



THE BLOGS

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The Coronavirus Hysteria and the Gods of Science



Hysteria has hit. I went to the store, and the shelves were cleared of toilet paper. Hand sanitizers were long gone, even Clorox has vanished from the shelves. God, what should I do? The world is ending...

The Coronavirus has arrived with a reported death in a nearby senior community of a man who lived on a respirator with congestive heart disease.

The world is facing a pandemic, a terror parallel only to the Black Death. The Jews are poisoning the wells. Not exactly. The Black Death, the Bubonic plague brought death to 80% of the untreated. The Coronavirus brings death to about 2% of

the severely compromised. The numbers may be slightly higher, but then they could be slightly lower. The Gods of Science and Statistics really do not know. There is truth, and there is statistics...

Is it possible that the world has gone over the deep end about the newest Coronavirus? Has the media and the obvious limits of medical science created hysteria? Is there a political motivation that has gotten out of control?

The new form of Coronavirus is a new form. Our Gods of science were unable to anticipate it. They are unable to respond. Wash your hands. Do not sneeze, cough or breathe the same air as anyone sneezing, coughing or has a runny nose. The Gods of Science have no cure for viruses.

We have turned to the good, pragmatic, time tested, medical practice, a very medieval practice, of building walls, barring the gates, keeping the lepers out of our cities. Is it possible that our fear is because the Gods of Science have feet made of clay? And, we are afraid?

When we know so little about something, we fear it, especially if the "it" can cause death from out of nowhere. The Gods of Science that protect us have failed. The Gods of Science are rushing, pell-mell. Our media is abetting, helping, nurturing, fertilizing, encouraging hysteria, and panic.

Political and social leaders do what they do best, since they know nothing more than what the media has told them. Their best advice is hide in place under the desk and wash your hands. What else are they supposed to do and not look incompetent? Maybe, they can blame Trump for the Coronavirus?

The communicability of Coronavirus is real, but how real? The who, the how, the what and the why one person get the death warrant of Coronavirus on top of their other compromising health considerations, is unknown. The health compromised, by far, very far, the seniors of our society are at risk. But...strange...should not the most vulnerable of our society also be at risk, our children. Why is the infection and the death rate to our defenseless children so low? Science has no idea, at least not yet.

So, what can society do? Probably, the most reasonable thing, build the walls and lock the gates. We hope we are keeping the healthy in and the sick out. The Gods of Science will find a vaccine, a cure, or maybe not. 94% of those who have had the Coronavirus are cured or will be cured on their own. The remaining 6%, that is the problem. Some statistics suggest 2% will die. Other statistics suggest 3.4% will die. The remaining 4%, or 2.4%, after being very sick, perhaps needing hospital care, will also survive. We just don't know, yet. The media panics, the Gods of Science panic, we panic.

The Center for Disease Control stats reports 26,000,000 Americans a year get the flu. 12,000-60,000 a year die from flu or flu-related issues, just in the U.S. No one is hysterical about the annual worldwide flu Holocaust.

The Coronavirus panic exacerbated by the ignorance and inability of the Gods of Science to respond is causing extraordinary self-inflicted economic disasters. The psychological impact of panic is causing long term damage. Who in their right mind will get on a cruise ship again? Who will fly, or who, even crazier, will want to sit 12 hours on an airplane to Israel ever again? How badly will Israel have damaged itself by cutting off travel to or out of Israel?

The Chinese claim to have turned the corner on controlling Coronavirus. Are we ingrained to believe that the Chinese are lying? Seniors cross the street when they see a Chinese walking towards them. They do not frequent Chinese restaurants. Chung King Chinese noodles sit on grocery shelves unclaimed. Any item manufactured in China has become suspect...

It is reasonable to be medieval about controlling a new disease when we are ignorant, our leadership is ignorant, and our Gods of Science are even more ignorant. The medieval answer has worked before and may work again. The Virus may actually run its course and die out on its own.

It is not unreasonable to over-react to Coronavirus when we are ignorant. It is not unreasonable to be medieval with our medical response. It is only reasonable until we begin to understand what it is we are dealing with. Not so long ago, we responded identically to AIDS. Or, turn off your cell phone when landing, as a hysterical woman next to me screamed to the man across the aisle. "I don't want to die." The plane landed safely. No one is hysterical of cell phones in airplanes today. We have a button to push on our set up screen so we can continue to play video games while we fly.

Wash your hands.

A new irrational panic has hit the financial markets today. The Saudis and the Russians have declared an oil price war. The world stock markets, weakened by the Coronavirus panic are insanely tanking. For the average Joe, if it cost him \$30 to fill his gas tank on Friday and it costs \$20 today for the same thing...should he be panicking?

Fear and greed are powerful motivators of irrationality.

Step back, take a breath. Be cautious. Be reasonable. Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. Airplanes are much safer than being in a nursing home or a hospital. Don't know about cruise ships...they can sink...

But then again, I could be wrong...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jerry is the president and founder of the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation, www.JASHP.org. He is the son of Survivors of Buchenwald and Bergen Belsen. He is a former Yeshivah student and served with the IDF in the Sinai. He is the author of over 100 articles in publications ranging from the Jerusalem Post to the Prairie Connection to the San Diego Jewish World. Jerry is frequently interviewed on T.V. and Radio about the American Jewish experience. The Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation has completed projects in 39 US. States and in 5 countries. Over 7,000,000 people annually benefit from one of JASHP's projects. JASHP has completed seven projects in Israel. Five more are in development. Recently, JASHP completed the first-ever historic memorial to the Exodus in Israel, July 2017. The Exodus was known as the "Ship that Launched a Nation". December 2017, the Machal Memorial in Jerusalem to the 5,000 Jewish and non-Jewish volunteers who came to Israel when they needed her most during the War of Independence, was completed. JASHP is working on five new projects in and for Israel. We expect to have them completed in 2020.