

Bikkur Cholim



Aims

- 1) To look at the first occurrence of Bikkur Cholim (Visiting the sick)
- 2) To look at the importance that people place on Bikkur Cholim
- 3) To look at how far one should go to do Bikkur Cholim



Dear Madrichim,

This week we will be learning about Bikkur Cholim. We will look in to the source of the mitzvah and the importance of it in Judaism. I hope that this weeks choveret is something which we can all strive to improve on in our lives, because as we will see Bikkur Cholim is very valuable in the Jewish religion.

Furthermore, so far this year there has been a bit of a change to the choveret in that now there are some pointers on how to translate the chomer in to a peulah, with tips, guidelines, timetables and ready made tziud. Over the next few weeks, hopefully, there will be a few more changes to try and improve the choveret even further. The first of these comes in the form a peulah planning sheet which can be found on the penultimate page of the choveret. You should use this to plan you peulah in a structured format and you should have it in shul so that you can make sure you are always following the plan and organising your peulah in a proper and structured format.

In addition, each week on this page will be some sort of puzzle, riddle, dingbat... The first Sviva each week to EMAIL in a correct answer will be rewarded with their name being mentioned in the Choveret and perhaps some sort of prize...

As usual personality of the week and rega b'ivrit are at the back. This week Yitzhak Rabin has been chosen as it was his yarhtzeit last shabbat.

Good Luck and Shabbat Shalom

Bevirkat Chaverim l'Torah v'Avodah

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Dingbat of the Week

Gathering Time (waiting for people)	10 minutes
Peulah Time	35-40 minutes
Transition Time (use sheet provided)	5 Minutes
Extra Time (Use ideas provided for what to do here	40 minutes
Mifkad	15 minutes





Last week we learnt about the mitzvah of Brit Milah and read about Avraham performing it on himself. Now that is something in and of itself, however perhaps a more important lesson that we should learn from this episode actually occurs at the beginning of this weeks parasha.

א וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְקֹוֹק, בְּאֶלְנֵי מַמְרֵא; וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח-הָאֵהָל, בְּחֹם הַיּוֹם.

And Hashem appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; (Bereishit 18:1)

Hashem was teaching us a very important principle about the way we treat people who have undergone surgery or are not at full health. Rashi explains two specific things about the way this verse is written which teach us the importance of Bikkur Cholim (visiting the sick) and treating them kindly.

Hadracha Hot Tip 1

Have two teams. Set up two obstacle courses and choose one member of each team to be injured. The team that comes up with the best idea to help the injured person gets to start the obstacle course first

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו: לבקר את החולה. אמר רבי חמא בר חנינא יום שלישי למילתו היה, ובא הקב"ה ושאל בשלמו:

And [the Lord] appeared to him: to visit the sick. Said Rabbi Chama the son of Chanina: It was the third day from his circumcision, and the Holy One, blessed be He, came and inquired about his welfare (B. M. 86b). (ibid)



ישב: ישב כתיב, בקש לעמוד, אמר לו הקב"ה שב ואני אעמוד, ואתה סימן לבניך, שעתיד אני להתיצב בעדת הדיינים והן יושבין, שנאמר (תהלים פב א) א-להים נצב בעדת אל:
was sitting: It is written יָשָׁב [without a "vav," and may therefore be read: "he sat"]. He wished to stand. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "Sit and I will stand, and you will be a sign for your children that I am destined to stand in the congregation of the judges, and they will sit," as it is said (Ps. 82: 1): "God stands in the Divine assembly." - [from Gen. Rabbah 48:7] (ibid)

In both of these two quotes from Rashi we can see how much importance Hashem places on visiting Avraham while he is still recovering from his procedure (Chazal tell us that the third day was the worst after his circumcision) and He made sure to pass up his Kavod (honour) by telling Avraham to not stand up when he saw that Hashem was approaching.



I think that the length that Hashem goes to in order to make sure that Avraham doesn't get put out while he is not 100% fit is a very important principle and one that we must all learn from and incorporate in to our lives.

These five stories demonstrate the length that one should go to in order to help people when they are un-well:

- I. A woman once appeared before Rav Chaim, her face moist with tears. When Rav Chaim asked what was troubling her she replied that she needed money for her baby who was very ill. Not only did Rav Chaim run to secure the necessary money, but he also insisted in accompanying the woman back to her home. There he stayed and



watched over the baby for two days, giving the mother a chance to sleep while foregoing sleep himself.

Save a Life Today

2. A pupil of Rabbi Akiva suddenly became sick. The scholars in the academy of Rabbi Akiva did not visit him. The sick student had not been especially outstanding in his studies, so they felt it was beneath their dignity to come to his house. Rabbi Akiva was outraged by their insensitive behaviour. He personally went to the home of the sick pupil, waited upon him, supplied him with all his needs, and took a deep interest in his treatment. After he had recovered, the student said, "My master you saved my life." When his pupils assembled shortly afterwards, Rabbi Akiva began his lecture by telling them, "Be advised that not visiting the sick is equivalent to hastening their death and shedding their blood." He then nodded in the direction of the sick student, whose recovery was due largely to the moral support he had received from his Torah master.

3. The Gaon Rabbi Hillel, the son in law of Rav Chaim of Volozhen, was seen one shabbat evening carrying a lamp through the town of Horodna. The people of the town were shocked. The Gaon was violating Shabbat by carrying a burning lamp in the street!



Soon a crowd gathered and they followed the Gaon until he came to a house belonging to a poor family. The Gaon entered the house, and later exited without the lamp. "Master!" the people exclaimed "Why were you carrying a lamp on Shabbat?" The Gaon replied, "In this house lives a person who is dangerously ill. The candle inside the house had burned up and the entire house was shrouded in darkness. As a result those inside could not take proper care of the ill person. The family sent a messenger to me to ask what could be done. To

emphasise the halacha, I took a lamp and brought it to their house on Shabbat. For it is a mitzvah to violate the laws of Shabbat to help save a life of a dangerously ill man.

4. When Rabbi Akiva Eiger accepted the position as Rabbi of his town, he devoted as much time as he could advising his fellow Jews. Though not physically strong, Rabbi Akiva Eiger never said “Enough” when it was a matter of coming to the assistance of someone else. When a cholera epidemic broke out in Prussia in 1831, Rabbi Akiva Eiger often spent whole nights at the bedside of the sick. He promulgated various laws of sanitation, urged the people to boil their water and in this way

Hadracha Hot Tip 2

Make 5 groups. Give each group one of the stories and they have to ‘modernise’ their story in the form of a play

helped reduce the death toll in his and nearby communities. This heroic work came to the attention of the Emperor Frederick William III, who sent a special royal order of appreciation to the Rabbi. A special emissary of the Emperor came

to the Rabbi’s house to deliver the letter of commendation. However, a royal reward is not necessary for one to help the sick. The mitzvah of Bikkur Cholim is recognised by the King of the Universe, and those practising it will receive their rewards from Him.

5. Rav Eliyahu Chaim Meisels was also a Torah leader who had to cope with a plague raging in his home town. Rav Meisels made it a point to go from house to house to visit the sick and to tend to their needs. One rainy day, while making these visits one of his galoshes got stuck in the mud and he couldn’t remove it. Instead, he extricated his foot and made his visits that day barefoot. When people told him that he was too prestigious a person to go around barefoot, he replied “Do you want to take my opportunity to visit the sick away from me? Even Hashem performed this mitzvah!”



All of these stories illustrate how much importance tzaddikim of old put on performing the mitzvah of Bikkur Cholim. The question is why?

Bikkur Cholim is something that can often be seen as something nice to do but not something that is as important as some of the other mitzvot, like shabbat or kashrut. However from the stories above, where some Rabbi's broke shabbat and also from the story in this weeks parsasha where Hashem himself ignored the Kavod that should have been shown to him we are able to understand that Bikkur Cholim is a very important mitzvah and in some cases can be likened to saving a life and can warrant breaking shabbat.

Hadracha Hot Tip 2

Put pieces of paper on the floor with different levels of illness and discuss what you can do in each instance (e.g. can you break Shabbat?) (see back)

The teaching below, from Rav Yosef Caro, demonstrates just how much visiting a sick person can help them recover.

Visiting the sick takes away one sixtieth of the illness. (Yoreh Deah 335)

From what we have seen in this choveret, we should understand that going to a hospital and visiting the patients on the wards, or taking time out our lives to go and visit friends and family who are not feeling so great, is something that the Hashem desires of us, so much so that He strives to perform this mitzvah too.

Furthermore when we visit the sick we are taking an active part in their recovery from illness and as we learn in the Gemara Sanhedrin (37a):

וכל המקיים נפש אחת מישראל מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו קיים עולם מלא
Whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world.

Planning Your Peulah

	Time (minutes)	Aim	Tziud
1.	5	Fun intro games that will get people excited for sviva (perhaps busy bees)	Funness!
2.	5	A look into Hashem's act of Bikkur Cholim	
3.	15	A look in to the mitzvah of Bikkur Cholim and what it entails (Hadracha Hot Tip 1)	
3.	10	A look at tzaddikim doing the mitzvah (Hadracha Hot Tip 2)	Dressing up stuff!
4.	5/10	A look at the importance placed on Bikkur Cholim (Hadracha Hot Tip 3)	Cut up pieces of paper with different levels of illness on them to place on the floor

Remember that all your activities should lead in to a discussion about the specific aim that they are linked to










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Personality of the Week

Yitzhak Rabin



-  Born July 1 1922 in Israel
-  Assassinated November 4 1995
-  He was the 5th prime minister of Israel
-  He served two terms 1974-77 and 1992- his assassination in 1995
-  He was the first native prime minister of Israel
-  In 1994 he won the Nobel Peace Prize with Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat
-  Operation Entebbe (The IDF's mission to free those taken hostage on a flight to Israel)
-  He played a leading role in the signing of the Oslo Accords. This was a peace treaty between Israel and the PLO creating the Palestinian National Authority and granting it partial control over parts of the Gaza strip and the West Bank in return for a renouncement of violence and for the PLO to recognise Israel
-  He was assassinated by Yigal Amir a right wing Jew who opposed the signing of the Oslo Accords, at a rally at the Kings of Israel Square, Tel Aviv, (now Rabin Square) held to support the Oslo Accords.

רגע בעברית- Rega B'Ivrit

ציוד

Equipment

איפה הציוד שאני צריך לפעולה?

Where is the equipment I need for my activity?

Gathering Time (waiting for people)	10 minutes
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Peulah Misgeret

In each box there are two sections, in the top one, write what it is that you are doing, be it a game, prompting a discussion, a role play, reading out a source or anything similar. Underneath, describe the implementation of what you are going to try to do. Utilise the “Hadracha hot tips” from the choveret to help you fill out the misgeret.

What we want to teach during this peulah:

Fun Intro Games

5 mins

The diagram consists of six rectangular boxes arranged in two columns and three rows. Each box is divided horizontally by a dashed line. The top-left box is pre-filled with the text 'Fun Intro Games' on the left and '5 mins' on the right. The other five boxes are empty. Arrows indicate a flow: a downward arrow from the top-left box to the middle-left box, another downward arrow from the middle-left box to the bottom-left box, an upward arrow from the bottom-right box to the middle-right box, another upward arrow from the middle-right box to the top-right box, and a large arrow pointing from the bottom-left box to the bottom-right box.

Illnesses

A little sneeze and a headache

The need to take a painkiller

A day off school or work

**The need to lie in bed because you cant
really do anything else**

Need to see a doctor/go to hospital

On your death bed
