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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

## Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 5:38 - הדלקת נרות
- 5:56 - שקיעה
- 8:35 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:11 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:10 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 5:58 - שקיעה
- 6:40 - צאת הכוכבים
- 7:10 - צאת 72

## ! אגטען שבת

### Did You Know?

Historically, the twentieth of Adar was a day of celebration. It was on that day, when the people were desperate for rain, that they approached Choni Ha'Me'agil (the circle-maker) and asked him to pray. He drew a circle, stood inside it like Chavakuk had done, and davened. The rain did not immediately fall as normal rain and he had to pray for it to change several times. When the plentiful rain threatened to flood Yerushalayim, he brought an ox as a Toda (thanksgiving) offering and the rains ceased. Shimon ben Shotach said to him "Were you not Choni Ha'Me'agil I would excommunicate you for desecrating G-d's name through your actions. But what can I do? You are like a son who always gets his way pleading with his father." *Megillas Taanis/Taanis 19a*

The Parah Aduma had to be burned whole and thus could not be checked for Treifos. However, the first Parah burned in the desert was checked for Treifos by using the Amud HeAnan, the Pillar of Cloud that led the Jewish people. It had the power to light up any dark area, including those inside something else, such as the organs of the animal. Acting like a modern-day X-Ray machine, it allowed them to see the insides of the animal, and check it for eighteen different potential treifos.

NOTE: Some opinions hold that Parshas Parah is a D'Oraisa like Parshas Zachor so it is preferable for women to attend shul to hear it lained as well.

### Thought of the week:

So near is falsehood to truth that a wise man would do well not to trust himself on the narrow edge.

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"איש אשר יעשה כמוה להריח בה ונכרת מעמיו" (שמות ל:לח)

**"A person who duplicates this formula to enjoy its fragrance shall be cut off [spiritually] from his people."**

Both the *shemen hamishcha*, the anointing oil, and the *ketores*, the sacred incense, had very specific ingredients and rules for their preparation, and a prohibition to copy them. Both have the punishment of *kares* attached to them for those who transgress this prohibition. However, there is a noticeable difference.

While the spiritual excision applies to the one who makes a copy of the anointing oil, the person who uses it is blameless. In the case of copying the *ketores*, however, anyone who uses it for its fragrance is cut off, while the person who makes it is not punished thusly. In fact, in certain cases, Rashi teaches, one may permissibly copy the *ketores*.

What is the difference between the two?

The oil was used to assign holiness to certain articles or people. As such, it had to be made only by Moshe Rabbeinu whose complete dedication to holiness would enable its proper formulation. If one were to try to copy it, it would be very presumptuous to believe that he was on the proper level to prepare it. Therefore, the one who does so is cut off. The result of his efforts, meanwhile, is not holy, and therefore may be used.

The incense, on the other hand, had specific physical attributes, namely its pungent and pleasing aroma. By copying it precisely, one could create the same outcome. While compounding it would be alright for the purpose of donating it for the communal need, using this for one's own pleasure would be grounds for Divine punishment.

R' Elimelech of Lizhensk, the Noam Elimelech, writes that the *ketores* symbolized man's actions. "Take for yourself spices," means to make your actions appropriate and proper, so they provide a pleasant aroma before HaShem, similar to a *korban*.

He continues by saying that one might feel that utilizing this world is wrong, as it is mundane and base. From the *ketores*, however, we learn that one can utilize the physical, and raise it up to the spiritual.

Following that line of thinking, we can now understand why one who uses the *ketores* for his own pleasure is severely punished. If one uses the physical world for spiritual purposes, he raises the earth to the Heavens. On the other hand, if he enjoys this world for the physical pleasure it affords him, he will be dragged down by it and never be able to rise. As by the oil, if the *ketores* is not made and used as intended, but for a false or incorrect purpose, the end result will be death and sorrow.

*As was customary at the end of every term, the students of the Chasam Sofer came in to speak with the Rosh Yeshiva "in learning."*

*One bochur came in and began relating a complex piece of Torah thought and analysis that seemed familiar to the Rosh Yeshiva's son, the Ksav Sofer, who also sat in on these meetings. The Ksav Sofer realized that this boy had seen the notes of this 'shtikel Torah' sitting on the Rosh Yeshiva's desk, and now the impudent child had the gall to attempt to pass it off as his own work.*

*When the boy left, the Ksav Sofer exclaimed "Father, how could you let him get away with saying that your Torah was his own?!"*

*"My son," smiled the Chasam Sofer, "I don't mind if he says my Torah and claims it is his, so long as he doesn't say his own Torah and claim that it's mine!"*