see him. Now my joy has been changed into darkness; he has gone to his eternal home and has left me prostrated in a strange land.

Whenever I come across his handwriting or one of his books, my heart grows faint within me and my grief awakens. In short, "I will go down into the grave mourning my son" Were not the study of Torah my delight, and did not the study of wisdom divert me from my grief, I should have succumbed in my affliction

from letter to R. Yefet Eliyah, dayan of Acco

4. I live in Fustat and the Sultan resides in Cairo; these two places are two Shabbat limits distance from each other. My duties to the Sultan are very heavy. I am obliged to visit him every day early in the morning and when he or any of his children or concubines are indisposed I cannot leave Cairo but must stay most of the day in the palace. It also frequently happens that one or two of the officers fall sick and I must attend to their healing. Hence, as a rule, every day, early in the morning, I go to Cairo and even if nothing unusual happens there, I do not return to Fustat until the afternoon.

Then I am famished but I find the antechambers filled with people, both Jews and Gentiles, nobles and common people, Judges and policemen, friends and enemies - a mixed multitude who await the time of my return.

I dismount from my animal, wash my hands, go to my patients and entreat them to bear with me while I partake of some light refreshment - the only meal that I eat in 24 hours. Then I go to attend to my patients and write prescriptions and directions for their ailments. Patients go in and out until nightfall, and sometimes, even as the Torah is my faith, until two hours and more into the night. I converse with them and prescribe for them even while lying down from sheer fatigue. When night falls I am so exhausted that I can hardly speak.

In consequence of this, no Jew can converse with me or befriend me [on communal or religious matters] except on Shabbat. On that day, the whole congregation, or at least the majority, comes to me after the morning service, when I instruct them as to their proceedings during the whole week. We study together a little until noon, when they depart. Some of them return and read with me after Mincha until Maariv. In this manner, I spend the days. I have related to you only apart of what you would see if you visit me

from letter to R. Shmuel ibn Tibbon



The Rambam's grave in Tiveria

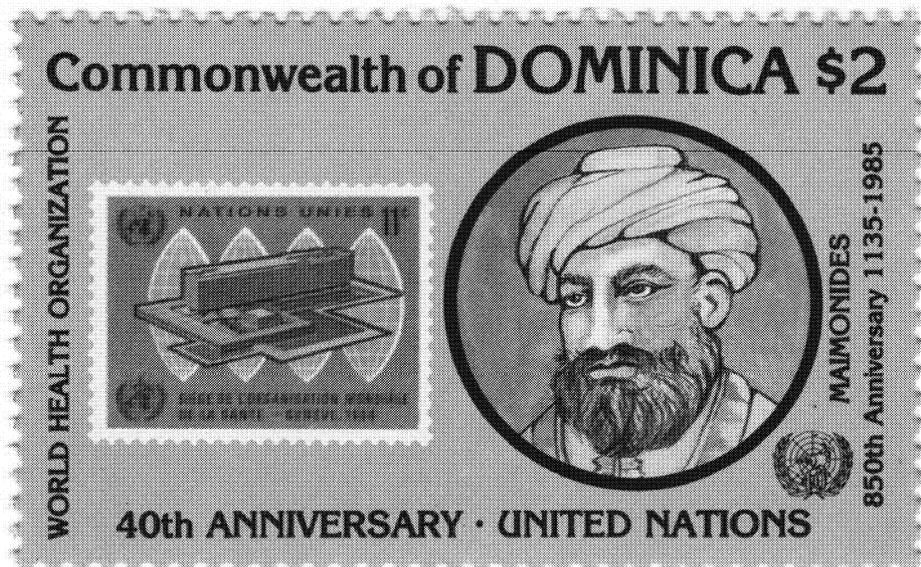
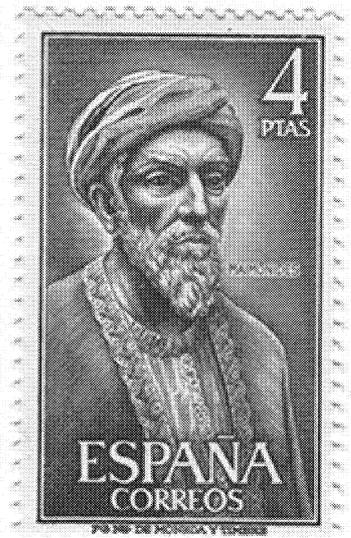
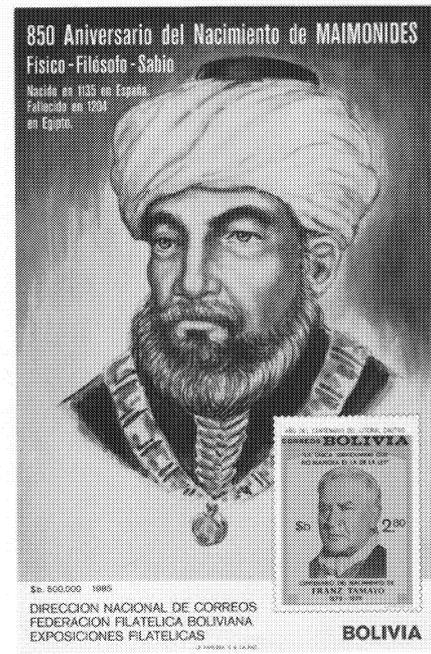
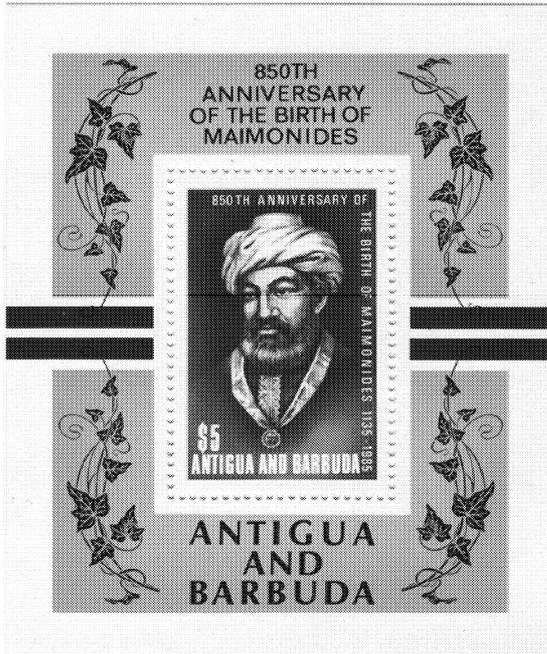


Statue of the Rambam in Cordova

## 2. Torah Works of the Rambam

- before 1155 **Biur Milot Hahegayon** - a short treatise on philosophical ideas  
**Ma'amar Haibur** - an essay on mathematics and the astronomy of the Jewish calendar
- 1163 **Iggeret Hashmad** - to the Jews of Morocco telling them that they did not need to die rather ... than publicly convert to Islam
- 1168 **Sefer Ha'Orah** (known as Peirush HaMishna LeHaRambam) - a line by line perush on the whole Mishna. Written in Arabic - clear, lucid and organized and intended to make the Mishna accessible to the Jewish masses. Its goals according to the Rambam were:  
*(i) an accurate classification of the [Mishna] and an explanation of the meaning of its words*  
*(ii) its final decisions*  
*(iii) a guide for the beginner as to the proper methods in analyzing the Mishna's statements*  
*(iv) For non-beginners, an aid to retaining clearly and permanently what was already learned*  
 Translated into Hebrew by R. Shmuel ibn Tibbon during the Rambam's life and later in the 20C by Rav Yosef Kappach  
 It includes 3 famous introductions:-  
**Hakdama LeMishna:** his introduction to the whole sefer - dealing with the origins and development of the different aspects of Torah Shebe'al Peh  
**Hakdama Le Perek Chelek:** his introduction to the 10th Perek of Sanhedrin - dealing with Olam Habah and the 13 Principles of Faith  
**Hakdama Lemesechet Avot - Shemonah Perakim** - on Ethics, Spirituality and the Soul
- 1170 **Sefer Hamitzvot:** a brief outline of the content of the 613 mitzvot
- 1170-80 **Yad Hachazaka (Mishneh Torah):** total halachic work encompassing ALL of Torah Shebe'al Peh, reformatting it and reorganizing it into 14 (ט"ד) new books. Written in beautiful Hebrew.
- 1190 **Moreh Nevuchim:** on creation, history, faith, prophecy, reasons and explanations for the mitzvot, philosophy, logic, rationalism. Heavily based on Aristotelian logic, philosophy, cosmology and natural physics. Written in Arabic and then translated by Ibn Tibbon into Hebrew and then into Latin and many other languages
- PLUS **500 Teshuvot**  
**Iggrot** (letters) - **(i) Hashmad; (ii) Teiman; (iii) to the Rabbis of Marseilles** (on astrology);  
**Ma'amarot** (essays) **(i) Hayichud; (ii) Techiat Hametim**  
**Digest of the Talmud Yerushalmi** - only extracts have been found  
**Commentary on many mesechtot of the Talmud Bavli** - only Rosh Hashana is extant  
**Medical Works** including: (i) Extracts from Galen (Pirke Moshe) (including 25 chapters bringing 1500 medical decisions of Galen (2nd Century Roman physician) , Commentary on the Aphorisms of Hypocrates, Explanation of Drug Names, The Regimen of Health, Treatise on Poisons and Antidotes, Treatise on Asthma, Treatise on Hemorrhoids, Treatise on Cohabitation, Treatise on Hygiene, Treatise on Fits. Many of these were translated into Latin and became standard medical texts into the 20th Century
- PLUS various works on jurisprudence, logic, philosophy, anatomy, pharmacology, pathology and dermatology

### World Stamps featuring the Rambam<sup>1</sup>



1. Reproduced from the Leiman Library - see <http://www.leimanlibrary.com/index.html>



# מפתח למשנה תורה

הוא ספר הירד החזקה להרמב"ם  
למצוא בנקל חפץ דבר ביד ספרו  
המפתח כולל

(א) שמות כל יד ספרו ומספרו של כל  
ספר.

(ב) שמות ההלכות

(ג) מפתח ההלכות ע"י א-ב ובצדן מספר  
אשר למצוא ההלכה למצוא מספר  
ספרו אשר נרשם על יד כל ההלכות.

מפתח למצוא אלה ביד  
תורת המנהג  
לספר

## משנה תורה

הירד  
החזקה  
להרמב"ם  
הגדול

מדרש	הלכות לפי סדרן	הלכות לפי א-ב
א	1 יסודי העדות	44 בית האשפות
	2 דעות	44 כל
	3 תלמוד תורה	82 כל
	4 עבודת סופרים	37 יסודי שפה
	5 תשובה	32 יסודי
ב	6 קריאת שמע	44 יסודי מנהג
	7 תפילה וזמנה כהנים	43 דעת המקור
	8 תפילין וזמנה וסו"ת	41 דת אצולה
	9 ציצית	52 תורות
	10 שבת	39 ארבעים
	11 מילה	18 ארבעים
ג	12 שבת	7 ארבעים
	13 עירובין	2 רוח
	14 שבתת עשור	74 זמן מנהג
	15 שבתת יום טוב	51 הנהגה
	16 חפץ ומצה	47 זמן תפוח
	17 שוקר סוכה ולולב	34 חליטה
	18 שקלים	14 חפץ ומצה
	19 קדוש החדש	21 חסות
	20 הענינה	33 חפץ
	21 במילה וזמנה	61 סמכות אגרון
ד	22 אישות	56 סמכות פה
	23 גירושין	58 סמכות גירוש
	24 ימים חולצה	77 חפץ וזמן
	25 גטרה במילה	24 ימים חולצה
	26 סוטה	48 הכל
ה	27 איסורי ביאה	48 יום הספורים
	28 מאכלות אסורות	15 דם שני
	29 שחיטה	1 יסודי תורה
ו	30 שבתות	34 כלאים
	31 נדרים	41 כלי המקדש
	32 נדרות	42 כלים
	33 ערובן הרמקן	17 לולב
ז	34 כלאים	25 סמכות אצולה
	35 מנחת עניים	21 גזילה וזמנה
	36 תרומות	74 פסוק
	37 מעשר	7 מנחה
	38 מעשר שני וטעם רבעי	67 סוף
	39 בוכרים	54 סמכותי מנהג
	40 שמיטה וזמנה	59 מסמך מסכת ומנהג
		11 מילה
ח	41 בית הבחירה	48 מקדש
	42 כלי המקדש האסורים	74 מילה וזה
	43 באת המקדש	83 מלכים
	44 איסורי זמנה	81 מלכים
	45 מלכה הקרובות	49 במילה
	46 תפילין ומספיק	45 מלכה הקרובות
	47 סמולי המקדשין	37 מעשר
	48 עבודת יום הכפורים	38 מעשר על חטא רבעי
	49 מילה	16 מנהג
ט	50 קרבן פסח	63 טקאות
	51 העונה	42/43 פסח
	52 המזרות	59 מסכת ומנהג
	53 שבתות	74 מנהג
	54 מתוספי מנהג	35 סמכות ציית
	55 הפרשה	31 פסח
י	56 סומאת פה	32 פסח
	57 פיה אדומה	44 זמן מנהג
	58 סומאת צרעת	18 מילה
	59 מסמך מסכת ומנהג	34 זמן רבעי
	60 שאר אבות הסומאת	37 מעשר
	61 סומאת אובלן	38 מעשר על חטא רבעי
	62 כלים	16 מנהג
יא	63 סומאת	63 טקאות
	64 סקי מנהג	42/43 פסח
	65 גזירה	59 מסכת ומנהג
	66 מילה ואכילה	74 מנהג
יב	67 זמנה ומנהג	35 סמכות ציית
	68 דעה רשמית נפש	31 פסח
	69 ספקות	32 פסח
	70 זמנה ומנהג	44 זמן מנהג
יג	71 שבתות	18 מילה
	72 מלוחן השחמן	34 זמן רבעי
	73 עבדים	37 מעשר
	74 שבתות	38 מעשר על חטא רבעי
יד	75 סוטה ומקדש	16 מנהג
	76 מלח וזה	63 טקאות
	77 טען וטען	42/43 פסח
	78 הלכות	59 מסכת ומנהג
טו	79 מהודין	74 מנהג
	80 דעות	71 פסח
	81 מסתים	73 פסח
	82 אבל	48 זמן מנהג
טז	83 מלכים וזמנה	62 מעשר
		38 מעשר על חטא רבעי





