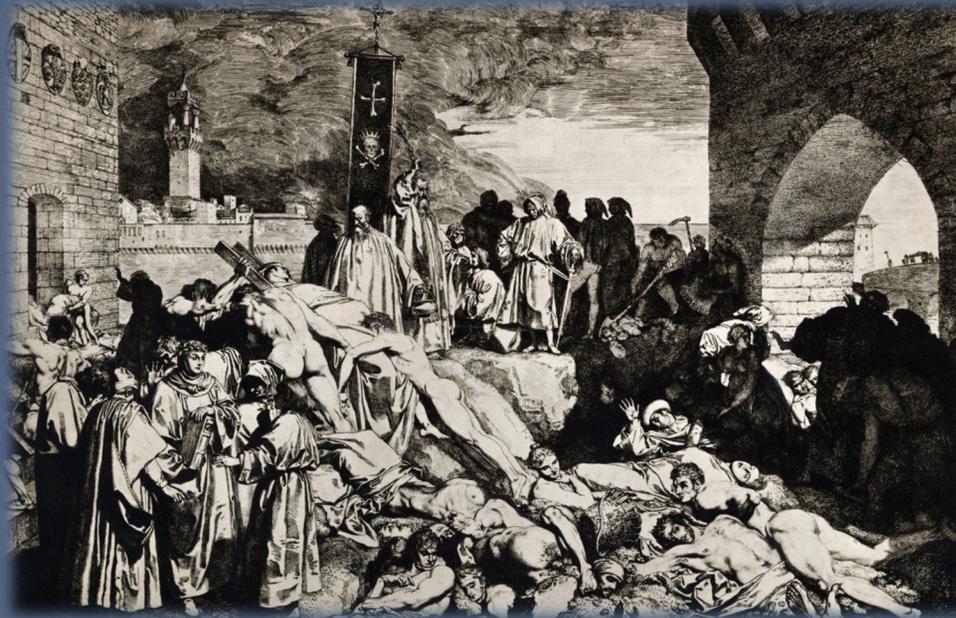


Jacob of Padua on Isolation and Treatment during the Black Plague "Quarantino"

- During the next 80 years, similar laws were introduced in Marseilles, Venice, Pisa, and Genoa. Moreover, during this time the isolation period was extended from 30 days to 40 days, thus changing the name *trentino* to *quarantino*, a term derived from the Italian word *quaranta*, which means "forty."



Shulchan Arukh, Yoreh De'ah 116:5 Pestilence and Contagion

כשם שמתענים ומתריעים על הגשמים כך מתענים על שאר הצרו' כגון עכו"ם שבאו לערוך מלחמה עם ישראל או יטול מהם מס או ליקח מידם ארץ או לגזור עליהם צרה אפי' במצוה קלה הרי אלו מתענין ומתריעין ועד שירוחמו וכל הערים שסביבותיהם מתענים אבל אין מתריעין אלא אם כן **תקעו להתקבץ לעזרתם ואפי' לא באו אלא לעבור דרך ארצם שאין להם מלחמה עמהם אלא על עכו"ם אחריו ועובריו על מקום ישראל מתעני' ומתריעין:**

וכן על דבר איזהו דבר עיר שיש בה ת"ק רגלי ויצאו ממנה שלשה מתים בשלשה ימים זה אחר זה הרי זה דבר יצאו ביום א' או בארבעה ימים אין זה דבר היו בה אלף ויצאו ממנה ששה מתים בג' ימים זה אחר זה הרי זה דבר יצאו ביום אחד או בארבעה אין זה דבר וכן לפי חשבון זה ואין הנשים וקטנים וזקנים ששבתו ממלאכה בכלל מנין אנשי המדינה לענין זה היה דבר ודוקא דאיכא דבר בכולה ולא (בארץ ישראל מתענין שאר גליו' עליהם היה דבר במדינה ושיירו' הולכו' ובאו' ממנה) (במקצתה) (ר"ן פ"ג דתענית למדינה אחר' שתיהן מתענו' אע"פ שהן רחוקו' זו מזו

ואם היה דבר בחזירים מתענין מפני שמעיהם דומים לשל בני אדם וכל שכן אם היה דבר בעכו"ם ולא בישראל שמתענים

וכן מתענים על המפול' שבעיר כיצד הרי שרבתה בעיר מפולת כותלים בריאים שאינן עומדין בצד הנהר הרי זה צרה ומתענין ומתריעין עליה וכן על הרעש ועל הרוחו' שהם מפילים הבנין והורגים מתענין ומתריעים עליהם

וכן מתענים על החולאים כיצד הרי שירד חולי א' לאנשים הרבה באותה או (פי' חולי סוגר הגרון מענין ויסכרו מעינות תהום) העיר כגון אסכרה חרחור וכיוצא בהם והיו מתים מאותו חולי הרי זה **צרת צבור** וגוזרין עליה תעני' ומתריעין וכן חכוך לח הרי הוא כשחין פורח ואם פשט ברוב הצבור הגה ובאלו: מתענין ומתריעין עליו אבל חכוך יבש צועקים עליו בלבד חולאים אינן צריכין שימותו בשלשה ימים זה אחר זה כמו בדבר שהוא בא מכח שינוי אויר אלא מתענים ומתריעים על אלו החלאים מיד. (ב"י)

Shulchan Aruch on Precautions to be taken during the time of Plague (16th century)

או בסם רע. ולא יתן כפר לחם תחת השחי, מפני הזעה. ולא יתן תבשיל ולא משקים תחת המטה, מפני שרוח רעה שורה עליהם. ולא יגעץ הגה: וכן יזהר מכל דברים המביאים לידי סכנה, כי סכנתא חמירא. סכין בתוך אתרוג או בתוך צנון, שמא יפל אדם על חדה, וימות ולכן אסרו לילך בכל מקום סכנה כמו תחת קיר נטוי או יחידי בלילה. (ב"י בשם הש"ס) מאסורא, ויש לחוש יותר לספק סכנה מלספק אסור ומנהג. (רמב"ם) וכן אסרו לשתות מים מן הנהרות בלילה או להניח פיו על קלוח המים לשתות, כי דברים אלו יש בהן חשש סכנה, (שם) אבודרהם ומרדכי ס"פ כל שעה רוקח סימן ער"ה ומהרי"ל (פשוט שלא לשתות מים בשעת התקופה, וכן כתבו הקדמונים, ואין לשנות וכל אלו. (תשובת מהרי"ל ל"ה) עוד כתבו שיש לברח מן העיר כשדבר בעיר, ויש לצאת מן העיר בתחלת הדבר, ולא בסופו. (ומנהגים הדברים הם משום סכנה, ושומר נפשו ירחק מהם ואסור לסמך אגס או לסכך נפשו בכל כיוצא בזה. ועין בחושן משפט סימן תכ"ז

- One must refrain from putting coins in one's mouth, lest it's covered with dried saliva of those afflicted with boils. He should not put the palm of his hand in his arm pit, lest his hand touched a *metzora* or a harmful poison. He should not put a loaf of bread under his armpit, because of the sweat. He should not put a cooked item or drinks under the bed, since an evil spirit rests on them. He should not stick a knife in an esrog or a radish, lest one fall on its edge and die. Hagah: Similarly, he should be careful of all things that cause danger, because danger is stricter than transgressions, and one should be more careful with an uncertain danger than with an uncertain issur. They also prohibited to go in a dangerous place, such as under a leaning wall, or alone at night. They also prohibited to drink water from rivers at night or to put one's mouth on a stream of water and drink, because these matters have a concern of danger. It is the widespread custom not to drink water during the equinox, and the early ones (early Rabbis) wrote this and it is not to be changed. They also wrote to flee from the city when a plague is in the city, and one should leave at the beginning of the plague and not at the end. {Rabbinic Gloss: "Duh"} And all of these things are because of the danger, and a person who guards his soul will distance himself from them and it is prohibited to rely on a miracle in all of these matters.

Jacob Zahalon's description of the plague of 1656 in Italy from *Otzar he Chaym* – Part Three

- At another time I preached in Toscana Street, from the window of the house of Judah Gatigno (of blessed memory), the people standing *Is it possible that the vapor of the burning tar impregnating his clothes made the doctor an undesirable host for fleas and thus afforded real protection? 3 in the street to listen to the sermon.
- In other streets scholars would preach from the windows of their houses. "None were permitted to go out on the street save physicians, except at certain times, to get food; at night no one was allowed to leave his house.
- The guards patrolled the city and if they found anyone they would put him into a prison appointed for that purpose. "After nine months the Holy One (blessed be He), remembered His people because of the merit of their forefathers and the disease came to an end and they were well and the gates were opened and Israel returned to the synagogues to pray as in former times. Give thanks and praise to God on high, whose kindness never ceases and whose mercy never ends !"

Confinement in the Ghetto and Punishments



“They ordered that the place selected for this should be the houses on the street along the river near the gate of the Ghetto, known as the Gate of the Bridge, where they should be confined until cured. They appointed an officer, Monsignor Negroni, who came twice a day to look after the needs of the community and to enforce rigid isolation at a great penalty; they set up gallows near the gate to hang anyone transgressing these orders. They appointed a Gentile physician, who remained confined in the Ghetto, and who ordered everyone affected to be brought to the "Lazaretto." For conditions occurred occasionally in the Christian world....”

Lurcz, who was Professor of Medicine at the University of Vienna, was at the same time a priest. See Puschmann, *Gesch. Med. Unterrichts, Leipzig 1889*, pp. 236. Vogelstein & Rieger, *Vol. II., pp. 268.* 2 the care of the patients in the "Lazaretto" there were resident there the physician Samuel Gabbai, (may the Lord preserve him!) and his father Cirocico, who died, while the son recovered. The lazarette houses were divided into three parts, to each of which one Jewish physician was appointed. “

Jacob Zahalon's description of the plague of 1656 in Italy
from *Otzar he Chayim* *The Treasure of Life ..*

- "In 5416 (1656) in the month of June, a disease called *morbilli* broke out among the children; most of them died. Afterwards adults became ill with blotches on the skin called petechiae, and in three days they were dead.
- It appeared three months earlier among the Gentiles than among the Jews; it also came to an end earlier among the Gentiles. The Jews were forbidden to leave the Ghetto and enter the city, as was their custom. Two officers were sent to the Ghetto to prepare a suitable place for a "Lazaretto," where the sick could be placed so that they were separated from the healthy and thus prevent the spread of the epidemic.

To Flee or Not to Flee – Trust in HaShem?

- Not remaining in a “dangerous place”—cf. R. Solomon ibn Simon Duran d. 1467 who deals with the question of fate and whether one should simply stay since one’s name has either been written in the Book of Life or NOT...based on classic Rabbinic thought
- If you have had the disease and survived – no need to flee
- Drinking a potion from the “cup of a Unicorn” – KOS Elikorno (Rabbi Moses)Trani Responsa 1. No.182.
- (Cf. Martin Luther's essay on whether to flee a plague or stay and help the sick)
- Moshe ben Haim Eisenstadt – 17th century – sympathetic to those who flee the plague of Prague 1665

Jacob Zahalon's description of the plague of 1656 in Italy from *Otzar he Chayim – the Treasure of Life*

- "Blessed be the Lord who did kindness to me and preserved me and saved me in order to carry out His will. I raise the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. Praises be given to the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.
- "At that time it occurred to me that a certain patient whose name was Shabbatai Cohen (of blessed memory) became ill with fever. He had a swelling in the groin and I did not consider it a bubo. When he died I stated that he did not die of the plague, but the Gentile physician said that he died of the plague because he saw the swelling in the groin, which I regarded as a hernia of the intestines.
- There was therefore great difference of opinion as to the closing up of the house, as was done when one died of the disease. They brought the body to the Gentile physician, opened it, and found that it was as I had said and not a bubo, as the Gentile physician had maintained, and I was saved.

- **Jacob Zahalon's description of the plague of 1656 – continued....**
- Blessed be He who redeems and saves! "This was the procedure. The Jewish physician visited the sick and if he saw any signs of the disease, a black "carbuncle" or a hubo in the groin with fever or other serious symptoms, especially if the tongue was white as snow, he would call the Gentile physician to examine the patient; the latter would order that they take the patient and his bed to the lazarette, to Samuel Gabbai,- or the patient might remain home and be treated there.
- "When the physician visited the sick it was customary that he take in his hand a large torch of tar, burning it night and day to purify the air for his protection, *and in his mouth he had theriac. With God's help, it also aided me greatly that on my left arm I placed a seton, from which there flowed much blood and bad pus.
- "In the nine months during which this epidemic lasted there died, both young and old, about 800; among them was the young scholar, expert in the science of surgery, Isaac Zahalon, my father's brother's son of blessed memory. "They brought the dead to the river in small boats and carried the bodies to the cemetery outside the city to a place called Piano dei divisori. "Since the people were not able to go to synagogue, on Sabbath Toledoth (Kislev 2, 5417) I, Jacob Zahalon, preached in Catalana street, from the window in the corner house of David Gatigno, to the people (may God preserve them!) standing iii the street.

Jacob Zahalon's description of the plague of 1656 in Italy from *Otzar he Chayim* (continued)

- “Furthermore, this book will be of benefit to the poor who are unable to pay the fees of a physician. He will easily learn the treatment of his disease in this book. . . I shall go into detail concerning the more common diseases and I shall be brief in regard to others.”
- "I shall append a practical case of each disease from my own practice or that of one of my colleagues explaining how the patient was cured. It inspires the invalid with hope that someone else was afflicted with the same disease and was cured."
- ... In the introduction to the *Ozar ha-Hayyim*, Zahalon discusses the religious question whether it is permissible and proper to treat a sick person with medicine. He refers to the authority of Maimonides who taught that "when a man is hungry and partakes of food for the purpose of curing himself of hunger" it does not indicate that he thereby loses faith and no longer places confidence in his God. . . .

Christian Response --The Red Cross and St. Roche – patron saint to help with Plagues

- Red Cross used by English authorities to identify a house that had plague – mid 17th century
- St. Roche born with with the symbol of the Red Cross on his breast
- A lifetime of service and helping the poor and sick



Plague of Prague 1665

Moshe ben Hayim Eisenstadt provides a detailed account of awful situation in an early Yiddish letter – Ayn Naye Klaglied (Oxford . Opp. 8, 643) manuscript

Plague emerged “suddenly” and killed many prominent Rabbis and teachers and he describes fighting and the horrible situation of the dead piling up unburied

“I must continue and begin by saying what was done about the burial of the dead. To our misfortune, an order was given by the royal authorities which we had to follow scrupulously.

When someone would die, he or she could not be buried in the nearest cemetery but had to be driven to the lazar house. Who could have looked upon such misery and unhappiness? The Kahal ordered three large wagons.

Each wagon would carry about twenty bodies and every night they passed three times in front of the door . There the dead lay many days, until two weeks were up, and then one could no longer drive them there by cart.

When someone would die, two bearers of the dead were needed to carry him back to the cemetery, but there he was still no interred; no internment was permitted before the wagons had gone out.

A great number of the dead were transferred from one cemetery to another -----

Eisenstadt on the Plague of Prague (cont.)

- Like me, people were busy, for they were gathering (cadavers) in this place. In three nights 750 cadavers were transported to the lazar house.
- As many as fifty corpse carriers were hired. Let such a calamity never befall us again! Who can write or tell of such misfortune?
- Each time two bearers of the dead carried a stretcher
-The Sabbath and holidays were disrupted (by the transporting of the dead) ...

We also had to dig graves day and night, on the sabbath and on holidays, as well as transport the dead by wagon. The number of dead multiplied so that nothing frightens me but the telling of it.

...Several more paragraphs on the digging of graves, sewing of shrouds, people building hundreds of coffins, and an entire page on the corpses, limbs and disintegration of bodies at the lazar houses....

Carts full of dead to bury.



Physician Masks

Extra protection against "Miasma" made these long beaked masks popular in the 16th century...and doctors had canes which enabled them to examine patients at a distance.

Protective gear was worn...special gowns..gloves



Materia Magica against Plagues – writings and rituals

The Sword of Moses (*Harbe de Moshe*) fighting the Plague

- After the Amidah is recited 3x God is asked to heal the disease while the practitioner utilizes the Sword. One encourages Him to bind the heavenly princes to the adjurer and to carry out all his desires; the other asks for his protection, lest the adjurer be swept away by fire (apparently cast upon him by the adjured angels). The adjuration of the thirteen archangels is the core and the climax of the entire rite. The adjurer turns to them by name, one by one, according to their status (lowest to highest), and adjures them to surrender to him.
- The actual result of their surrender is the transmission into his hands (as in the case of Moses) of the power to control the “sword” and to use it. The adjuration of the princes clearly rests, both ideologically and textually, on the narrative that begins the book.