

HALACHICALLY SPEAKING

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{ TOPIC }

The Mitzvah of Bikur Cholim Visiting the Sick Part 2



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The Mitzvah of Bikur Cholim - Visiting the Sick Part 2

לרפ"ש שלמה בן חנה

Visiting the Sick on *Shabbos*¹

The custom is that one is permitted to visit a sick person on *Shabbos*.² When asking for mercy for the patient (who is not in danger)³ one should say “*Shabbos* will heal you and the *refuah* should come soon.”⁴ Crying is forbidden on *Shabbos*, but words of consolation are permitted.⁵ Others add other words as well,⁶ but the custom is like the first opinion.⁷ Some find issues with going to visit a sick person

1. Regarding Yom Tov refer to Meseches Succah 41b, Betzel Hachochma 2:44. See V'ein Lamo Michshal pages 220-224, Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 217. In regard to visiting a hospital on *Shabbos* and walking in a place which has video cameras and automatic doors refer to Orchos *Shabbos* 1:teshuvos pages 513-514, Massei Choshev 1:pages 147-171 in great depth.

2. Refer to Meseches *Shabbos* 12a, Rashi “v' b'ais Hillel,” Rambam Hilchos *Shabbos* 24:5, Shulchan Aruch O.C. 287:1, Y.D. 335:6, Aruch Hashulchan O.C. 287:1, Shulchan Aruch Harav O.C. 287:1, Tzitz Eliezer 13:36, Teshuvos V'hanugos 3:97. In regard to saying *tehillim* on *Shabbos* for a sick person. See Mishnah Berurah 293:1, Bakashas B'Shabbos 1:footnote 13, Rivevos Ephraim 8:411, Teshuvos V'hanugos 3:97. One of the reasons why visiting on *Shabbos* is permitted is because it brings serenity to the sick person (Shevet Yehuda 335:6). For a detailed discussion on this topic see Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 193-215.

3. Aruch Hashulchan O.C. 287:2.

4. Meseches *Shabbos* 12a, Shulchan Aruch 6. See Meiri Meseches *Shabbos* 12a, Rambam Hilchos *Shabbos* 24:5, Tur 335, Maharsha Meseches *Shabbos* 12a, Prisha O.C. 287:3. Refer to Matamim Hachodesh page 131:32 (new). On Rosh Hashanah when making a *mi sh'be'rach* one does not have to say Yom Tov will heal since it is the day of judgement (Matei Ephraim 584:25).

5. Bais Yosef O.C. 287, Prisha 2, Magen Avraham 287 beginning, Mishnah Berurah 2.

6. Meseches *Shabbos* 12b, Tur O.C. 287, Shulchan Aruch O.C. 287:1, Levush 287:1, Elya Rabbah 3, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 193:4, Chochmas Adom 151:4, Aruch Hashulchan 9. See Bach O.C. 287, Y.D. 335, Aruch Hashulchan O.C. 287:1. Refer to Divrei Sofrim 335:34.

7. Levush O.C. 287:1, Y.D. 335:2, Shulchan Aruch Harav O.C. 287:1, Aruch Hashulchan O.C. 287:2, Lekutei Maharich 2:pages 423-424 (new), Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 14, see Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 335:6, O.C. Rama O.C. 287:1, Taz O.C. 287:1, Pri Megadim M.Z 1, Gesher Hachaim 1:3:2. Refer

איזן על להקדיף ה בעולמו אלז י אמות של הלכה בלובד... (ברכות ח)

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only on *Shabbos* if one did not visit during the week.⁸ However, the custom is if one does not go during the week because he is busy with work or other pursuits, he may go on *Shabbos* if the sick person will enjoy the visit.⁹ One who is weak-hearted and will be in pain over seeing the sick person should not visit him on *Shabbos*.¹⁰

The custom is to recite a *mi sh'be'rach* on *Shabbos* for sick people.¹¹ One who visits a sick person on *Shabbos* and does not ask for mercy has not fulfilled the *mitzvah* properly, just as during the week.¹²

There are groups of people who go on *Shabbos* together to visit different people in the hospital. However, some *poskim* maintain that this should be avoided. Large groups create a lot of noise and the sick person may not be able to get what he needs.¹³

Which Sickness / Conditions do not Get Visitors

When visiting, one should be careful not to be a burden to the patient.¹⁴ Sometimes it is hard for one to converse, but he will strain himself to talk. In addition, the sick person may have to go to the bathroom and is embarrassed if

to Bikur Choim B'halacha U'bagadah page 97:footnote 14 and page 126:13 who quotes the opinion of Harav Chaim Kanievsky Shlita who says you can say whichever *nusach* you wish of the two.

8. Magen Avraham O.C. 287 beginning, Elya Rabbah 1, Shulchan Aruch Harav 3, Mishnah Berurah 1, Aruch Hashulchan 1, Kaf Hachaim 1.

9. Sharei Teshuva O.C. 287:1, Aruch Hashulchan 1, Kaf Hachaim O.C. 287:6. Refer to Biur Halacha 287 "v'chein."

10. Sharei Teshuva ibid. Refer to Tzitz Eliezer 13:36 who argues.

11. Tzitz Eliezer 13:36. Refer to Ashrei Haish Y.D. 2:page 256:5.Regarding the custom to recite a *mi sh'be'rach* on *Shabbos* for a sick person who is not in danger see Magen Avraham O.C. 288:14, Mishnah Berurah 28, Aruch Hashulchan 17.

12. Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 5:14.

13. Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 3.

14. Refer to Leket Yosher Y.D. page 83.

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people are there. One has to use judgment regarding this,¹⁵ and should only visit during normal visiting hours.¹⁶

One should not visit someone who suffers from the following: stomach ailments (because he may have to go to the bathroom)¹⁷ eye disease, headaches, or any sickness which makes it hard to talk,¹⁸ or if the visit is hard for him¹⁹ (it is difficult for the patient to interact with people).²⁰ One should not enter unannounced; rather, he should stand outside and ask how he is doing and if he needs anything. When one witnesses his suffering, he should *daven* for mercy.²¹

Enemies

There is a discussion in the *poskim* if one should visit someone whom he hates. One opinion in the *Rama*²² is that he should visit him, while most *poskim* say that this should be avoided, since it looks like he is gloating over his enemy's suffering.²³ The *Aruch Hashulchan*²⁴ says that if the sick person requests the visit, then he should go since this will bring peace between them.

Visiting a Non-Jew

May one visit a non-Jewish co-worker or neighbor?

15. These are the words of the *Aruch Hashulchan* 4.

16. *Leket Yosher* Y.D. page 83.

17. *Meseches Nedarim* 41a, Ran "ein," meshum," *Chochmas Adom* 151:6, *Aruch Hashulchan* 4.

18. *Meseches Nedarim* 41a, Tur 335, *Shulchan Aruch* 6, *Levush* 8, *Chochmas Adom* 151:6, *Aruch Hashulchan* 4.

19. *Meseches Nedarim* 41a, *Rambam Hilchos Avel* 14:5.

20. *Bikur Cholim B'halacha U'bagadah* page 80:footnote 1.

21. *Shulchan Aruch* 8.

22. *Rama* Y.D. 335:2.

23. *Rama* *ibid*, *Levush* 2, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 193:1, *Chochmas Adom* 151:1, see *Shach* 2. Refer to *Tzitz Eliezer* 5:Ramat Rochel 9. See *Ahavas Chesed* 1:4, *Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim* pages 278-282.

24. 335:6.

איך ללמוד ולהתנהגות עם חולה? (פרק 10) ... אמות של הלכה בלבד



One can visit a sick non-Jew in order to keep the peace.²⁵
This is true even if one makes a special trip just to visit him.²⁶

The *halachos* that apply to a visit to a Jew do not apply to a non-Jew. Therefore, one can visit a non-Jew at all hours of the day, sit on a higher bench than the sick person (see part 1), and does not need to pray for him.²⁷

Sending a Messenger

There is a discussion in the *poskim* if one is allowed to make a messenger for *bikur cholim*, if he cannot visit personally. There are those who maintain that this should not be done.²⁸

Calling / Writing or Emailing a Sick Person

If one cannot visit personally, is writing or emailing a sick person is enough to fulfill the *mitzvah*?

The consensus of the *poskim* is that if one has no other option then these forms of communication are acceptable. However, this is not the ideal *mitzvah*²⁹ for a number of reasons. First, although it is possible to *daven* for a sick

25. Meseches Gittin 61a, Tur 335, Shulchan Aruch 9, Levush 9, Chochmas Adom 151:6, Aruch Hashulchan 11. For an explanation on this refer to Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 375. One is permitted to *daven* for a sick non-Jew to get better as well (Refer to Chaim B'Yad 33, Bais Shearim Y.D. 229, Yechaveh Daas 6:60).

26. Rambam Hilchos Avel 14:12, Prisha 16, Shach 8, Levush 9, Gra, Shevet Yehuda 335:9, see Rashi Meseches Gittin ibid "im," Rambam Hilchos Melachim 10:12. Refer to Bach Y.D. 151:1.

27. Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 376.

28. Refer to Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:223, Tzitz Eliezer 17:6:6.

29. Refer to Chelkes Yaakov Y.D. 188, Mahari Shteiff 294, Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:223, O.C. 4:40:11, Be'er Moshe 2:104, Yechaveh Daas 3:83, Yalkut Yosef 7:page 26, Chai HaLevi 2:19, Beer Sarim 2:24, Minchas Yitzchok 2:84, Miyum Hahalacha 2:25, 4:52, Bishivili Haparsha 1:pages 283-284, Ashrei Haish Y.D. 2:page 256:8, Derech Sicha 1:page 66, Minchas Shlomo 2:82:9, Chuko Mamtakim 1:page 68, Oleinu L'sha'be'ach 2:pages 629-630, opinion of Harav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita quoted in Bikur Cholim B'halacha U'bagadah page 41:footnote 33, and page 125:9, opinion of Harav Elyashiv zt"l quoted in Bikur Cholim B'halacha U'bagadah pages 119-120, Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 220-229 in great depth. See ibid:page 137:7 quoting the opinion of Harav Zilberstein Shlita. Refer to Minchas Shmuel Y.D. pages 298-299.

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person even if he is not present,³⁰ it is not possible to ensure that his needs are provided for.³¹ In addition, the aspect of removing part of the illness cannot be accomplished in this way. The facet of making him happy can be accomplished through a call letter or email.³² Others prove from the fact that *Hashem* actually went to visit *Avraham* and did not simply call out to him that calling a sick person is not valid.³³ The same discussion applies to videotaping a message for the patient.³⁴

In brief, one can use indirect forms of communication when an actual visit is impractical, especially when the sick person does not want visitors.³⁵

Sleeping Over in a Hospital

Many people volunteer to sleep over in hospitals. This was done in the days of the *Chofetz Chaim zt"l* as well, who said³⁶ (paraphrased), "It is a very desirable act that people sleep over next to a sick person at night to see if he or she needs anything. This is great for many reasons. First, because the family was there during the day and they have no strength to stay longer. Second, in ensure the members of the household do not get sick themselves by working day and night for the sick person. Third, when the sick person sees that people are worried about him and working to get him well, it gives him strength. Praiseworthy are such acts of kindness."

30. Refer to Yechaveh Daas 3:83.

31. Even though in a hospital his needs are taken care of but maybe he requires other needs (Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 8:6).

32. Refer to Beer Sarim 2:24:3.

33. Shearim Metzuyanim B'halacha 193:1.

34. Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita. Refer to Minchas Yitzchok 2:84:10.

35. Refer to Teshuvos Ivrei (Kisvei Harav Hagoan Rav Henkin zt"l) pages 87-88:1.

36. Ahavas Chesed 3:3:pages 365-366 in footnote. Refer to Aruch Hashulchan 3. See Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 4.

איך ללמוד ולהלכה בלימודים של אמונת של הלכה בלימודים (ברכות ח)



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Claiming to be Exempt From the *Mitzvah*

Some people claim, “Why do I have to go visit a sick person? All his needs are taken care of by the hospital staff and there is no need for me to go.” This argument is false for a number of reasons. First, even with a medical staff, the patient frequently needs help for a trip to the bathroom or needs to talk to a doctor when the rest of the staff is busy with other patients. Second, one can still cheer him up. In addition, one has to *daven* for the sick person. Finally, hospital meals are notoriously skimpy and tasteless, and many patients appreciate some good home-cooked food.³⁷

Bikur Cholim—Hospitality³⁸

Based on the ideas discussed in this issue, any time one knows of a sick person he should go visit to *daven* for him and ensure that he has everything he needs. This is not always practical, and in many hospitals across the country there are *bikur cholim* rooms set up with *kosher* food and anything else that a sick person might need. One feels so good knowing that anything a sick person needs can be obtained by having a visitor go to one of these rooms. In addition, volunteers go from room to room asking how one is feeling etc, and makes the sick person feel so good knowing that people care for him. How praiseworthy are these acts of kindness.³⁹

In order to have a share in visiting many sick people, one should support a *bikur cholim* organization. They act as our

37. Ikorei D'chaya pages 84-85, see Tzohar 5:pages 345-348.

38. For the history regarding *bikur cholim* see Bikur Cholim B'halacha U'bagadah pages 309-324 in great depth.

39. Ahavas Chesed 3:3:page 265. Refer to Pela Yoetz Choleh pages 22-223, Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 6, 5:Ramat Rochel 4.

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messengers to perform the *mitzvah* with people whom we would not normally visit.⁴⁰

Bikur Cholim* or *Nichum Aveilim

One who has to choose between *bikur cholim* or *nichum aveilim* should do *nichumaveilim* since that is doing kindness to the living and the deceased.⁴¹ One who knows that he will bring a sick person any benefit when visiting should go visit him instead of being *menachem* an *Avel*.⁴² In addition, all agree that if the sick person is in danger or needs help then of course one should go to visit the sick person.⁴³

***Kohen* Visiting a Sick Person in a Hospital**

A *kohen* is forbidden to touch a dead person or a limb removed from a live or dead person (Jew or non-Jew)⁴⁴ or to be under the same roof as a body of a Jew.⁴⁵ A *kohen* may visit a relative in the hospital if there is a need for it. The fact that there are dead bodies is not a concern in *chutz la'aretz* since most hospitals have non-Jews in them. If one knows that a deceased Jew is in the hospital, then there may be an issue with a *kohen* going into a hospital.⁴⁶ In *Eretz Yisroel*,

40. Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 6.

41. Kol Bo 112, Rambam Hilchos Avel 14:7, Darchei Moshe 3, Rama 10, Levush 10,Shach 11, Chochmas Adom 151:9, Aruch Hashulchan 12. Refer to Ohr Someach on Rambam ibid. Also refer to Radvaz on Rambam ibid who says the opposite as the opinion of the Rambam. Refer to Benesivi Chesed V'emes 5749:pages 36-38 on the topic of *bikur cholim* and *nichum aveilim*. On Yom Tov *bikur cholim* is before *nichum aveilim* (Ohr Someach Hilchos Avel 4:7). Refer to Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 216-217 if one has a *mitzvah* of making a *chossan* and *kallah* happy or to visit the sick which one should he do.

42. Aruch Hashulchan 12.

43. Igros Moshe O.C. 4:40:11, Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 19, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 2:592.

44. Refer to Rambam Hilchos Tumas Meis 1:12.

45. Rambam Hilchos Avel 3:1, Tumas Meis 1:1, 2:3.

46. Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:166. Refer to Teshuvos Ivrei (Kisvei Harav Hagoan Rav Henkin zt"l) pages 88-89:1. See Har Tzvi Y.D. 283, Shevet HaLevi 5:184, Minchas Shlomo 2-3:100:8, Shearim Metzuyanim B'halacha 202:5. See Nishmas Avraham (English) Y.D. pages 258-259 in depth. Refer

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where most of the population is Jewish, a *kohen* should not enter a hospital unless it is certain that he will not be under the same roof as a Jewish body.⁴⁷

Proper Behavior in a Hospital – With The Patient – Practical Advice⁴⁸

Even before going to the hospital one should make sure that the sick person wants visitors. He may be in pain or uncomfortable.⁴⁹ Once you have clarified that the patient wants visitors, make sure to visit during regular visiting hours in order to avoid any possible *chilul Hashem*.

One should offer to bring some CD's or newspapers for the sick person to read.

Hospital patients routinely share a room with other patients. In order to avoid a *chilul Hashem*, one should ensure not to disturb the other patients. Furthermore, one should not take over the room by taking all the chairs in the room to sit around the patient.⁵⁰

In addition, one should not enter when the doctors are tending to the patient or while he is sleeping.⁵¹ One should not enter the sick person's room suddenly without knocking.⁵² The *Gemorah*⁵³ says that *Hashem* hates it when someone walks into his own home or his friend's home suddenly.

to Teshuras Shai 559.

47. Refer to Melamed L'hoyel 2:136, Shevet HaLevi 2:Y.D. 205. Refer to V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 234-235, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:878.

48. For great practical advice on this entire topic see Visiting the Sick by Rabbi Aaron Glatt MD (Artscroll) pages 30-40.

49. Visiting the Sick page 30 (Glatt).

50. Visiting the Sick page 34 (Glatt).

51. Mishpatei Hatorah 1:88, V'ein Lamo Michshal 4:page 176, 6:page 217.

52. Yikorei D'Chaya page 42, Pnei Boruch – Bikur Cholim K'hilchoso 1:34.

53. Meseches Niddah 16b.

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One should not snoop around other rooms in the hospital. It is important to respect the privacy of other patients.

Sick Person Standing for Respectable Guest

A sick person does not have to stand for respectable guests who may visit.⁵⁴ The *Levush*⁵⁵ explains that he is focused on his own pain. Others explain that this would not be a sign of respect.⁵⁶ If the sick person does stand, the visitor should not say “*shev*” (sit),⁵⁷ as this might also mean that he should remain with his illness.⁵⁸ This gives an opening to the *sotton*.⁵⁹ One should say, “Do not bother, sit.”⁶⁰

Contagious Disease

There is a discussion in the *poskim* if one is required to visit a sick person who has a contagious (non-deadly) disease.⁶¹ Many say that there is no difference and the *mitzvah* still exists.⁶² However, the custom seems to be that one should avoid visiting if he will get sick as well. Rather, one should stand at a distance or remain outside and

54. Meseches Moed Kotton 27b, Tosfas “lekol,” Rambam Hilchos Avel 13:5, Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 376:2, Shevus Yaakov 1:26, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 193:1, Aruch Hashulchan Y.D. 376:4. See Kitzur 207:2. Refer to Yabea Omer Y.D. 3:27. Some question why this is not brought down in the Tur, or Shulchan Aruch and why the Rama brought it in *hilchos Avel* and not in the section which discusses *bikur cholim* (Shiurei Beracha Y.D. 376, Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 383-384). On this entire topic see Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 383-394 in great depth.

55. 376:1. Refer to Yabea Omer Y.D. 3:27.

56. Shevus Yaakov 1:26.

57. Shulchan Aruch 376:2, see Pela Yoetz Dibur page 134. Refer to V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:page 274 how Hashem was able to tell Avraham “shev.” See Sifsei Chachamim Bereishis 18:1.

58. Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 376:2.

59. Rama Y.D. 376:2.

60. Pela Yoetz Dibur page 134.

61. Sdei Chemed klalim bais 116. Refer to Asusa pages 391-394.

62. Refer to Teshuvos Rama 20, Divrei Yatziv C.M. 79:36, Ze Hashulchan 335:1. See Rama Y.D. 116:5, Beer Moshe (Yerushalimski) kuntres Binyan Yerushalayim 29:pages 131b-132.

inquire about his welfare.⁶³ If the disease is only transmitted through direct contact, then one should go and be careful not to touch the sick person.

If the visitor himself is unwell, then he should not go to perform the *mitzvah* of *bikur cholim* in person.⁶⁴ Besides the obvious danger of infecting the patient with another disease, the visitor himself will often be exposed to an infectious disease. In this situation, one should content himself with a phone call.⁶⁵

There is a discussion in the *poskim* if a doctor has to treat a patient if he himself might be exposed to a dangerous disease.⁶⁶

Groups Making Sick People Happy

It has become common for people to come to cheer up sick people. This is done by dancing and singing⁶⁷ in front of them, saying jokes, and other forms of entertainment. This is a great benefit for the sick people.⁶⁸ However, in order to fulfill the *mitzvah* properly one should *daven* for them as well.

Making Sure People Visit

It can happen that many people come to visit at the same time, while the patient is alone for many lonely hours during the day. If patient agrees, there should be a rotation

63. Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, Shevet HaLevi 8:251:5, Pnei Boruch – Bikur Cholim K'eihilchoso 1:16, Daas Torah 335:5, Kinyan Torah 4:116:8. Refer to Bikur Cholim B'halacha U'bagadah page 105:footnote 18 quoting the opinion of Harav Korelitz Shlita and page 128:18 quoting the opinion of Harav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita.

64. Visiting the Sick page 23 (Glatt).

65. Asusa page 394.

66. Tzitz Eliezer 9:17:kuntres refuah B'Shabbos 5. Refer to Mishnah Berurah O.C. 329:19, Shevet HaLevi 8:251:7. See Divrei Yatziv C.M 79:11.

67. Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 272.

68. V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:page 220. Refer to Meseches Succah 53a.

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so that he is not lonely.⁶⁹ In addition, some patients are in remote locations, and one should make sure to visit.⁷⁰

Washing Hands Upon Exiting a Hospital

It is preferable to wash one's hands after leaving the hospital, since the *tuma* of deceased people spread. However, one can argue that each room is a separate unit and *netiyas yadayim* is not necessary. There certainly is no *issur* if one does not wash.⁷¹ Others say that there is no need to wash, and the custom is to be lenient.⁷²

Davening for Oneself

The *Medrash*⁷³ says that the best thing is when a sick person *davens* for himself. Some explain that he *davens* with humility.⁷⁴ The *Gemorah*⁷⁵ says even if a sharp sword is on one's throat he should not refrain from *davening*.⁷⁶ One should only *daven* for himself if he has the proper frame of mind.⁷⁷

Chazzan Davening for a Sick Person

If a member of the *shul* is not well, the *chazzan* should have him in mind in the *beracha* of *refaeinu*. Although a

69. V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 220-221.

70. Pnei Boruch – Bikur Cholim K'hilchoso 1:11.

71. V'Yan Yosef O.C. 3, Shevet Hakehusi 5:37, Mishnah Halachos 6:207.

72. Opinion of Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

73. Bereishis Rabbah 53:14, Rashi on Bereishis 21:17, Nefesh Hachaim 2:11. Refer to Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 245-263 in great depth, V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 254-256. See Meseches Berochos 5b which implies the opposite, but see Gur Aryeh 21:17. Chiskunei Bereishis 21:17, Sifsei Chachamim Bereishis 21:17, Maharsha Eruvin 29b "u'bikshu." Refer to Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 247, V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 254-256.

74. Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 246.

75. Berochos 10a.

76. In regard to telling a sick person about the severity of his sickness see Miyum Hahahalcha 2:26, Betzel Hachochma 2:55, V'ein Lumo Michshal 6:pages 268-270.

77. Chiskunei Bereishis 21:17, Sifsei Chachamim Bereishis 21:17.

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sick person should *daven* for himself, many times it is not practical. Since the *chazan* is a *shliach* of the *tzibur*, it is like the sick person is *davening* for himself.⁷⁸

Davening for a Sick Person

The *Gemorah*⁷⁹ says, “One who can *daven* for a sick person and does not is called a sinner.”⁸⁰ Some limit this to a *tzadik* who knows that his *tefillos* will be answered.⁸¹ One who *davens* for a sick person has fulfilled the *mitzvah* of *v’ohavtal’reiacha kamocha*.⁸² When *davening* for a sick person, one should imagine that he has the same sickness, as this will enhance his *kavana*.⁸³ It is best to *daven* in the presence of the patient, but one may stand to the side so that the patient does not become worried about the severity of his condition.⁸⁴ One should not *daven* for a supernatural recovery (i.e. if the doctors already gave up hope). However, one should say it should be good for the sick person and his family.⁸⁵

When one *davens* in the presence of the patient⁸⁶ he does not have to mention his name.⁸⁷ One can say **קל נא רפא נא לו**

78. Shevet Mussar 34:page 46 (old).

79. Berochos 12b, see Sefer Chassidim 753, Yalkut Yosef 7:page 60, Betzel Hachochma 1:67:3.3:33:2. Mishneh Halachos 13:201, V’ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 239-240).

80. Refer to Shevet HaLevi 10:26 if the sick person’s situation did not get better if you should stop *davening*. Harav Moshe Feinstein zt”l says even one who is a simple person who does not think that his *tefillos* will be answered should *daven* for a sick person (Igros Moshe Y.D. 4:51:1).

81. Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 359). In regard to whether there is an obligation to *daven* for every sick person see Sefer Chassidim 753, Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 358-365 in depth.

82. Yesod Veshoresh Huavoda 5:4:page 121.

83. Chasam Sofer O.C. 166.

84. Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 8:footnote 63.

85. Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 8:footnote 56. Refer to Sefer Chassidim 794, Rav Akiva Eiger O.C. 230:1.

86. Magen Avraham O.C. 119:1, Elya Rabbah 116:1, Shulchan Aruch Harav 3, Mishnah Berurah 2, Aruch Hashulchan 1.

87. Meseches Berochos 34a, Ben Yehoyada Berochos 34a, see Melachim 2:20:1. Refer to

(for a man) and נה (for a woman).⁸⁸ A parent can simply say my daughter or my son without mentioning his own name.⁸⁹ The opinion of *Harav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l*⁹⁰ is that saying *refuah sheleima* is considered a *tefillah*, but this is not considered as *bikur cholim* (if not in front of the sick person).

The custom is to make a *mishebeirach*⁹¹ in *shul* for sick people at the time of *laining*,⁹² since *Hashem's* mercy is aroused then.⁹³ In addition, one should *daven* for a sick person in the *beracha* of *refaeinu*.⁹⁴

If the situation is grave, then a name is changed (see below) because changing a name rips up the bad decree.⁹⁵

V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 244-246, Yechaveh Daas 3:84. See Tammei Haminhagim page 117:footnote.

88. Leket Yosher Y.D. 2:page 82:3.

89. Bikur Cholim B'halacha U'bagadah page 87:footnote 5.

90. Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 8:footnote 63, Chuko Mamtakim 1:page 68.

91. In regard to saying the word *choleh* in the *mi sh'be'rach* see V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 252-253. Refer to Shevet HaLevi 8:251:8 regarding the *nusach* of the *mi sh'be'rach*. Regarding the custom to recite a *mi sh'be'rach* on Shabbos for a sick person who is not in danger see Magen Avraham O.C. 288:14, Mishnah Berurah 28, Aruch Hashulchan 17.

92. Rama 10, Chochmas Adom 151:8, Aruch Hashulchan 12. Refer to Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 17.

93. Aruch Hashulchan 12.

94. Yosef Ometz perek bikur cholim page 323, Mishnah Berurah 116:3, Shar Hatzion 5. Refer to Ohr L'tzyion 2:7:33 if this also refers to non family members. On Shabbos one should have in mind the sick person in the *beracha* of *ata gibbur* when saying *rofeh cholim* (Ishei Yisroel 23:footnote 187).

95. Darchei Moshe 2, Rama 10, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 192:2, Aruch Hashulchan 12. Refer to Meseches Rosh Hashanah 16b, Maharsha, Minchas Elazar 2:27. See Sefer Chassidim 245, Mekor Chesed on Sefer Chassidim 245. The adding of the name is done by reciting *tehilim* with a *minyan* and saying the *yud gimmel middos* (Gesher Hachaim 1:1:4). Whether a small change to the name is good enough see Yufeil Leleiv 3:335. Refer to Gesher Hachaim 1:3:5 if the sick person lives, which name he is called by the original name or the one which was added or both. Also see Minchas Elazar 3:27. In regard to which name to write on a *get*, the original name or the added name see Terumas Hadeshen 234. Regarding a *ba'al teshuva* changing his name see Rambam Hilchos Teshuva 5:4, Tzitz Eliezer 20:38. In regard to writing the new name on the grave or for learning Mishnayos if the sick person succumbed to his sickness and was never called to the Torah by that name (Gra E.H. 129:30) see Chelkes Yaakov Y.D. 229, Yabea Omer O.C. 2:11:6, Bais Hayehuda

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The person with the new name is a new person, and was never placed under the decree of illness.⁹⁶ Others say that changing the name changes one's *mazal*.⁹⁷ Our custom is to add a name to the current name,⁹⁸ since we name children after parents. Therefore, we retain the original name, and add to it.⁹⁹ The new name precedes the original name.¹⁰⁰ The custom in some places is to add the name *Refoel* or *Azriel* for a male.¹⁰¹

In any case one should ask a *Rav* before changing or adding a name to a sick person.¹⁰²

The custom is that one *davens* for a sick person even without the sick person being present.¹⁰³

When *davening* for a sick person and he is not present, the custom is to say the following chapters of *Tehillim*: 2, 6, 13, 22, 25, 30, 32, 38, 69, 88, 102, 103, 107, 116, 118, 142, 143,

3:page 305:4, V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:pages 262-264. Refer to Shulchan Aruch E.H. 129:18, Bais Shmuel 33. In regard to changing a name of a woman who wishes to have a child see Chinuch Bais Yitzchok E.H. 20, Teshuvos V'hanugos 1:790, and Oleinu L'shab'each 1:pages 611-612. Refer to V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:page 265 and Oleinu L'shab'each 1:page 612 regarding which names to add for a woman who cannot conceive. Refer to Minchas Yitzchok 10:132 regarding adding a new name to the *kesuba* after a name was added because one was sick *r'l*. One may change the name of a sick person who is in danger on Shabbos as well (Aruch Hashulchan O.C. 288:17, Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 14). One should inform the sick person that his name is being changed if he is at all with it (Refer to Keroei Shmo page 306). One who was not informed that his name is changed is not considered to have his name changed (Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 8:footnote 67). In regards to changing ones names in order to find a *shidduch* see Oleinu L'shab'each 1:page 611.

96. Refer to Ritvah Meseches Rosh Hashanah 16b, Chinuch Mitzvah 311, Levush 10. Refer to Darchei Chaim V'sholom 976:footnote 1. In regard to if all the items listed in the *Gemorah* together help to remove a bad a decree or even changing the name see Koroiei Shmo pages 297-299.

97. Rashba 5:48.

98. Aruch Hashulchan E.H. 129:12, 68, Divrei Yatziv E.H. 100:3, Maharam Brisk 2:7,V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:page 259. Refer to Yabea Omer Y.D. 5:21.

99. Maharam Brisk 2:7, V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:page 260, Beer Moshe 8:19:8.

100. Keroei Shmo page 305.

101. Keser Shem Tov page 643.

102. Opinion of Harav Fisher *zt"l* as quoted in Koroiei Shmo pages 302-303.

103. Aruch Hashulchan 12.

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and 130. Others can add 9, 16, 17, 18, 23, 31, 36, 39, 41, 49, 55, 56, 86, 89, 90, 91, and 104. Then one recites the sections of chapter 119 that correspond to the patient's name, and the letters *kerá sotton* (in Hebrew).¹⁰⁴

Using Mother's Name When *Davening* for Health

When a *mi sh'be'rach* is made (or one is *davening* / saying *tehillim*) for a sick person, one mentions his name with the name of his mother.¹⁰⁵ Two reasons are given for this. First, a woman has less *aveiros* because she is not obligated to learn Torah, and does not have the sin of *bitul* Torah. In addition, it is certain who one's mother is; the father's identity is not always definite.¹⁰⁶ If the mother's name is unknown, one should use the father's name, and if neither are known, then one should use just the sick person's name.¹⁰⁷

Davening for a Parent

One is not allowed to call his parents by their first name.¹⁰⁸ Accordingly, what is the preferred method to *daven* for one's parent? Titles are not used, such *avi mori*, since there

104. Gesher Hachaim 1:3:3.

105. Torah L'Shma 399, Divrei Torah 8:49, Darchei Chaim V'sholom 977, Daas Torah 119:1, Mishmeres Shalom (Hadres Shalom 10:pages 184), Keser Shem Tov page 643, Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 8:17. Refer to Meseches Shabbos 66b, Berochos 55b, Kaf Hachaim 284:37, Ben Yehoyada Meseches Berochos 55b, see Aprakasisa D'Yana inyunim shonim 385, Yabea Omer O.C. 2:11, Beer Sarim 3:77:11, V'ei Lamo Michshal 6:pages 248-249. Refer to Pri Temarim 7:page 74:4, Rivevos Ephraim 8:474. Some have the custom is that on a grave one places the name of one's father (Refer to Melamed L'hoyel O.C. 1:23, Divrei Torah 2:4, 8:49, Gesher Hachaim 1:31:2:10, Darchei Chaim V'sholom 977, Betzel Hachochma 3:91).

106. Torah L'Shma ibid, Oz Nedberu 14:24.

107. Sheilas Rav 1:page 85:1, see Orchos Rabbeinu Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 64:218, page 333:2.

108. Refer to Meseches Kiddushin 31b, Rashi "chachumim," Rambam Hilchos Mamrim 6:3, Shulchan Aruch 240:2. The Rosh 1:50 and Rif page 13 do not bring this *halacha*, see Torah Temimah Vayikra 19:9. Many *Pesukim* and *Gemorahs* seem to be in contradiction to this *halacha* see Tiferes Yisroel to Meseches Kiddushin 1:7, Yufeil Leleiv 240:10, Ben Ish Chai Shoftim 2:4-5, Shem Hagedolim page 1:footnote 1 in depth, Sdei Chemed kof:klal 104:pages 196-197, Pardes Yosef Yisro page 174, Mishchas Shemen Parshas Vayechei 1:pages 186-187. Some places are Bereishis 28:4, 31:42, 32:9, 50:24, Meseches Kiddushin 31a, Bava Basra 56b, Pesachim 66a.

איך ללמוד להלכה של אמונת הבעולמו אלא י



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should be no mention of the greatness of people when one is *davening* to *Hashem*.¹⁰⁹ Instead, one should say my father *Yaakov* and then the name of his mother, just like any other person.¹¹⁰

Based on this, some say that one should not say *avi mori* in *bentching*, and should instead say *avi*.¹¹¹ Others permit this because it is a *beracha* and not a *tefilla*.¹¹²

Giving *Tzedaka*

One should give *tzedaka* in the merit of the sick person because *tzedaka* can change a *gezeira*.¹¹³

A *Ger Davening* for his Father

May a *ger daven* for his non-Jewish father?

The consensus of the *poskim* is that a *ger* is allowed to *daven* for his non-Jewish parent.¹¹⁴ A *ger* may visit his mother or father who is sick as well.¹¹⁵ The same is true for reciting *kaddish* after they pass on.¹¹⁶

109. Sefer Chassidim 800:page 471, Birchei Yosef Y.D. 240:4, Rav Akiva Eiger O.C. 119:1, Sdei Chemed chof:104:page 200, Shearim Metzuyanim B'halacha 143:1, Moreh Horim V'kebudim pages 291-292. Others are lenient (Mekor Chessed on Sefer Chassidim ibid:1, Sheilas Rav 1:18:5).

110. Birchei Yosef Y.D. 240:4, Shiurei Beracha Y.D. 335:4, Ben Ish Chai Shoftim 2:5, Aprakasisa D'yana 1:104 (it is permitted to mention *adonei* before one's fathers name when learning *mishnayos* in his memory), Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 13:2, Otzer Kibbud Av V'eim pages 150-152, Sheilas Yitzchok 3:103.

111. Avnei Yushfei 1:185:7.

112. Lekutei Maharich 1:page 247 new print, Moreh Horim V'kebudom pages 293-294, Avnei Yushfei ibid quoting the opinion of Horav Elyashiv zt"l. Refer to Shearim Metzuyanim B'halacha 143:1 in regard to mentioning ones parent's name by *yizkor*.

113. Darchei Moshe 335:2, Shevet Yehuda 335:10, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 192:2.

114. Yechaveh Daas 6:60, Chaim Beyad 33, Bais Shearim Y.D. 229. Refer to Ruach Chaim 335:5.

115. Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:130.

116. Yechaveh Daas 6:60, Zekan Aron Y.D. 2:87, V'ein Lamo Michshal 6:page 243. Refer to ibid:pages 240-243 in great depth.

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Sitting Next to a Sick Person who is *Davening*

Normally, it is forbidden to sit within four *amos* of a person who is *davening*.¹¹⁷ There is a discussion in the *poskim* if one may sit near a bedridden patient while he is *davening*. One can argue that it is permitted since one is doing a *mitzvah* when visiting him, but one should try to avoid it if possible.¹¹⁸

When Does a Sick Person Get Better?

The *Gemorah*¹¹⁹ says that a sick person does not get better until his sins are forgiven.¹²⁰ When one gets better and returns to a healthy state he should remember that *Hashem* saved him from his sickness.¹²¹

Watching¹²² a Sick Person

A sick person needs to be watched,¹²³ since his luck is bad and a *shed* (demon) might overpower him.¹²⁴ This *halacha* applies even in one's home and even during the day.¹²⁵ This applies today as well.¹²⁶ The opinion of *Harav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita* is that this only applies to a person who is dangerously ill.¹²⁷ A person is considered a *shomer*

117. Shulchan Aruch O.C. 102:4.

118. Tzitz Eliezer 9:7.

119. Nedarim 41a.

120. Refer to Maharsha Meseches Nedarim 41a "ein."

121. Pela Yoetz Choleh page 235.

122. Some opine that included in watching a sick person one should make sure not to divulge the sick persons condition to others if it is not beneficial (Sefer Chassidim 802, Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 449).

123. Meseches Berochos 54b, Magen Avrahgam 239:7, Mishnah Berurah 9. Refer to Shemiras Haguf V'hanefesh 180:1.

124. Rashi Meseches Berochos ibid "choleh."

125. Aruch Hashulchan E.H. 64:3.

126. Salmas Chaim 660;page 118 old.

127. Quoted in Ikorei D'Chaya page 25;footnote 5.

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even if he is sleeping.¹²⁸ When a person is in a hospital and is constantly monitored by the staff, he is considered as being watched.¹²⁹

You Came to Visit Someone Else

Often, a person makes a trip to the hospital to visit a friend, and discovers that another acquaintance is hospitalized as well. If the latter person asks if you came especially for him you cannot say YES because it would be *geneivas daas*.¹³⁰ One can say I always like to visit with you.¹³¹

Davening That a Sick Person Should Die

Sometimes the patient endures tremendous pain, and it would seem to be better to die than to suffer so much. The question arises whether it is permitted to *daven* for his demise.

The *Ran*¹³² permits this, and his opinion is brought by the *Aruch Hashulchan*.¹³³ Some *poskim* agree with the opinion of the *Ran*. *Harav Moshe Feinstein zt"l*¹³⁴ says that there are times when one needs to *daven* that the patient should in fact die, such as when medicine cannot help and the *tefillos* on the patient's behalf were not answered. The *tefilla* does not cause him to die; rather, one is *davening* to *Hashem* that He should take his *neshoma*. The opinion of the *Ran* is not brought in the *Shulchan Aruch* or the earlier commentaries.

128. Yaavetz Meseches Berochos 54b.

129. Opinion of Harav Elyashiv zt"l quoted in Bikur Cholim B'halacha U'bagadah page 32:footnote 9. Others seem to say that the watcher has to be in the room with the sick person (Refer to Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 447).

130. Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, Oleinu L'sha'be'ach 1:page 654.

131. Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

132. Meseches Nedarim 40a "ein," see Tiferes Yisroel Yoma 8:Boaz 3.

133. 335:3. Refer to Shearim Metzuyanim Behalacha 194:2 and Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 334:10.

134. Igros Moshe C.M. 2:73:1, 74:4. Refer to Minchas Shlomo 1:91:24, 2:82:4, Halichos Shlomo Tefillah 8:footnote 56, Shevet HaLevi 8:253.

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Even according to this view, the relatives should not *daven* for his demise. In any case, since this is a very sensitive issue one should discuss this with his *Rav*.¹³⁵

Others argue strongly against this practice,¹³⁶ and say that the *Ran* was not issuing an actual ruling.¹³⁷ In addition, the *Mishnah*¹³⁸ says that one moment in this world with *teshuva* and good deeds is better than all of *olom haba*. Furthermore, we mentioned earlier that even if one has a sharp sword on his neck he should not refrain from *davening*.¹³⁹

Everyone agrees that when the doctors despair of hope, there is no need to *daven* that the sick person should get better.¹⁴⁰

Going to *Daven* When Visiting the Sick

After a long visit, one is often faced with the choice between *davening* with a *minyan* or staying with the patient. Some *poskim* maintain one who is involved with the *mitzvah* of *bikur cholim* does not have an obligation to go *daven*.¹⁴¹ It would seem if there are other visitors then he should go *daven*.

135. Tzitz Eliezer 5:Ramat Rochel 5 in great depth, Tzitz Eliezer 7:49:kuntres E'ven Yaakov 13:1, 9:47. Refer to Yishrei Lev Y.D. 8:7:page 16.

136. Refer to Chikekei Lev Y.D. 50.

137. Shevet HaLevi 10:292:3.

138. Pirkei Avos 4:19.

139. Kinyan Torah 2:120:1. Refer to Pela Yoetz dibur page 130.

140. Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 327. See Darchei Chaim V'sholom 975.

141. Opinion of Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, opinion of Harav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita quoted in Verapeh Yerapeh page 142. Refer to Biur Halacha O.C. 72 "b'yo'm." On the topic of busy with a *mitzvah* one is exempt from a different *mitzvah* refer to Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim pages 290-296 in great depth.



איך ללמוד להלכה של אמות של הלכה בלבד... (ברכות ח)

Preferences When Visiting the Sick

If there is only enough time to visit one patient, what is the order of preference? If one patient is unaware of his surroundings, then one should visit the conscious patient who will appreciate the visit. A dangerously ill patient takes preference over one who is not dangerously ill.¹⁴² One should visit a man before visiting a woman.¹⁴³

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142. Mitzvahs Bikur Cholim page 264.

143. Ibid:pages 266-267.

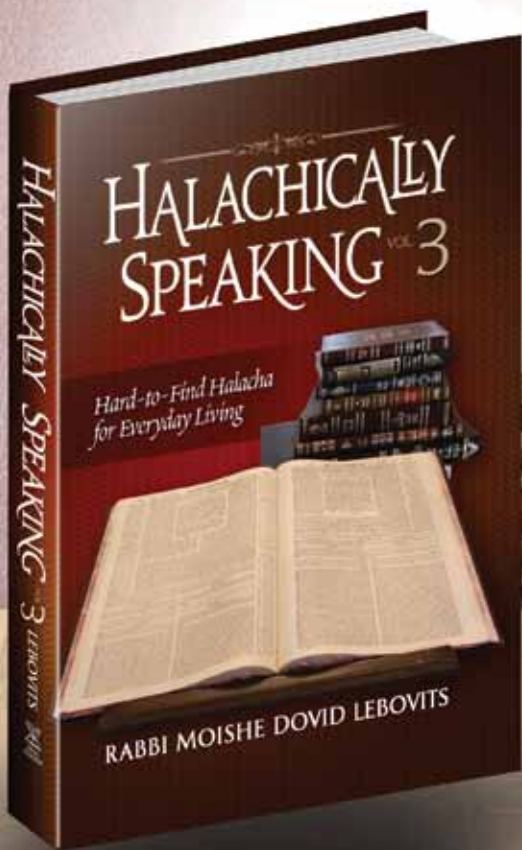
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4000 Nesconset Hwy. (Rte. 347)
East Setauket, NY

339 Gateway Drive
Brooklyn, NY
(off Belt Parkway, Exit 15)

6000 Brush Hollow Road
Westbury, NY

232 Larkin Dr.
Monroe, NY

790 Sunrise Highway
South Service Road
Bellport, NY

66 Seyon Street
Waltham, MA

5901 W Hillsboro Blvd
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1155 Palm Bay Road
Melbourne, FL

184 West 237th St.
Bronx, NY

Any questions please call

Rabbi Moishe Lebovits

Rabbinical Administrator KOF-K Kosher Supervision
at 718-744-4360 • email: mlebovits@kof-k.org

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