

לוקוטי ופסקי הלכות

# "חוקי חיים"

ותלמוד  
"חוקי חיים"  
לעשות רצונך  
בלבב שלם



שע"י "חדר הזדאה" שכונת מנחת יצחק פעיה"ק ירושלם תובב"א - בראשות הרב חיים אהרן בלייער שליט"א

Halochohs compiled by HaRav Chaim Bleier – Translated from the Hebrew edition by R' Zerachya Shicker

## Halochohs of

# Taking care of oneself

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15. **The gezeirah depends on hishtadlus.** The seforim explain that there are three groups: 1) the people upon whom there is a decree to live no matter what will be saved even without hishtadlus [on occasions, great tzaddikim have relied on this for themselves]; 2) the people upon whom there is a decree of death, ch"v, will not be saved even with hishtadlus; 3) there are people whose decree depends on their hishtadlus: if they do what is necessary by the laws of nature, they will be saved, and if they do not do what the chiyuv of hishtadlus dictates is necessary, they will not be saved. This is why Chazal warn us not to live in a place where there are no doctors; without hishtadlus, one surrenders himself according to the laws of nature (ע"פ החינוך מצוה תקמ"ו, רשב"ש, פלא יועץ, ערך רפואה).
16. **The Soton accuses at times of danger.** Chazal teach us another principle that Rashi mentions on the posuk, "He did not send Binyamin, Yosef's brother...for he said, 'perhaps a tragedy will happen to him.'" (בראשית מ"ד) – "And in his house, a tragedy will not happen to him? Rather, from here we learn that the Soton accuses at a time of danger," i.e., if someone is in a dangerous situation, he needs extra zechuyos to be spared.

## Coronavirus – COVID-19

### Description of the Virus

17. **Lo aleinu,** recently, a worldwide coronavirus pandemic, or more specifically, COVID-19, appeared. It causes flu-like symptoms, but it can cause respiratory complications and, lo aleinu, death.
18. **Different than typical flu.** Some people are claiming that it is not dangerous, and that it is just like the flu, which people also die from. However, the experts determined that it is many times more serious than the typical flu. First of all, it is much more contagious than the flu. Also, the mortality rate is much greater than the flu. Thus, they are not comparable at all.
19. **Dangerous to the elderly.** Experts say that it is not very dangerous for the average person and most people infected will recover, b'ezras Hashem. Still, for the elderly, the immunocompromised, and people with diabetes, high blood pressure, or respiratory issues, it is very dangerous, and many people have already died internationally because of it.

### How Countries Are Treating It

20. **Serious.** Each country is reacting differently to the virus. Some are treating it with the utmost seriousness. For example, in China, where the virus originated, they proclaimed a total quarantine in places where the virus spread and took harsh steps against violators.
21. **Moderate.** In other countries, measures were set into place when the virus began to spread to prevent it from spreading nationally. For example, in Eretz Yisroel, they forbade gatherings of many people together. Originally, the number was 5,000, then it went down to 2,000 people, then again to 100. As of this writing, gatherings of 10 people are forbidden. Also, as of now, everyone who comes from outside the country must be quarantined for 14 days.
22. **Light.** Some countries, e.g., Italy, barely took any steps to prevent the spread and treated it like the regular flu, allowing nature to run its course. Top researchers in England explained that there is an advantage to the population getting infected, as that will eventually create a national immunity to the virus in the future, and after all, it only kills the elderly.. They are preparing for a high number of fatalities, r"l.
23. **Bottom line.** What we have seen until now is that the countries that took steps to prevent the virus's spread had some success, while the countries that were careless, e.g., Italy and Iran, were hit with many fatalities.

### From a Halachic Standpoint

24. This virus is potentially dangerous (above, 8), has a mortality rate between 2% and 4% [enough of a chance to be treated as a danger] (10), and, especially, is viewed by the whole world as dangerous – the proof being that if one would identify a patient infected with coronavirus, he would flee as one would flee from fire (11). Therefore, there is a mitzvoh of "ונשמרתם מאד לנפשותיכם" (1).
25. Even if a tzaddik who is full of bitachon doesn't need hishtadlus (above, 15), this is only as pertains to himself. Toward others, he must employ every strategy and hishtadlus possible to prevent the spread of the disease and not gather or get together with many people together, especially if they are crammed together on bleachers.. We do not rely on a miracle in a situation of danger (7).
26. Even though young people are only at risk of a temporary illness, not death (above, 5), they must still see to it that the virus doesn't spread among us at all and reach older people, ch"v, for whom it is a life-threatening danger (4). We know that due to the sanctity of life, one may not give up on the life of a single Jew, no matter what age. Hence, we are obligated by the Torah to do whatever possible to prevent further spread of the disease and to listen to and obey the doctors and the authorities who are dealing with it, as Rabbi Akiva Eiger warned (13).

27. In places like England, where the authorities are taking the matter lightly, members of the Jewish community and its leaders must take their own steps to prevent the disease's spread and not endanger the lives of the elderly, ch"v, just like Rabbi Akiva Eiger did when he personally introduced policies for his community to daven in small minyanim, and the authorities ended up agreeing with him. Also, walking around on the city streets and gatherings of many people should be prevented.
28. **Follow good hygiene.** It is also very important to be very careful everywhere about hygiene, especially in public places. Do not use public towels; only sneeze into a tissue, and throw it out; dry your hands with paper towel; don't lick your finger to make it easier to flip through a sefer; it is better to use a personal siddur instead of a shul siddur, and the like.

## Halochoh of Quarantine

### Obligation to Be Quarantined

29. In light of all the above, whoever the authorities say must be quarantined has a halachic obligation to obey the experts and not outsmart them, thereby harming others; he can say a Lesheim Yichud on fulfilling several mitzvos asei. The main thing is to serve Hashem and do what is temporarily necessary with joy, not sadness, ch"v (מכתב של רע"א הנ"ל).
30. If one violates his quarantine and comes to the beis medrash, he may be asked to leave. If he doesn't listen, one may rebuke and shame him until he leaves in order to keep an endangerer of the public far away.

### Davening with the Tzibbur

31. If someone does not have the option of coming to shul, he should daven at the same time as the tzibbur (ש"י"ע סי' צ"ט), i.e., when the community he belongs to davens. Although this is not technically "tefillah betzibbur," he has the advantage of davening with the tzibbur (ש"י"ת הבצלת השרון סי' ב').
32. **Set minyan.** One who usually davens in a "shtieblach" that has minyanim all the time should still try to daven at the time his regular minyan davens. For example, if he always davens at a 7:30 minyan, he should daven at home at 7:30, and start Shmoneh Esrei at the time they usually get there (לקט הקמה החדש סק"ה, אשי ישראל פ"ח הע"ל ל"ב). However, if one does not daven in a set minyan, whenever he davens is called davening with the tzibbur.
33. **Speaker, phone.** If one wants, he can join a minyan by phone or livestream so that he can say the whole davening together with the tzibbur, and he can even answer amein to the brochos he hears. Rav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg did this at the end of his life.
34. **Multiple individuals in a house.** If multiple people are quarantined together in the same house, even though they don't have a minyan, there is an advantage to them davening together. This is a fulfillment of "ברוב עם," and even just two people should daven together (מהר"ם (בנעט ברכות ל"ח, תשובות והנהגות ח"ב סי' נ"ז, מו"ד בש"ת שבט הקהתי ח"ב סי' מ').

### Mikveh

35. Someone in quarantine or with symptoms of illness may not toivel in a public mikveh; doing so endangers others and violates "לפני עור" (ספר (הסידים אות תרע"ג). One may not justify this under any circumstances, even for tevilas Ezra. He should say brochos and learn Torah as usual; chas vesholom to refrain from learning Torah for this. This is certainly true about toiveling for extra kedushah or lechavod Shabbos.
36. **Hataras nedarim.** If someone who is always careful to toivel, e.g., tevilas Ezra or on Erev Shabbos, etc., is quarantined, he does not need to do hataras nedarim since he is a complete oneis and it is only temporary (ש"ת חשב האפד ח"ב סי' נ"א ע"פ דגול מרבבה י"ד סי' ר"ד). Similarly, someone who doesn't shower after the mikveh so that the mikveh water remains on him for reasons of kedushah does not need hataras nedarim to shower after the mikveh during this time.
37. **Nine kav.** At the present time [as of this writing], the mikvaos in Eretz Yisroel are closed and men cannot toivel. Therefore, one who does tevilas Ezra should at least make sure to pour nine kav [22 liters (חוק איש) or 12.5 liters (הגר"ה גאה)] of drawn water over himself (מ"ב סי' פ"ח סק"ד) [הגר"ה גאה]. He may do this by standing under the shower; he should turn on the water after he is already standing under the showerhead (ש"ת מנח"י ח"ד סי' כ"א) and the water should stream onto his whole body uninterrupted.

