

“Remember the Torah of Moses, My servant”

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The closing words of the last prophet Malachi, “Remember the Torah of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him at Horeb for all of Israel – [its] decrees and [its] statutes” (3:22) suggest that Moses’ role in transmitting the Torah to the Jewish nation went beyond merely recording the holy “text” dictated by G-d. This essay identifies three areas in which Moses’ unique and personal contribution to the formulation of the text/Torah may be perceived. First, the hermeneutical principle known as *kal ve-chomer* (deduction by inference from a minor to a major case), perceived in rabbinical tradition as an innovation “discovered” by Moses and “approved” by G-d as an essential tool in interpreting the Torah. Secondly, Moses’ own revelation of a “new” mitzvah, that of the nullification of vows or *hatarat nedarim* (Num. 30:2-3), which came to be included among the 613 commandments of the Written Torah. Thirdly, the composition of the Book of Deuteronomy, known as *mishneh Torah* in which Moses himself transcribed the teachings he had received orally from G-d throughout his lifetime to written form, and thereby enabled their inclusion in the Written Torah, *mipei Hashem*. A wide range of sources and commentary from rabbinical tradition, medieval and modern Jewish thought are presented to clarify the seemingly paradoxical contention, fundamental to Jewish belief, that Moses indeed played a central, personal role in the composition of the “eternal” text of the Torah.