



VACCINES IN HALACHAH

Vol. 2

Inoculation was common practice in a variety of forms for the better part of three centuries. In the 1700s, a predecessor of modern-day vaccines called variolation was employed, where they scratched pieces of smallpox infection into the healthy arm of uninfected people. There is even evidence of this practice from India and China as far back as the 1600s. Variolation slowly became unpopular as evidence of its fatal risks emerged.

In 1774, an 'improved' method began to develop where they would rub cowpox matter into an open wound, hoping to create immunity to the smallpox virus. In 1796, Edward Jenner coined the term "vaccine" after the latin word for cow, *vacca*.

In the 1880s and 1890s, the first injected vaccines were developed for rabies, cholera, and typhoid. A few more vaccines were created in the early 1900s, including the polio vaccine. In 1986, when Congress gave vaccine companies immunity from lawsuits against injury and death, the number of vaccines on the schedule increased exponentially.

A lot has changed in 300 years. As we review the Halachic analysis from Poskim of previous generations, it is critically important to take into account the scientific reality and perception of the time. If we understand the underlying principle of each ruling, we can properly apply the guidelines even while many factual variables evolve over time.

ספר הברית [מאמר יז]

R' Pinchas Eliyahu Hurwitz of Vilna (1765-1821) published the first edition of ספר הברית in 1797, with an expanded edition in 1801. He describes inoculation in the 1700s, where they would insert pieces of smallpox infection into the arms of healthy children. But, as noted above, the risks of the procedure were becoming apparent. His perspective is translated as follows: *In most cases*

the treatment helps, but it does not always work, often causing severe infection, sometimes resulting in death. Therefore, the חכמי ישראל are not willing to permit inoculation for children כדי שלא להכניס את בניהם בספק נפשות לכתחילה. The record is clear: the very first version of "vaccines" are אסור according to the Psak of "חכמי ישראל" of the time.

The ספר הברית goes on for several pages to discuss the next version of vaccines, derived from cowpox. In pertinent part, he says: *In recent years, we have a new medical treatment, בחסד עליון, that offers lifelong protection from smallpox. To date, tens of thousands of people were successfully vaccinated without a single death.* Since the חכמי ישראל observed that it has proven to be extremely safe and effective, and it is used every day around the world **without a single person being injured by it**, – כי הוא דבר שאינו מזיק לעולם, עמדו גם זקני ישראל, ותופסי התורה בדור הזה והתירו זאת לכל ישראל על פי **it never causes a single injury**, *אמרו גם זקני ישראל, ותופסי התורה בדור הזה והתירו זאת לכל ישראל על פי Not only do the זקני ישראל say it is permissible, many of them . . . announce publicly that it is a strict obligation for all adults and their children to get it, since it provides lifelong immunity from smallpox which is a very dangerous disease.*

תפארת ישראל [יומא פרק ח משנה ז]

R' Yisrael Lifschitz (1782-1860) published his famous commentary on Mishnah in the year 1843. He offers a brief description of the vaccine followed by his ruling. It is translated as follows: *It appears to me that we can derive a leniency to allow the use of the smallpox vaccine. Even though the inoculation kills one person out of every thousand recipients, since the natural disease is even more dangerous, it is permissible to put oneself in danger to avoid the greater danger.*

He then offers an interesting thesis proving his point, which we will discuss בעז"ה in the future. But we first must address the glaring contrast between the ruling in his opening statement, and the ruling of ספר הברית. In 1801, the ספר הברית portrayed the common medical perception of the smallpox vaccine as being perfectly safe with zero recorded

side effects or casualties. It therefore makes sense that every Posek of the time ruled it was at least permissible, with many viewing it as obligatory. 42 years later, however, תפארת ישראל stated as a matter of common knowledge that there was one fatality out of every 1,000 people who took the vaccine. Based on this, it required a complex dissertation to permit its use. It certainly was not obligatory in anyone's view in 1843.

Leicester, England

Another shift in reality took place 50 years later. Not only was the smallpox vaccine killing people, new data showed you had a better chance of surviving without it. There are numerous recorded data points demonstrating this fact. One of the most notable examples is the town of Leicester. In 1877, the newly elected government of the town opposed the compulsory vaccination laws of England. Many people predicted they would suffer the consequences. But in the end, their refusal to vaccinate was a life saver. In the 1893 smallpox outbreak, the death rate in a nearby vaccinated town was recorded 32 times greater than that of Leicester. Other towns likewise recorded a much higher rate of death compared to Leicester.

The תפארת ישראל ruled that the smallpox vaccine is permissible based on his understanding in 1843, that although there was a risk of dying from the vaccine, the risk of dying from smallpox was much greater. Had he been aware that the opposite was true, he would not have permitted its use. The same can be said with the ספר הברית. The ruling in 1801 obligating its use was only based on the assumption that the vaccine was 100% safe.

Follow the Science

This brings us to an important question: according to the most recent data in the final decades of the smallpox vaccine, the world would have been a better place without it. But many doctors will tell you today with full confidence that the smallpox vaccine was the greatest achievement in medical history. We find a similar paradigm in recent years.

Many doctors believe the Covid vaccine saved lives. But if you look at the actual data comparing country to country and state to state, the more they vaccinated, the more they died. Who is correct? Should we trust what the experts are telling us, or should we trust what the data is telling us?

The answer is simple: one group of experts are saying, we spent months researching the history and gathering data. We conclude that the smallpox vaccine, as well as the Covid vaccine, caused more harm than good. If you ask to see their data, they will gladly share it with you. In contrast, the other group of experts are saying, we didn't do any research, but we were told in medical school that the smallpox vaccine saved lives. And we were told by CDC that the Covid vaccine saved lives. If you ask to see the data in support of their claim, they will not show it to you because it does not exist.

Imagine a DNA expert testifying in a murder trial: "I never tested the blood samples or looked at the DNA, but the defendant seems like a nice guy and I don't think he committed the murder". If an expert witness admits he never looked at the relevant data, it does not qualify as an "expert opinion", especially in דרישה וחקירה דיני נפשות which require

The same is true regarding childhood vaccines, including HepB which we discussed in Vol 1. Those who claim vaccines are safe, admit not a single childhood vaccine has been through a saline placebo-controlled safety study. And they refuse to do a retrospective study comparing the health outcome of children who were fully vaccinated vs children who were never vaccinated. Parroting "vaccines are safe" with no tangible data to back it up does not qualify as an expert opinion. Many experts, however, conducted extensive research and data analysis, concluding that the childhood vaccine schedule is toxic and deadly. Science is constantly evolving, and if we follow a few simple guidelines, we can choose the right side of history 100 years before everyone else. ובחרת בחיים

In Volume 3, we will בעז"ה discuss the fascinating opinion of Rav Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל. Stay tuned.