

Lessons from the Chaplaincy, on Prayer

Rabbi Daniel Coleman, Staff Chaplain

Prayer by an RN

In a recent shiur [class] you said that many people complain to you, “I said Tehilim [psalms] for so and so who was ill, but it didn’t help. The person died.” They wanted to know what was the point of their prayers.

Let me share the following ideas with you. When people pray for a sick person they are not just praying for one thing – life or death. They should include in their Tefilos the following thoughts...

1. They should pray that the person does not suffer any pain.
2. They should pray that the person is treated gently and with dignity by medical staff.
3. They should pray that the person is free of severe anxiety as they go through their illness.
4. They should pray that veins on the person are easy to find for I.V.’s
5. They should pray that the person can eat and not vomit back the nourishment.
6. They should pray that the medications and treatments should be the correct ones.
7. They should pray for the patient’s emotional and physical strength to fight the illness.
8. They should pray that the person is not abandoned in their time of tzorus [troubles].
9. They should pray that the person’s family members can hold up under the strain.
10. They should pray that the correct decisions (medical) and ethical ones are taken by the facility, physical therapist and Doctor.

If you pray for all of the above things for a sick person, you will find that many of your Tefilos [prayers] will be answered by Hashem [G-d].

As you told us in shiurim [classes] about Tefilos [prayer] – our Tefilos [prayers] have to mature with age, we must see more of the whole picture of the “experience of a critically ill person.”

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