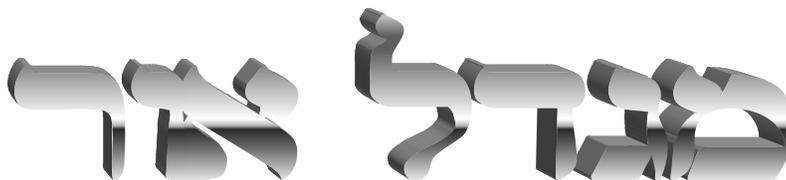


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

**Zmanim for שבת**

Wesley Hills, NY

- 6:37 - פלג המנחה
- 7:47 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:05 - שקיעה
- 8:54 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:30 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:40 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:05 - שקיעה
- 8:47 - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:17 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com

The Sfas Emes comments on the manner in which we should do Mitzvos, and how we should focus on doing things for the sake of Heaven.

The Torah says, "P'sal lecha," hew for yourself, about the luchos. Regarding Avoda Zara, the Torah says, "Lo sa'aseh lecha pesel," do not make for yourself an image. (The words are spelled the same.)

He muses that when the lecha comes last, and the focus is on the mitzvah, that brings about the luchos. However, when the "lecha" comes first, and a person puts himself as the primary focus, that leads to Avoda Zara.

**You Should Know**

The next melacha performed in the construction of the Mishkan is:

**16. Toveh - Spinning**

This Melacha involves twisting fibers together to make long threads. Given that none of us work in sweatshops, when would this melacha ever be relevant to us?

Well, for those of us who wear tzitzis, there comes a time when the threads of the tzitzis may fray and separate from one another. On Shabbos one may not twist the threads back together. (Tightening the knots would not be toveh, that would be koshair, tying.)

Source: TorahTots.com / The 39 Melachos, by Rabbi David Ribiat

**Thought of the week:**  
 Reach up as far as you can, and G-d will reach down the rest of the way.

**"בעת ההוא אמר ה' אלי פסל לך שני לחות אבנים כראשנים ועלה אלי הרהר ועשית לך ארון עץ."**

**"At that time, HaShem said to me, "Hew for yourself two stone tablets like the originals, and ascend to Me on the mountain; and make for yourself a wooden case."**

Rashi, quoting the Tanchuma comments that Moshe made the box first, and then carved the stones, for if he came back with the tablets, "where would he put them?" But what about the original luchos? The shards were placed into this wooden case, but where would Moshe have put the originals had he not broken the tablets and been commanded to make a new set? Also, why would HaShem have commanded him to make the tablets before the box?

The Netziv says Moshe obviously needed to have an aron to hold the luchos, and he should have been told to make the ark first, then the tablets. Clearly, HaShem's command was not just that a case should be made. Rather, the second luchos represent the Talmud, the oral Torah, which involves effort and toil, so HaShem's command was to make a wooden aron as opposed to a case of silver or gold, to highlight the necessity of a willingness to toil in Torah even under difficult circumstances. For the first luchos, presumably, an ark of gold would have been fine.

The Ohr HaChaim disagrees, and says that the first tablets were holy and didn't need a box. Rather, they stood on their own, floating in mid-air out of Moshe's grasp. Only once Klal Yisrael sinned did they become heavy and then Moshe cast them to the ground. The Ramban comments that HaShem gave no directive to make an ark for the first luchos as He knew Moshe would break them. It would appear consistently, then, that this command to make a wooden ark was specifically linked to the second luchos. Also, the use of the word, "lecha - for you," implies that there was some ownership or benefit to Moshe from the aron.

In truth, the first luchos were made by G-d, Himself, and were in fact out of reach of even Moshe Rabbeinu. They could have been kept in a case of precious metal, something the common man couldn't afford. When Moshe broke the tablets, however, he acquired a stake in the Torah. His action and subsequent involvement in preparation of the second set of luchos gave Man a share in the creation of Torah, represented by the give and take of the Talmud. In essence, he brought Torah down from the heavens, putting it within our reach.

This is symbolized by the common wooden box. Moshe's obligation to make an aron to hold the luchos reflects the Jewish People's responsibility to protect the Torah once it was given to us to discuss, argue about, and delve into.

This posuk teaches us that the Torah is not something that hovers above us, out of reach, but rather it is the domain of "everyman", provided he is following the guidelines Moshe Rabbeinu taught us, to protect it. It is up to each of us to hew for ourselves the portion of Torah that is to be ours and make a kinyan, an act of ownership, in it.

Learning and following the Torah is not limited to the righteous, the men and women of gold and silver, but rather it is to be maintained within the ark of wood, the "aitz," which represents each of us, as the Torah says, "Ki ha'adam aitz ha'sadeh," Man is the tree of the field. The Torah must dwell within each of us and b'ezras HaShem we will then be fruitful and productive.

*A young boy who misbehaved at every turn exasperated his teachers. One day, he even hid a goat in the Aron Kodesh which came prancing out when the Rabbi opened the door. That was it! They decided to expel him. The boy refused to leave. "Bring me to the Rabbi of the city!"*

*In the Rav's study, he made his case. "Not everyone has been consulted on this decision. Did the Rabbi or Principal ask my children how this will affect them? If they throw me out now it will harm future generations." They had no answer for this and the Rav ruled the boy must be allowed to stay.*

*This story was told over at an engagement party by the father of the choson, a well-known Talmid Chacham and mechanech. "That wild boy was my grandfather. Look around and see how true his words were, and how much good came from him."*