



DIVREI CHIZUK AND Q&A HARAV NEBENZHAL SHLIT" A

ON PESACH AND CORONAVIRUS

The following is a summary from the Q&A session with HaRav Nebenzhal Shlita on כ"ו אדר תש"פ (March 22 2020) regarding the corona virus. The questions were asked to the Rav by HaRav Ami Merzel Shlita.

HaRav Ami Shlita: Many people would love to hear divrei chizuk from the Rav.

HaRav Nebenzhal Shlita: The current situation with the corona virus is urging us to strengthen ourselves in Torah and Tefillah. Also, the political situation is urging us to strengthen in Torah and Tefillah. I don't know what is of great danger, the danger of the corona virus or the danger of the political situation in Eretz Yisrael. We need chizuk and to strengthen in Torah and Tefillah for both. This is specifically true now because men cannot go to yeshiva or the beis midrash to learn. People are forced to learn by themselves and daven by themselves and we should not be tempted by laziness but continue to strengthen our learning and davening. Even with people stuck at home, they should learn with their children which is equally as important.

Questions and Answers

Burial and Tachrichim

Q: Someone died from corona, they cannot get tachrichim for three days. Should they wait three days to get tachrichim and then bury him, or should they bury him without tachrichim immediately?

A: Wait 3 days for the tachrichim because it is more important for honoring the dead body (כבוד המת).

Weddings

Q: Since many weddings can only be done with a small group, what is the Rav's advice regarding pushing off a wedding? Should they make a small wedding now or push off for a bigger wedding later?

A: If the kallah is ready, it is better not to wait. If the kallah is ready then get married, if she wants to push it off then they should push it off.

Q: Is there more room this year to be lenient and allow weddings during sefiras haomer?

A: One should wait, we don't know how long corona will be, but we do know how long Sefiras HaOmer will be and better to wait.

Bris Milah

Q: What does the Rav suggest regarding a bris milah, should it be done without a minyan or should they try and make a minyan?

A: It can be done without a minyan. Tziporah and Moshe didn't have a minyan and they still did the bris milah.

Krias HaShem

Q: If someone has a girl, and no minyan to do the naming. How should one fulfill krias hashem?

A: They can call her a name without a minyan including the mi sh'berach. The father can say a mi sh'berach at home without a minyan, because the mi sh'berach is HaKadosh Baruch Hu and He is everywhere!

Bar Mitzvah

Q: Regarding someone who is making a Bar Mitzvah, would the father say the blessing of Baruch Sh'petarani without a minyan or should he wait?

A: It is better to wait until the bar mitzvah boy does something that shows he is a bar mitzvah (for example: Kriyas HaTorah or davening from the amud etc.) The father should say it at that point.

Bracha and Corona

Q: This year we have been given so much from Hashem in Eretz Yisrael, an abundance of rain and bracha, but now all of the sudden we have this disease to deal with! Is this not a contradiction in what Hashem is doing for us?

A: It is not a contradiction but the opposite! HaKadosh Baruch Hu is having mercy on us even during the corona virus. He gave us extra bracha during the time of the disease in order to show us how much he cares and wants us to live through it.

Selling Chametz Gamur

Q: The government in Israel has said there is plenty of food in Israel, but people are not listening and buying a lot of food in the grocery stores. People are scared that there might not be enough food after Pesach. Can one buy food now that is chametz gamur and sell it during pesach, even though the custom in Eretz Yisrael is to not sell chametz gamur?

A: There will be chametz after Pesach. There is no real reason to buy it now, however if one is very scared that there will be nothing they could buy and rely on the selling of chametz gamur.

Cleaning For Pesach

Q: The Rav has said that since the children are home a lot more this year, that the parents should spend more time teaching their children and less time following stringencies regarding cleaning for Pesach. Can the Rav clarify?

A: Part of chinuch is to teach the kids about cleaning for Pesach. Helping their parents clean is a great opportunity to teach them about the importance of cleaning for Pesach including the stringencies.

Virtual Minyanim/Siyum

Q: There is a lot of talk about people doing things together over the computer. The Rav has said before that a virtual minyan is not considered a minyan (and one would not be able to say kaddish etc.). Does the Rav hold that one should not say amen if they heard a bracha over the phone or internet? What is the reason?

A: One should not say amen, because we are afraid their may be something dirty in between.

Q: Even if the bracha is being said live right now?

A: One cannot answer Amen. But I was asked if it would work for a siyum on a mesechet and I answered that it may be sufficient to hear the siyum.

Q: Does there have to be a minyan where the siyum is?

A: No

Q: If he hears the siyum over the internet, will his seudah be considered a seudas mitzvah?

A: Yes

Q: Will there be kaddish said at the siyum?

A: No

Birkas HaGomel

Q: People who are in quarantine, and they never were sick with corona would they say birkas hagomel?

A: No

Q: Someone who is sick with corona and in quarantine and got healthy would they say birkas hagomel?

A: If there was no real danger one would not say it, but if there was a danger one would say it.

Q: Should one say birkas hagomel right away even without a minyan? Or wait until there is a minyan?

A: One should wait for a minyan to say it.

Q: What if it may be a few months away?

A: Still better to wait. Because we have to show praise and gratitude to public in front of a minyan. A minyan is obligatory.

Avinu Malkeinu

Q: Should Avinu Malkeinu be added into the tefillah?

A: Yes

Q: Also on erev shabbos?

A: Not during mincha.

Q: When Chodesh Nissan starts should one stop saying Avinu Malkeinu?

A: Yes

Fast Day

Q: Should one have a fast day during this time?

A: This is not a good idea because people may become weak.

Q: What if they fasted for only half a day?

A: Half of a day fasting is not really a fast.

Q: If one's community is fasting, is it considered being poresh min hatzibur if you don't fast?

A: Only if he is strong enough, he should join. But if he is weak, he should not join at all.

Closing Shuls

Q: In different communities there are differences of opinion regarding what to do with shuls, some are staying open, some are closing. What is the correct thing to do?

A: We should follow the Health Ministry in Israel, and the Health Ministry in America should be followed in America.

Q: Should one be more machmir than the Health Ministry?

A: In other things yes, but regarding tefillah b'tzibur no. If the shul is following the rules of the health ministry there is no reason to be more machmir.

Q: If in America they close all the shuls, if there are some shuls that are not following the rules does one have an obligation to inform the police about this shul not following the rules?

A: Here there are also people who are not following the rules, but we do not phone the police.

Aveilus

Q: Someone who is in aveilus and can't say kaddish, what should he do?

A: Learn mishnayos

Limited Respirators

Q: Unfortunately, certain countries might only have a certain number of breathing machines for a certain amount of sick people. If there is a sick person who will not live anyways could you give the breathing machine to someone else who will live?

A: I was asked another question should we keep the general rules of kohen, levi, yisrael in this regard? Perhaps.

Q: What about the first question?

A: I am not sure.

Honoring Parents

Q: Regarding honoring one's parents. If parents tell you to do something that is a danger you should not listen to them. If they ask you to do something that is against the Health Ministry do you listen or no?

A: If it is a danger you should not listen to your parents.

Q: Same thing if it is a big family seder and they want you to come?

A: Same would apply. Do not listen to the parents, the first Pesach the mitzvah was not to leave the house "עד הבוקר" so too here.

Q: If a parent could not be with their child, and they really want to fulfill the mitzvah of *והגדת לבנך*, could they write a letter to their children to fulfill this?

A: To some extent yes.

Tevilas Keilim

Q: They closed down a lot of mikvaos for keilim and they cannot be tovel keilim for pesach. What should one do?

A: They can give the keilim to their wife who is being tovel.

Q: Maybe there are certain women's mikvaos that do not allow to bring keilim, could they rely on selling to a goy and borrowing?

A: If there is no other way, they could rely on that.

Lashon HaRa

Q: Is it lashon hara to say that someone has corona?

A: If it is needed to spread the word so people can be careful than it is not considered lashon hara.

Q: What if their intention is so you can daven for them?

A: It is still permitted to say.

Chavrusa or Tehillim

Q: If one has a set chavrusa at the same time in which his community is saying tehillim together, what is better to say tehillim or to keep the chavrusa?

A: Chavrusa is more important.

Biur Chametz

Q: Many places will not have a communal biur chametz. If someone is scared to do it by fire what is the best way to do it this year? Could they flush it down the toilet?

A: Yes, could flush it down the toilet.

Hand Sanitizer

Q: If hand sanitizer has alcohol in it, does it have to be kosher l'pesach?

A: It needs to be kosher l'pesach

הא לחמא עניא

Q: Do we say *הא לחמא עניא* this year? Because we don't really want people to come into our houses?

A: Yes, we still say it. Because there is an opinion that it is only discussing what our forefathers did in mitzrayim.

Geulah

Q: A lot of people are saying that corona is a significant step towards geulah, is it?

A: We have to bring korben pesach IY"H,

Q: Can we do it in a group this year?

A: Yes. According to the instructions of the Health Ministry of Moshiach.

Q: Any hints that corona is the geulah?

A: Perhaps Keter, כתר יתנו לך..

Haircut

Q: The barber shops have closed and there is no ability to get a haircut, is it possible to get a haircut on chol hamoed?

A: Better for one to take a haircut at home before pesach.

Q: Sefira and haircuts? Room to be meikel?

A: (I could not hear the Rav clearly)

Selling Chametz

Q: Can you sell chometz online?

A: It can be problematic

Q: If it is done by a talmid chochum?

A: One would be able to do it.

Q: We know that most of the kinyanim we do now chumrahs, is there room to be meikel this year and sell over the internet?

A: A Rav who is a talmid chachum could pasken.

The Rav wants to give a bracha to all the families, avreichim, talmidim and all of klal yisrael. That Hashem should give us tremendous bracha.