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## Tefillah - 070 Hashem Is Our Doctor

### *The Source Of A Sickness*

"רפאינו ה'". We ask Hashem in the "Refoeinu" blessing that we should be healed.

The Sages state that Hashem gave permission to doctors to heal. The Ramban says that not only should a sick person ask Hashem to be healed, but even doctors, who have permission from Hashem to heal, also need to daven for special help. Just because Hashem gave us permission to heal doesn't mean that we don't need to turn to Hashem for help. Rather, we are supposed to include Hashem in our healing process.

If a person gets sick, and he goes to the doctor - and he doesn't turn to Hashem for help - on this, it does not apply that "permission is given to go to doctors." The permission given to doctors to heal is only if a person includes Hashem in the picture; otherwise, permission is not given to the doctors to heal.

This is relevant for all people: we must all know how to approach sickness. We must recognize the Source of the messenger being sent to heal us. Without recognizing that it is Hashem who heals us, that Hashem is our true Doctor,

When a person gets sick, he tends to be busy with doctors and call them all the time. But this comes from a lack of recognition of Hashem. The person forgets that it is Hashem who made him sick; if he would feel that way, he wouldn't be so busy talking to the doctors. He would get busy talking to Hashem. "Refoeinu, Hashem."

The first thoughts a person has when he gets sick is, "I'm sick. I need a doctor; I must find the best doctor..."

**Before** a person gets sick, though, he should be know what the proper attitude to have is. He shouldn't wait until he gets sick in order to work on this concept. The proper attitude has to be developed already before he gets sick, so that he will be able to deal with it in the proper way when it comes. And because getting sick is such a common occurrence, we must all inevitably prepare for it, especially in today's generation, where there are so many people getting sick.

Our first thoughts should be instead, "Who made me sick? Hashem."

***Sickness - A Reminder To Rectify Our Sins of Chilul Hashem***

The word sickness is *choli* in Hebrew, which comes from the word *chalal*, empty space. This hints to us that sickness comes when there is a lack of connection with Hashem. *Choli* also comes from the word *chilul*, which hints to the idea of *Chilul Hashem*. In other words, when a person gets sick, it's a reminder for him to rectify the sin of *Chilul Hashem*.

A person should know this *before* he gets sick. One should reflect with himself and realize that it is Hashem who is behind everything. The more he reflects like this, the more he will be able to feel, in his heart, this knowledge. He will then realize that it is not his job to talk with doctors all the time, but instead, that he should speak with Hashem.

When a person is sick and thoughts come into his head, "What will be with me??" he should put aside these thoughts. Instead, he should think about the source of his sickness, which comes from *Chilul Hashem*.

These words are meant for someone who lives with Hashem in his life. This is what a person should think if he gets sick: that it is coming because of a certain *Chilul Hashem* going on in his soul. Just like there can be a *Chilul Hashem* in public, so can there be a private *Chilul Hashem* taking place inside one's own soul. (*Chilul Hashem* is the worst sin – and by contrast, *Kiddush Hashem* is the greatest mitzvah.)

So before a person gets involved with doctors, he should build within himself the attitude that sicknesses come on a person when there is some *Chilul Hashem* going on in his soul – when there is a certain lack of connection with Hashem. He can then realize Who gave him the sickness and come to be more appreciative of everything he had until now, and he comes closer to Hashem through the sickness.

### **Stage One Is Emunah, Stage Two Is Tefillah**

Before we *daven* to Hashem, though, we first need to make sure that we have deep *emunah* in Hashem, that we recognize that it is Hashem who sent the sickness, and that it is up to Him to take it away. Tefillah is already the second stage. Before we *daven* to Hashem, we need to have *emunah* already planted in us, and from that, we will be able to *daven* in a deeper and truer way. So before we proceed to *daven*, we must reaffirm our *emunah*, and tell ourselves that since Hashem is the source of everything – and He made me sick too – He can do anything, and He can take the sickness away as well.

Although a person gets sick due to his own negligence (like if he gets a cold, it was because he should have bundled up more, as the Gemara says), still, when a person gets sick, it is not his *avodah* to think about how it happened and what caused it, but it is rather his *avodah* now to turn to Hashem. He must first strengthen his deep *emunah* in Hashem, and then *daven* to Him to be healed.

These words are a description of an inner kind of life. When a person gets sick, he tends to focus on his body and what will be with it. But the real attitude to have is to focus on the source of the sickness. A person has to learn how to change his attitude towards sickness. We must gain a more mature perspective on how to look at it. The way we looked at things when we were 20 years old should not be the same as we look at a situation when we are 30 years old.

Sickness is a very big part of our life, especially in our generation, when there are so many people becoming sick. It is very relevant to our *avodah*, and thus we must have the proper perspective towards it. If we ever get sick, we must not get caught up in thinking about the physical aspects of it and what will be with our body; we should instead turn to Hashem and realize that only He can heal us, while at the same time taking care of ourselves and doing what we have to do.

Often, there is a lot more going on to the sickness that cannot be seen with the human eye of the doctor. A person might be going to doctors for 2-3 years not knowing what is wrong with him, and finally he can discover that he has some problem which is probably untreatable. There can be a lot going on under the surface which even the doctors can't figure out. From the world of doctors, we can all realize that it will do us nothing to become dependent on doctors. The doctors don't always know what to do, and by the time they find out what to do, it can already be too late from them to treat it.

Should we remain confined to the doctors' limited power to heal? We can turn to Hashem, the true Healer of us all, and He can help us. From that, we are able to accept the illness with love. The more we feel like we depend on doctors, the less we turn to Hashem, and then we are at the mercy of the doctors. This is not the way a Jew lives. We can go to doctors of course and do what we have to do, but we must not confuse our priorities. We must realize that the main doctor here is Hashem.

### **Summary**

So if we get sick, our avodah is that first we must strengthen our *emunah*, that is it Hashem who gave us the sickness (and going to the doctor, of course). After working on that, we can turn to Hashem in our *tefillos* and ask Him to be healed. Our *tefillos* will then be coming from a place of *emunah*. After that, one will be able to accept the illness with love, for he recognizes that it comes from Hashem.

If a person works on this practically, many times he will discover that his illness will begin to go away!

May we merit the promise of Hashem, *"All of the illnesses which I placed upon Egypt, I will not place upon you, for I am Hashem, your Healer."*

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**Source:** <http://bilvavi.net/english/tefillah-070-hashem-our-doctor>