

2020 Culture/Corona Connection II

A pretend Hebrew lesson for the Days of Corona

All I can tell you, is that for a native English-speaker, it's a nightmare.

As we all know, it is crucial to appreciate the difference between the **number of people *infected***, versus the **number of people *tested***.

Right now, all the numbers we're being given, of those infected, are pretty irrelevant since there are so many millions who have not been tested at all. There may be millions of people infected and/or recovered from covid19 who don't even know, because they weren't tested.

I didn't mean to get into the medical statistics of it all, but I have no choice!

It is a matter of linguistic life and death...

Because listen to the Hebrew of it all:

Nivdakím – tested

Nidbakím – infected

Go on, say it out loud. (Emphasis on the final syllable.)

Not easy to differentiate without your teeth falling out, is it?

But differentiation is now an existential issue!

Add to that the fact that, when you read these two words in Hebrew, the letter for V and the letter for B are the same letter!

Nibdakím – tested - נבדקים

Nidbakím – infected - נדבקים

You understand my suffering?

I have to admit though, it's not all bad.

The word for isolation in these circumstances is *bidud* - בידוד

And to the delight of Anglo-Saxon Israelis of a certain age, this inspired a wondrous meme, that entirely alters one's approach to corona isolation:

