



### A Decree of the Gedolei Hador

10. The *pasuk* states: “*Lo sasur min hadavar asher yagidu lecha yamin u’smol, you may not turn away, neither right nor left, from whatever they tell you*” (*Devarim 17:11*). *Chazal* learn from here that a person is obligated to obey the rulings of *gedolei Yisrael* and not to do the opposite of what they say. (There is a disagreement among the *Rishonim* if this is a Biblical law or an *asmachta* that is actually a Rabbinic law.) (*Rambam, Hilchos Mamrim 1:2; Sefer Hachinuch mitzvah 496*)

When the *gedolim* and Torah leaders of the generation establish decrees and guidelines to protect people from *aveiros*, we are especially obligated to obey them. Some derive this from the *pasuk* (*Vayikra 18:30*) “*Ushemartem es mishmarti, and you shall observe My charge.*” (Others maintain that this is learned from the *pasuk* (*Devarim 27:26*) “*Arur asher lo yakim es divrei haTorah hazos, cursed is he who does not uphold the words of this Torah.*”)

This is so stringent that if someone swears to disobey such a decree of the *gedolim*, it is the same as if he swore not to obey a mitzvah of the Torah — which is considered a *shevuas shav*, an oath made in vain! — because we are obligated to obey the mitzvos of the Torah and have no other recourse. (*Mordechai, Shevuos 755; Shulchan Aruch YD 228:33 and Taz :42; Shu"t Maharam Shick YD 5; see Shu"t Be'er Moshe 3:163-165*)