

For I am Hashem Your healer. (15:26)

We are enjoined to seek medical help when circumstances arise that dictate such action. The Torah, likewise, commands the physician to heal those who are in need of a *refuah*. Nonetheless, one should never lose sight of the fact that the true and only effective Healer is Hashem. The physician and all who participate in the patient's care are merely agents of Hashem who have been Heavenly sent to address his physical concerns by employing conventional therapeutic means. Hashem determines the success of the physician.

Horav Mordechai, zl, m'Neshchiz, was known for the efficacy of his blessings. The ill and unfortunate would travel from far distances to petition him on their behalf. He never uttered a negative comment about another person, viewing everyone through a positive perspective. One day, a *chassid* who was gravely ill came to the *Rebbe* and supplicated him for a blessing to be healed and live. He had travelled far and wide to medical specialists, to no avail: "Please, *Rebbe*, I have no one else to whom to turn. What should I do?"

Rav Mordechai advised the *chassid* to travel to the city of Annipole, which was home to a specialist who had the ability to heal him. When the man heard this, he did not waste a minute, and he immediately left for Annipole. It was quite a distance. Public transportation meant hiring a wagon and driver for a ride that, at best, could be described as difficult, but when the *Rebbe* says, "Go!" – one goes. It took quite some time to reach Annipole, where the man immediately alighted from the wagon and began questioning the city's residents for the address of the famous doctor who resided and practiced in their community.

"There is no one in our community who matches that description. We have no medical specialists in our city," they replied. "Is there a doctor in town?" the man asked. "No, we have no doctor in our town." "What does someone do if he becomes ill?" he asked. "It does not happen. No doctors, because no one is ill," was their reply. The man was incredulous: a city without a physician; a city that had no sick people! It was absurd. He was upset over having wasted so much precious time on what he felt was a wild-goose chase. He would return to the saintly *Rebbe* of Neshchiz and inform him of his error.

He returned to the *Rebbe* and related what had occurred in Annipole. "So what do the people do when someone becomes ill?" the *Rebbe* asked. "Their only option is to pray to and rely on Hashem," the man responded. "They have to hope that He will be generous and forthcoming with His blessing and heal them."

When the *Rebbe* (finally) heard the man say this, he said, "This is the medical specialist that I had intended for you. Whoever is healing (protecting) the townspeople of Annipole can effectively do the same for you!"

The man, who now understood the message, began to pray to Hashem and was ultimately healed.

The message is timeless and applies today as well – to us all.