

Holy Incense or Wholly Nonsense: Was the *Ketoret* Rediscovered in 1992?

1) Shemot 30:34-38

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה קַח־לָךְ סַמִּים נְטֹף | וְשִׁחֲלֵת וְחִלְבֹנָה סַמִּים וְלִבְנָה זָכָה בַד בְּבַד יִהְיֶה:
וַעֲשִׂיתָ אֹתָהּ קִטְרֶת רִקַח מֵעֵשֶׂה רוֹקַח מִמֶּלֶח טְהוֹר קָדֹשׁ:
וְשִׁחַקְתָּ מִמֶּנָּה הֲדֹק וְנִמְתָּה מִמֶּנָּה לִפְנֵי הָעֵדֹת בְּאֶהֱל מוֹעֵד אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹעֵד לָךְ שִׁמָּה קָדֹשׁ קָדָשִׁים תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם:
וְהַקְטֹרֶת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה בְּמִתְכַנְּתָהּ לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם קָדֹשׁ תִּהְיֶה לָךְ לַיהוָה:
אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה כְמוֹהָ לְהָרִים בָּהּ וְנִכְרַת מֵעַמּוּ: {ס}

And the LORD said to Moses: Take the herbs stacte, onycha, and galbanum—these herbs together with pure frankincense; let there be an equal part of each. Make them into incense, a compound expertly blended, refined, pure, sacred. Beat some of it into powder, and put some before the Pact in the Tent of Meeting, where I will meet with you; it shall be most holy to you. But when you make this incense, you must not make any in the same proportions for yourselves; it shall be held by you sacred to the LORD. Whoever makes any like it, to smell of it, shall be cut off from his kin.

2) Keritot 6a-b

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: פִּיטוּם הַקְטֹרֶת: הַצָּרִי, וְהַצִּיפּוֹרוֹ, וְהַחֲלֹבָנָה, וְהַלְבוֹנָה – מִשְׁקַל שְׁבַעִים שֶׁל שְׁבַעִים מָנֶה. מוֹר, וְקִצְיֵעָה, שִׁיבוֹלֶת גִּרְדֵּי, וְכַרְכּוֹם – מִשְׁקַל שְׁשֵׁה עָשָׂר שֶׁל שְׁשֵׁה עָשָׂר מָנֶה. הַקּוֹשֵׁט – שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר, קִילוּפָה – שְׁלֹשָׁה, וְקִנְמֹן – תְּשַׁע. בּוֹרִית כְּרִשִׁינָה – תְּשַׁע קִבּוּיִם, יֵין קְפָרִיסִין – סָאִין תְּלָתָא קִבּוּיִם תְּלָתָא. אִם אֵין לוֹ יֵין קְפָרִיסִין מִבֵּיא חֶמֶר חִינְרִיזִין עִתִּיק. מֶלֶח סְדוּמִית – רוּבַע. מַעֲלָה עָשׂוֹן – כָּל שָׁהוּא. רַבִּי נֶתָן אָמַר: אַף כִּיפַת הַיַּרְדֵּן כָּל שָׁהוּא. וְאִם נֶתָן בַּהּ דְּבִישׁ – פְּסִלָה. חִיסָר אַחַת מִכָּל סַמְמָנֵיהּ – חֲטִיב מִיָּתֵהּ. רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אָמַר: הַצָּרִי אֵינוֹ אֶלָּא שְׂרָף מַעֲצֵי הַקֶּטֶף. בּוֹרִית כְּרִשִׁינָה, שְׁשִׁפִּין בַּהּ אֶת הַצִּיפּוֹרוֹן כְּדִי שְׁתֵּהא נְאֻהָ. יֵין קְפָרִיסִין, שְׁשׁוּרִין בּוֹ אֶת הַצִּיפּוֹרוֹן כְּדִי שְׁתֵּהא עֵזָה. וְהֵלֵא מִי רַגְלִים יָפִין לָהּ, אֶלָּא שְׁאִין מִכְּנִיסִין מִי רַגְלִים לְמַקְדָּשׁ.

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: How is the blending of the incense performed? **Balm, and onycha, and galbanum, and frankincense, each** of these by a weight of seventy *maneh*, i.e., seventy units of one hundred dinars. **Myrrh, and cassia, and spikenard, and saffron, each** of these by a weight of sixteen *maneh*. **Costus** by a weight of twelve *maneh*; **three *maneh* of aromatic bark; and nine *maneh* of cinnamon. Kersannah** lye of the volume of **nine *kav*; Cyprus wine** of the volume of **three *se'a*** and **three more *kav***, a half-*se'a*. **If one does not have Cyprus wine he brings old white wine. Sodomite salt** is brought by the volume of a **quarter-*kav***. Lastly, a **minimal** amount of the **smoke raiser**, a plant that causes the smoke of the incense to rise properly. **Rabbi Natan says: Also a minimal amount of Jordan amber. And if one placed honey in the incense he has disqualified it**, as it is stated: “For you shall make no leaven, nor any honey, smoke as an offering made by fire unto the Lord” (Leviticus 2:11). If he **omitted any one of its spices** he is **liable** to receive **death** at the hand of Heaven. **Rabbi Shimon says: The balm** mentioned here **is nothing other than a resin exuded from the balsam tree**, not the bark of the tree itself. The **Kersannah lye** mentioned is not part of the ingredients of the incense itself, but it is necessary **as one rubs the onycha in it so that the onycha should be pleasant**.

Likewise, the **Cyprus wine** is required as **one soaks the onycha in it so that it should be strong. And urine is good for this purpose, but one does not bring urine into the Temple** because it is inappropriate.

אמר רבי יוחנן: אחד עשר סממנין נאמרו לו למשה בסיני. אמר רב הונא: מאי קראה? "קח לה סמים" – תרי, "נטף ושחלת וסלבנה" – הא סמשה, ו"סמים" אחריו – סמשה, הא עשרה, "וילבנה זפה" – סד, הא סד סרי.

Rabbi Yoḥanan says: The **eleven ingredients** of the incense were stated by God to **Moses at Sinai**, as not all of them are specified in the verses. **Rav Huna said:** **What is the verse** from which it is derived? "Take for you spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; spices with pure frankincense" (Exodus 30:34). The plural form of the phrase: "**Take for you spices**" is referring to **two** ingredients; "**stacte, and onycha, and galbanum**" are three ingredients; **this** results in a total of **five**; and the **other** mention of "**spices**" indicates that there are another **five**, i.e., that one should double the previous total, and **this** results in a total of **ten**. And finally, "**pure frankincense**" is **one**, and **this** results in a total of **eleven**.

3) Shemot 30:23-25

ואתה קח־לך בשמים ראש מ־דרור חמש מאות וקנמן־בשם מחציתו חמשים ומאתים וקנה־בשם חמשים ומאתים:
וקדֹה חמש מאות בשקל הקדש ושמן זית הין:
ועשית אתו שמן משחת־קדש רחח מרקחת מעשה רחם שמן משחת־קדש יהיה:

Next take choice spices: five hundred weight of solidified myrrh, half as much—two hundred and fifty—of fragrant cinnamon, two hundred and fifty of aromatic cane, five hundred—by the sanctuary weight—of cassia, and a *hin* of olive oil. Make of this a sacred anointing oil, a compound of ingredients expertly blended, to serve as sacred anointing oil.

4) The Koren Tanakh of the Land of Israel

30:34 *Nataf* (*Commiphora*)

In talmudic sources, this plant has several names: *tzori*, *afarsemon*, *balsam* and *ketaf*. During the mishnaic era (1st to 3rd century CE), this plant produced the most valuable perfume in the world. It grew naturally only in the area of Judea – specifically, in Jericho and the oasis of Ein Gedi.



Balsam

The Greek name of this plant is *opobalsamum*, meaning liquid perfume, a reference to the resin that trickles from it when the plant is damaged and resin is released. This name reflects the meaning of the Hebrew *nataf*, meaning “drop.”

When Jewish settlement diminished at the end of the Byzantine era, the knowledge of growing the plant and the secret of extracting *nataf* was lost and the plant was no longer grown. However, in recent years, the plant – known today as *afarsemon*, and identified with *Commiphora gileadensis* – has started to be grown again in modern-day Israel. • ZA

30:34 *Shehelet*

Talmudic sources state that this is a plant used to make perfume called *tziporen* (cloves in modern Hebrew).

There have been many suggestions as to the identity of *shehelet* such as a type of aromatic plant, but there is not enough information available to make a conclusive identification. Some ancients thought that it may have been a shellfish native to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.

Alternatively, there are ancient traditions that identify *shehelet* as the hard shell, similar to a fingernail, of certain types of snails, that contain aromatic materials. In many traditional societies, the cover of these shells, the *operculum*, is used for incense, even today. • ZA

5) Rambam, Moreh Nevuchim 3:45

מכיוון שבמקום המקודש היו שוחטים בהמות רבות בכל יום, וחותכים בו את בשרן ורוחצים בו את קרביה אין ספק שאילו הונח במצב הזה כפי שהוא בלי שינוי, היה ריחו כריח בית מטבחים. לכן נצטוונו בו על הקטרת הקטורת פעמיים בכל יום, בפקר ובין הערבים, כדי שיתבשם ריחו וריח כל בגדי המשרתים בו

Since many beasts were daily slaughtered in the holy place, the flesh cut in pieces and the entrails and the legs burnt and washed, the smell of the place would undoubtedly have been like the smell of slaughter-houses, if nothing had been done to counteract it. They were therefore commanded to burn incense there twice every day, in the morning and in the evening (Exod. 30:7, 8), in order to give the place and the garments of those who officiated there a pleasant odor.

6) Rabbeinu Bachya, Shemot 30:1

והנה הרב הכריחו לומר כן הדרך אשר דרך בה בשאר המצות אבל חס ושלום שנתלה העקר הגדול שבסוד הקטרת שחייבה עליו התורה כרת לעושה כמוהו כמתכונתו בטעם החלוש הזה, ובענין נדב ואביהוא אבאר לך סוד הקטרת אם יהיה אלהים עמדי

And behold, the Rav was compelled to say this in accordance with the approach he follows regarding the other commandments. But Heaven forbid that we should attribute the great fundamental principle contained in the secret of the incense — for which the Torah imposes *karet* upon one who makes it in its prescribed formulation — to this weak explanation. And concerning Nadav and Avihu, I will explain to you the secret of the incense, if God will be with me.

7) Sefer Hachinuch Mitzva 103

מְשַׁרְשֵׁי מִצְוָה זוּ. גַּם כֵּן לְהַגְדִּיל כְּבוֹד הַבַּיִת וְלְהִיּוֹת מְעֻלָּתוֹ וּמוֹרָאוֹ עַל פְּנֵי כָּל אָדָם. וְאֵי אֶפְשֶׁר לְהַגְדִּיל דְּבָר כָּלֵב בְּנֵי אָדָם וּמְחַשְׁבֹתוֹ, רַק בְּדְבָרִים שֶׁהוּא חוֹשֵׁב אוֹתָם לְגַדְלָהּ וְיִמְצָא בָהֶם תַּעֲנוּג וְשִׂמְחָה. וְיִדְוֶע כִּי עֲנִין הָרִיחַ הַטּוֹב הוּא דְבָר שֶׁנֶּפֶשׁ אָדָם נִהְיֶית בּוֹ וּמִתְאַנֶּה אֵלָיו וּמוֹשֵׁף הַלֵּב הַרְבֵּה

Among the roots of this commandment as well is to magnify the honor of the House and to cause its exaltedness and awe to be upon the face of every person. And it is impossible to elevate something in the hearts and thoughts of people except through matters that they regard as expressions of greatness and in which they find pleasure and joy. And it is well known that the matter of a pleasant fragrance is something from which a person's soul derives enjoyment and toward which it yearns, and it greatly draws the heart.

8) Yoma 38a

שֶׁל בֵּית אַבְטִינָס לֹא רָצוּ לְלַמֵּד עַל מַעֲשֵׂה הַקְטוֹרֶת. תָּנוּ רַבֵּנוּ: בֵּית אַבְטִינָס הָיוּ בְקִיָּאִין בְּמַעֲשֵׂה הַקְטוֹרֶת וְלֹא רָצוּ לְלַמֵּד, שֶׁלְחֹו חֲכָמִים וְהִבִּיאוּ אוֹמְנֵינֵי מֵאַלְכְּסַנְדְּרִיָּא שֶׁל מִצְרַיִם. וְהָיוּ יוֹדְעִין לִפְטֹם פְּמוֹתָם וְלֹא הָיוּ יוֹדְעִין לְהַעֲלוֹת עֶשֶׂן כְּמוֹתֶן. שֶׁל תְּלִלוֹ — מִתְמַר וְעוֹלָה כְּמַקְל, שֶׁל תְּלִלוֹ — מִפְּצִיעַ לְכָאן וּלְכָאן. וְכִשְׁשָׁמְעוּ חֲכָמִים בְּדְבָר, אָמְרוּ: כֹּל מָה שֶׁבְּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא — לְכַבּוֹדוֹ בְּרָאוּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "כֹּל פֶּעַל ה' לְמַעֲנֵהוּ", וְחָזְרוּ בֵּית אַבְטִינָס לְמִקוֹמָן. שֶׁלְחֹו לָהֶם חֲכָמִים וְלֹא בָּאוּ, כִּפְּלוּ לָהֶם שְׂכָרָן וּבָאוּ. בְּכָל יוֹם הָיוּ נוֹטְלִין שָׁנִים עֶשֶׂר מְנָה, וְהָיוּ עֹשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה. רַבֵּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: בְּכָל יוֹם עֹשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה, וְהָיוּ אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁמוֹנֶה. אָמְרוּ לָהֶם חֲכָמִים: מָה רָאִיתֶם שֶׁלֹּא לְלַמֵּד? אָמְרוּ: יוֹדְעִין הָיוּ שֶׁל בֵּית אַבָּא שְׂבִית זֶה עֲתִיד לִיתְרַב, אָמְרוּ: שֶׁמָּא יִלְמוּד אָדָם שֶׁאִינוּ מְהוֹנְנֵן וְיִלְדֵי וְיַעֲבֹד עֲבוּדָה זָרָה בְּכֹף

The craftsmen of the House of Avtinas did not want to teach about the secret of the preparation of the incense, at which they were particularly adept. The Sages taught in a *baraita*: The members of the House of Avtinas were expert in the technique of preparing the incense, and they did not want to teach others. The Sages dismissed them and sent for and brought craftsmen from Alexandria in Egypt. And the Alexandrian craftsmen knew how to blend the spices like they did, but they did not know how to cause the smoke to rise like the House of Avtinas did. The smoke of the incense blended by these members of the House of Avtinas rises in a column like a stick; the smoke of the incense blended by these Alexandrians

branched out to here and to there and did not rise in a straight line. **When the Sages heard of the matter, they said: Whatever the Holy One, Blessed be He, created, He created in His honor, as it is stated: “God made everything for His sake” (Proverbs 16:4), and they let the House of Avtinas return to their original station. The Sages sent for the members of the House of Avtinas to reassume their previous position, and they did not come. They doubled their wages and they came. Each day until then they would take wages of twelve *maneh*, and today they take wages of twenty-four *maneh*. Rabbi Yehuda says: Each day they took twenty-four *maneh*, and today they take forty-eight. The Sages said to them: What did you see that led you not to teach others this craft? They said: The members of our father’s house knew that this house, the Temple, is destined to be destroyed, and they were concerned lest an unworthy man learn our skill of preparing incense and go and engage in idol worship with that skill. Therefore, they attempted to prevent this skill from spreading beyond their family.**

9) Yoma 52b

משנגנו ארון — נגנזה עמו צנצנת המן, וצלוחית שמן המשחה, ומקלו של אהרן ושרידיה ופרטיה, וארגז ששגרו פלשתים דורון לאלהי ישראל, שנאמר: “ויכלי הנהב אשר השיבותם לו אשם תשימו בארגז מצדו ושלחתם אותו וקהל”.

When the Ark was buried, along with it was buried the jar of manna that was next to it, and the flask of oil used for anointing, and Aaron’s staff with its almonds and blossoms, and the chest that the Philistines sent as a gift [*doron*] to the God of Israel after they captured the Ark and were stricken by several plagues, as it is stated: “And put the jewels of gold that you return to Him for a guilt-offering, in a coffer by its side, and send it away that it may go” (I Samuel 6:8)

10) 2 Maccabees 2:4-8

The same document also tells how the prophet, in virtue of an oracle, ordered that the tent and the ark should accompany him, and how he went to the very mountain that Moses climbed to behold God’s inheritance.

When Jeremiah arrived there, he found a chamber in a cave in which he put the tent, the ark, and the altar of incense; then he sealed the entrance.

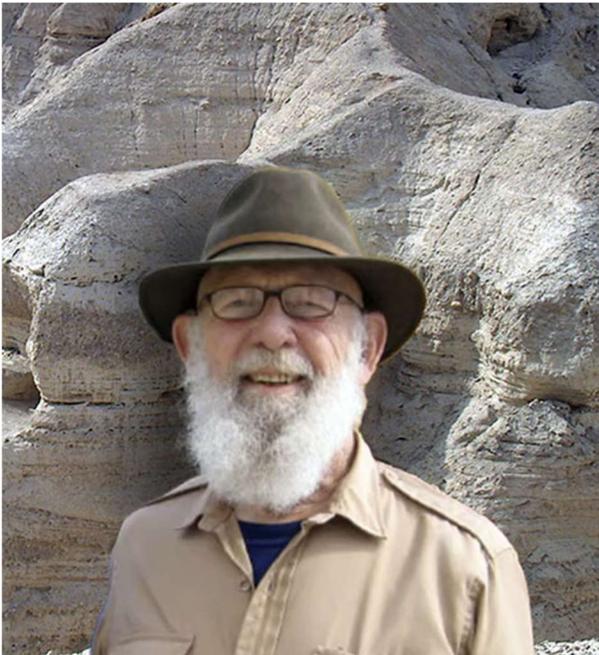
Some of those who followed him came up intending to mark the path, but they could not find it. When Jeremiah heard of this, he reproved them: “The place is to remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows them mercy.

Then the Lord will disclose these things, and the glory of the Lord and the cloud will be seen, just as they appeared in the time of Moses and of Solomon when he prayed that the place might be greatly sanctified.

11) Yoma 53b

רבי אליעזר אומר: ארון גלה לבבל, שנאמר: “ולתשובת השנה שלח המלך נבוכדנאצר וביאהו בבלה עם כלי חמדת בית ה’”. רבי שמעון בן יוחאי אומר: ארון גלה לבבל, שנאמר: “לא ינתר דבר אמר ה’” — אלו עשרת הדברות שבו. רבי יהודה (בן לקיש) אומר: ארון במקומו נגנז, שנאמר: “ויראו ראשי הבדים מן הקדש על פני הדביר ולא יראו החוצה ויהיו שם עד היום הנה”

Rabbi Eliezer says: The Ark was exiled to Babylonia, as it is stated: “And at the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylonia, along with the precious vessels of the House of the Lord” (II Chronicles 36:10). These precious vessels must include the Ark. Likewise, **Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai says: The Ark was exiled to Babylonia, as it is stated: “Behold, the days come that all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored until this day, shall be carried to Babylonia; nothing [davar] shall be left, says the Lord” (Isaiah 39:6).** These are the Ten Commandments [*dibrot*] that are inside it; they too shall not be left behind. **Rabbi Yehuda ben Lakish says: The Ark was buried in its place, as it is stated: “And the ends of the staves were seen from the sacred place before the partition, but they could not be seen without; and they are there to this day” (I Kings 8:8).**

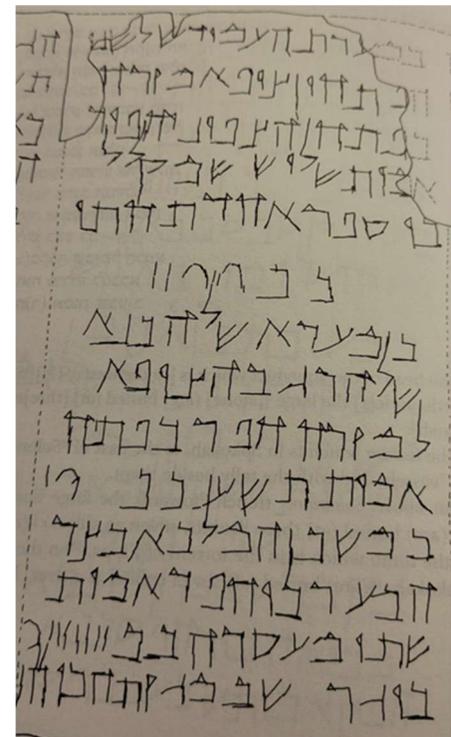
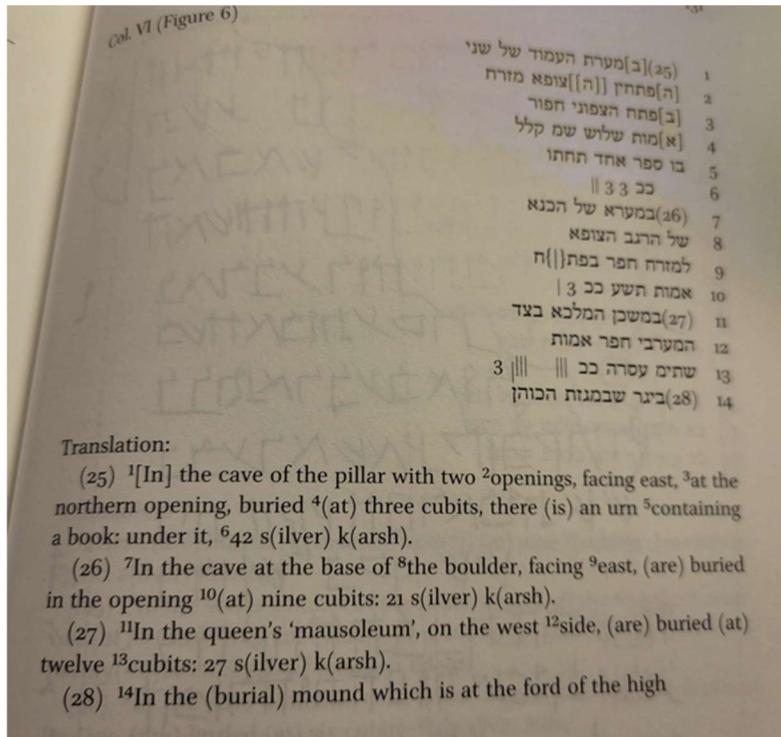
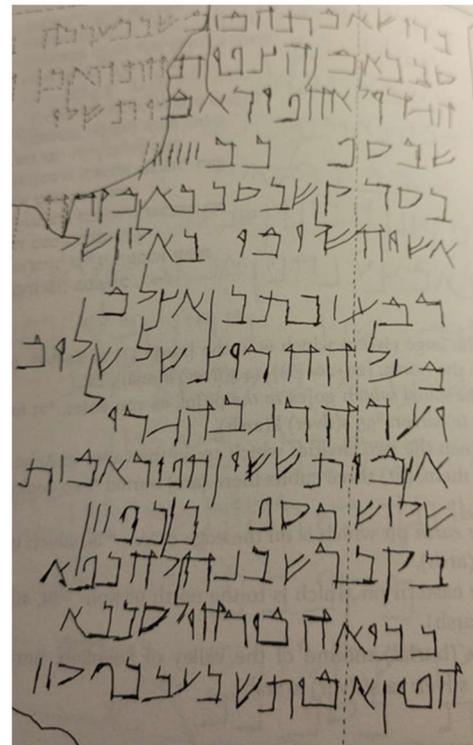
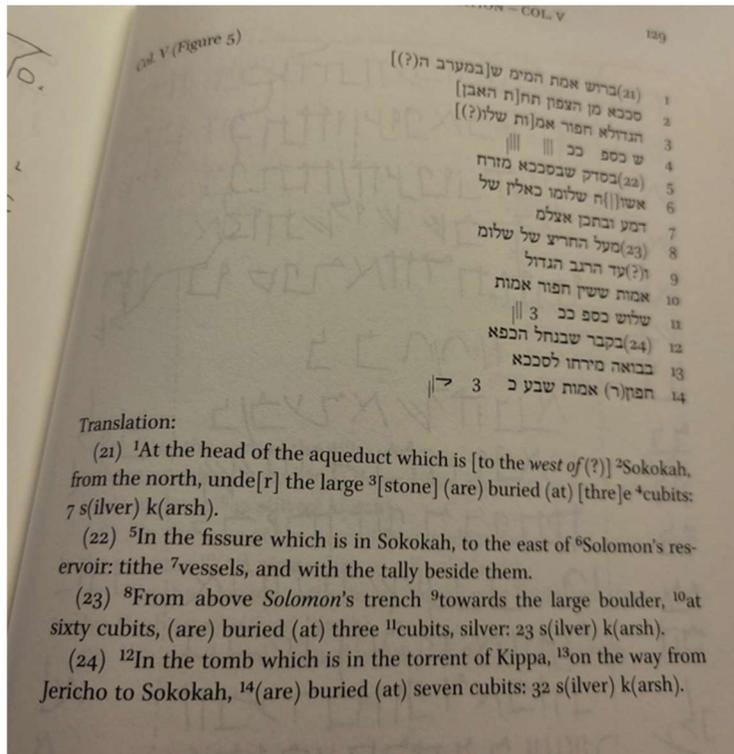


Vendyl Jones (1930-2010)



The Copper Scroll

12) Copper Scroll Columns 5 and 6 (from *The Copper Scroll Revisited* by Émile Puech)





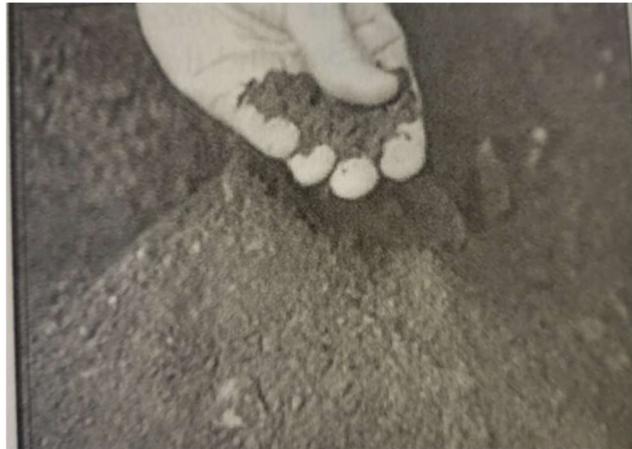
Rav Goren visiting Jones' dig in 1982



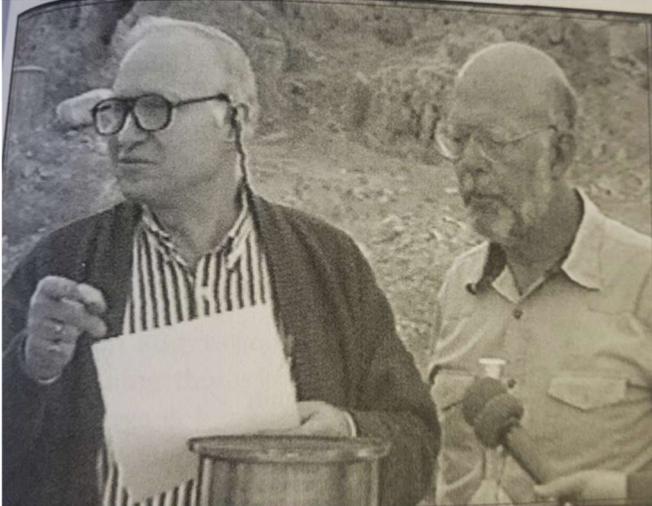
The Cave of the Column (or Pillar)



The oil juglet discovered in 1988



The reddish substance (*ketoret?*) discovered in 1992



Rabbi Dr. Marvin Antelman (left) and Jones (right) announcing the *ketoret* find



Vendyl Jones meeting the Lubavitcher Rebbe in 1990

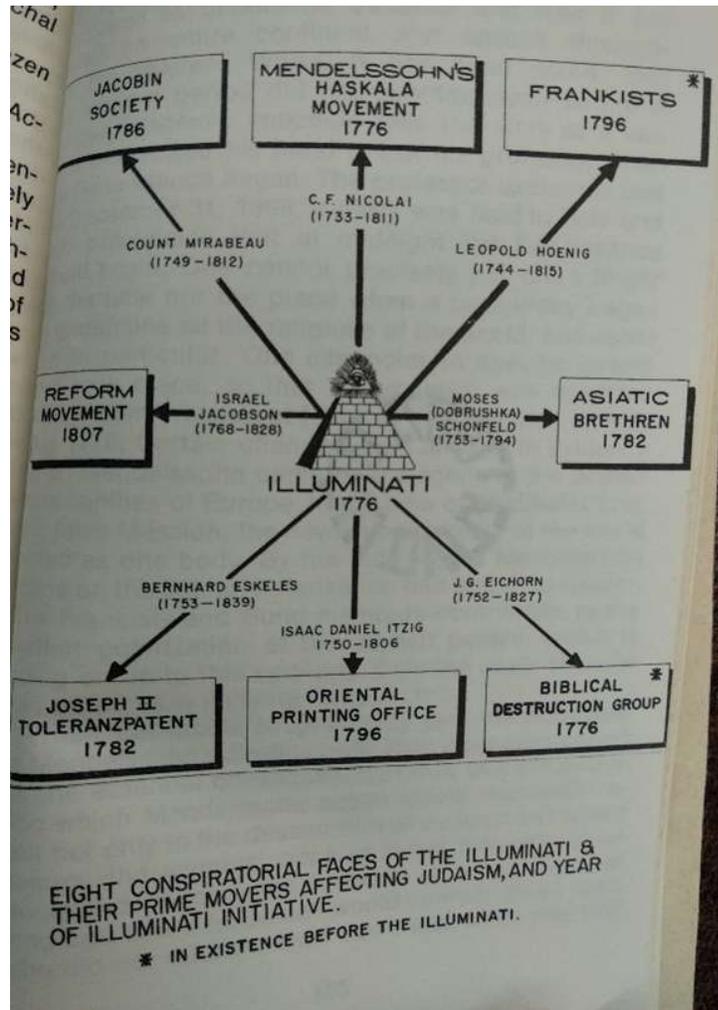
13) From Terry Hutter's Palynological Analysis

The aroma released from the spice compound during its processing was profuse and almost immediate. It initially saturated my hands as well as the clothes that I was wearing. Within a matter of minutes my laboratory and the surrounding area (for an area of several meters) was affected by the scent released from the spices... On the first day of processing, the aroma was so intense that I could almost taste it... Upon my return home that evening, the scent that had attached itself on my body and clothes was really apparent to both my wife and daughter. During the course of the week, the odor lessened slightly but was still noticeable in and around my lab. Within a few weeks the distinct aroma of the spices diminished to a freshness or cleanness of the air in my lab and the surrounding area. This aroma was in evidence, if even so slightly, for approximately two months.

14) Kenneth D. McMurtrey, Subsequent Analysis of the Sample and Data in Daniel C. Browning, Jr., "The Strange Search for the Ashes of the Red Heifer," *The Biblical Archaeologist* (June 1996)

My interpretation of the available data is that the red material is soil of mixed calcite/dolomite limestone origin (primarily calcite) with an admixture of silicates, nitrates, phosphates and sufficient iron salts to provide a red color. There is also a trace of nonpolar organic material which may be of biogenic origin. I should expect that analysis of soil samples from many, if not most, areas of the arid and semiarid regions of the near east would yield very similar or identical results. The sample appears to contain little plant-based materials (0.1%). There is certainly no evidence that it may once have been processed by humans, intended for any particular use by humans, or have ever been contained in or otherwise associated with a particular building.

15) Excerpts From R. Marvin Antelman (1933-2013), *To Eliminate the Opiate* vols. 1 & 2



The foundations of Solomon's temples of doom were his teachings, spread through his essays in both hard cover and paperback, such as *Studies in Judaism, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology,* and *Seminary Addresses and Other Papers.* The bulk of this work is studded with references to his Marxist, Frankist teachers, especially Weiss. Thus, the contemporary Conservative and *Masorati* (Conservatives in Israel) movements are based not only on the antinomian pagan-Satanic Frankists' Sufi doctrines, but on their falsehoods and fake scholarship; hence the play on the word *sheker* (deceit) to designate Schechter.

The conspiracy to implant the Conservative movement in America was masterminded by the Illuminati and implemented by Austrian, English and American Frankists. The Sabbatian Illuminati plans for America were formulated in these stages:

The excommunication of Henry A. Kissinger

by Rabbi Marvin S. Antelman, chief justice,
Supreme Rabbinic Court of America.



NOW COME WE

A duly constituted Bet Din, Court of Jewish Law, and say that a certain Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State of the United States of America, has in actions and in certain publicly proclaimed widely circulated pronouncements, posed a clear and present danger to the Jewish people, the Jewish State of Israel, and the fulfillment of the covenantal destiny of the Jewish people according to the Torah.

AND WE FIND

That said Henry Kissinger is applying intense pressure against Israel to violate the COVENANT between God and Abraham very severely coercing Israel to transgress it by giving up Divinely ordained, liberated areas of our eternal everlasting possession.

AND WE FIND

That Henry Kissinger is continuing pressure upon our people to continue to give up Divinely ordained, liberated areas of our Promised Land; and thus blaspheme GOD and the Holy Nation Israel before the world.

Moshe Brown. The final and most dramatic aspect of the ceremony began with my own reading of the *Cherem* in Hebrew, which had its own nuances and was patterned after the excommunications recorded in the log books of the Council of Four Lands which spans over two hundred years from the Sixteenth Century. The reading was rendered in a traditional sing-song melancholy manner until the actual ancient verse was repeated seven times by all Rabbis present excommunicating Kissinger, thus: "*Shaketz Tishaktzenu Vitaev Titavenu Ki Cherem Hu.*" The verse is from Deuteronomy 7:26: "You shall utterly defeat it (him) and you shall utterly abhor it (him) because it (he) is *Cherem.*"

In this context he is both cursed and excommunicated. As soon as the verse was completed, candles which had been lit before each Rabbi representing and symbolizing the illumination of Henry Kissinger's soul were individually extinguished. The shofar was blasted, and the rest of the Hebrew charge of *Cherem* was completed. The audience reaction to all this was intense. It was the first time most had ever witnessed an actual excommunication. After the *Bet Din* adjourned, they flocked to the dais where the Court was seated and proclaimed their praise for a great deed which they felt had to be done, surrounding the Rabbis with enthusiasm.