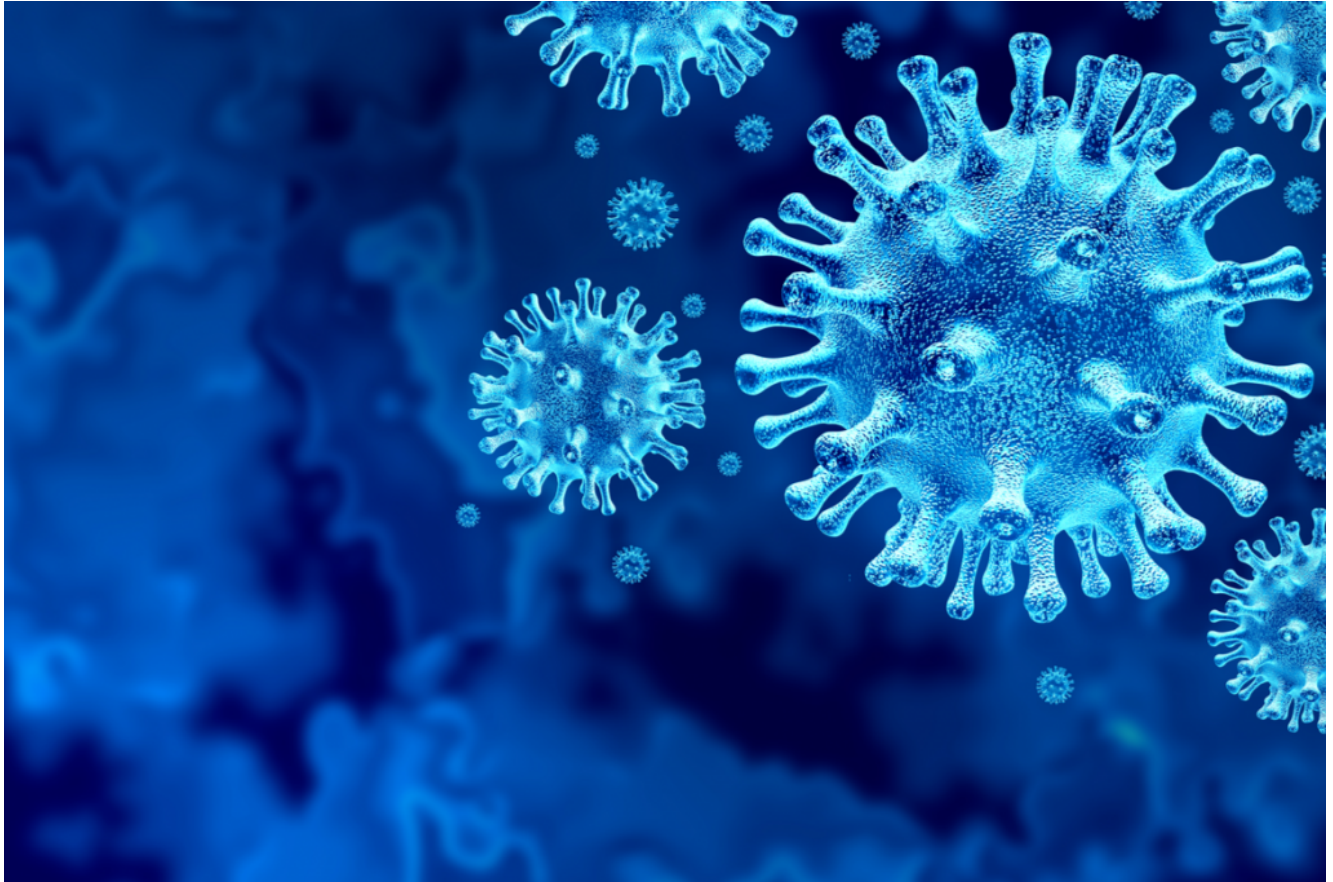


Corona and the survival of King David

written by breslov.org

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On Purim, early in the Corona outbreak, Rav Yakov Meir Shechter, one of the Breslov leaders in Yerushalayim, said that the name of the disease, Corona, is an indication of what our mission is during the crisis. צור צור צור – ‘Cry out’ to Hashem. Daven and plead with Him. This, we know, is the reason for any difficulties that we face. Hashem wants us to call out to Him.

Perhaps we can discover more in the following episode in Tanach.

In Shmuel II chapter 15, we learn about the rebellion of Avshalom, the son of King David, against his own father. David flees into exile for fear of his life. Achitophel, an advisor

to King David, revolts and joins the ranks of Avshalom. Upon hearing this news, David begs Hashem to refute the advice of Achitophel.

Hushai, a close friend of King David, is able to trick Avshalom into believing that he is also a supporter of Avshalom's uprising. He is now positioned as a secret agent on behalf of King David.

In chapter 17, Achitophel advises Avshalom to plan a surprise attack on David, in order to assassinate him. Avshalom very much liked this plan, and relished the chance to have his father killed.

For some reason (see the prayer of King David above), Avshalom decides to also ask the advice of Hushai in this matter.

וַיִּשְׁמַע אַחִיתוֹפֶל כִּי יָצָא דָוִד מִן הַבַּיִת לֵאמֹר אֲנִי הָיִיתִי חָטֵא וְעַתָּה אֲנִי מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְעַתָּה יִשְׁמַע אַחִיתוֹפֶל כִּי יָצָא דָוִד מִן הַבַּיִת לֵאמֹר אֲנִי הָיִיתִי חָטֵא וְעַתָּה אֲנִי מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה

But Avshalom said, "summon Hushai the Archite as well"

Realising that this would be a fatal attack on King David, Hushai pretends that this attack would actually backfire on Avshalom.

וְעַתָּה יִשְׁמַע אַחִיתוֹפֶל כִּי יָצָא דָוִד מִן הַבַּיִת לֵאמֹר אֲנִי הָיִיתִי חָטֵא וְעַתָּה אֲנִי מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְעַתָּה יִשְׁמַע אַחִיתוֹפֶל כִּי יָצָא דָוִד מִן הַבַּיִת לֵאמֹר אֲנִי הָיִיתִי חָטֵא וְעַתָּה אֲנִי מִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה

Whoever hears of it will say, 'A disaster has struck the troops that follow Avshalom'

Hushai suggests an alternative plan to Avshalom, one which would delay the timing of the attack and give Hushai the chance to inform King David, allowing him to escape and survive.

Despite the high regard of Achitophel's advice to Avshalom (see end of chapter 16), Avshalom decides to go with the plan of Hushai. Hushai is then able to send warning to King David to escape. In the end, Avshalom's men are defeated, Avshalom is killed (against his father's wishes), and King David is

restored to be the king over all of Israel.

The above episode was a defining moment in the life of King David, with his very survival in the balance. Avshalom decides to listen to the advice of Hushai over Achitophel, which enables the life and legacy of King David to be saved.

The words he used, quoted above, are כִּי יִשְׁרָאֵל, 'Corona'. The year of this outbreak is 5780. Skipping 80 words from that phrase takes us to the word מִדְּבַר, in the second verse quoted above, commonly translated as a plague.

This episode, which possibly contains a hint to the Corona plague, is at the very heart of the battle of tefilla. King David is the symbol of prayer, the sweet singer of Israel, the composer of sefer Tehillim. His life and everything that he stood for were in the balance. Hashem brought about a miracle and his legacy was saved for all of eternity.

Just as King David was the 'stone rejected by the builders that became the main cornerstone', similarly, true sincere prayer is 'of the utmost importance, and is yet treated with contempt'. At this time during the Corona, we are reminded to 'Cry out' to Hashem and to choose this powerful weapon passed down to us by King David himself.

Written by Yosef Bell