

The Daily Reb Yisroel Salanter, ZT"L, 6/25/06

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His attitude, always to bear in mind the good of the next person, made him adopt a more lenient attitude in all matters of permitted and forbidden things, based on the principle "the power to rule leniently is to be preferred." [38]

As has been stated, R. Israel would punctiliously observe all stringencies and comply with all opinions. This applied where he himself alone was involved. Wherever others were concerned, he would always seek the ways and means to rule leniently.

This accounts for his many well-known rulings in matters pertaining to health and danger to life, "danger to life being graver than ritual prohibitions." [39] From here stemmed his audacious granting of permission to perform acts otherwise forbidden on Shabbat and to eat on Yom Kippur during the outbreak of the cholera epidemic in Vilna. [4] And from here stemmed his lenient ruling on his own conduct where others might thereby suffer hardship.

Reliable sources indicate that one of the reasons for R. Israel refusing to accept a rabbinical appointment was that he sided with the more lenient opinions in many Halachot in opposition to the prevailing stricter rulings of the other authorities, and he was unwilling to stir up objections and arguments. [41]

[38.] Betzah 2a.

[39.] Chullin 10a.

[40.] See Vol. I, Part I, Chap. 11.

[41.] See **Sha'are Zion**, *ibid.*, p. 58 for a similar opinion expressed by a famous gaon.