

The RYS Daily 12/24/06 The Cholera Epidemic

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R. Israel warned everyone to obey the doctors' instructions implicitly, since so the Torah required. So stringent were his rulings, that he issued a proclamation to the effect that eating fish (which the doctors had forbidden) was tantamount to eating pork! One of the Vilna dignitaries, R. Isaac b. Zalman approached R. Israel. He had always been punctilious in eating fish on Shabbat. He had now cooked the fish himself. Could he at least taste the soup? R. Israel answered : "Buy pork and eat it together with the fish!"

At the same time he encouraged and exhorted the people not to be afraid, not to mourn excessively over the dead, since sorrow debilitated body and nerves and lowered the resistance to disease.

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