

# Raising of Incense

- [Litany of the Sick - HG Bishop Raphael](#)

# Litany of the Sick - HG Bishop Raphael

Three types of sicknesses:

- Sickness of Spirit: Sin
- Sickness of Mind:
- Sickness of Body (obvious - Viruses, Internal issues (heart, kidney, etc), External issues (rashes, bleeding, etc))

Litany of the Sick addresses all of these.

- “Visit them with mercy and compassion, heal them.” - The word “visited” - jem epshini - efteqad (visiting, asking about, etc).
- “The spirit of sickness chase away” - Spirit of sickness does not mean “an evil spirit or an angel of sickness” - but it refers to the low spirits. When someone is sick - even the most minor of sicknesses and they freak out, stress out, etc. And we might say “their spirits are down.” Something like a Hypochondriac - they have a minor symptom so they worry it is indicative of a major illness. He’s not faking but he has a weak spirit or a spirit of sickness. Many times Abouna Reweis has visited someone who is terminally ill and when I would ask about someone and he would say “her spirit is good. She is prepared. She is not scared. She gave her confession.” He was concerned about her spirit - that the devil is not trying to bring her down. And the people who were not brought down have a strong spirit - that even when they get sick, they don’t dwell on it. But they think “ok life will move on and the sickness will be treated.” For example Pope Shenouda - there are many pictures of him hooked up to a bunch of tubes and stuff and you see him with a pen and paper writing the Keraza magazine. And when they asked him he would say “the doctors are working, and I am working” - he doesn’t let it slow him down. So the spirit of sickness is the opposite of this.
- “those who have long lain in maladies raise up and comfort” - these are people with Chronic diseases. Long-lasting.
- “those who are afflicted by unclean spirits, set them all free” - these are actual demon-possessions. And HG Bishop Raphael makes a difference here between unclean spirits and mental illness. Some people think if they have a “mental illness” that it is a demon possession and they go to try and get someone to pray for them, etc. But there’s a difference. Unclean spirits may result in a sickness but as soon as they are driven out, the sickness is gone (see Matthew 9:32-33, Matthew 12:22-23). Mental illness requires much treatment, patience and time for healing.
- “For You are He who loosens the bound and lifts up the fallen.” - Bound by a sickness of body or a sickness of mind or a sickness of spirit (sin)
- “the hope of those who have no hope and the help of those who have no helper;”

- “the comfort of the fainthearted;” – The fainthearted is the person who lets anything bother him; short temper, etc.
- “the harbor of those in the storm.” – Literally this means if someone is stuck in a storm in the middle of the ocean, he can’t reach the harbor. The harbor means safety, freedom or release from the storm. God is the harbor – the safety, freedom and release from any sickness or malady or distress.
- “All souls that are distressed” – for example. So this is someone who is “metdaye2” – something is bothering him. When we are in a Funeral prayer, we pray the Thanksgiving Prayer and then Litany of the Sick. Some people ask “why? Doesn’t make any sense to pray Litany of the Sick when someone died” – but it is a prayer for the living. The person’s family who is there – husband, wife, kids, siblings – they are distressed at the departure of their loved one. So we pray Litany of the Sick before the Litany of the Departed.
- “All souls that are bound” – Could be literally bound
- “Grant them rest, refreshment, grace, help, salvation, forgiveness of their sins and iniquities.” – we never forget to pray for forgiveness of sins. It is more important than the healing of the body.
- “As for us too, O Lord,” – We always pray for ourselves at the end of the Litany. Even litany of the departed as we talked about.
- “The sicknesses of our souls, heal” – we pray for our souls first  
“and also those of our bodies, cure” – and THEN our bodies
- “O You, the true physician of our souls and bodies, the Bishop of all flesh, visit us with Your salvation.”

## What is the relationship between faith and healing?

- The woman who had the internal bleeding, Christ told her: “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”
- The Centurion’s came to Christ about his sick servant and Christ told him “I will come and heal him.” The man said “Only speak a word and my servant will be healed.” and the Gospel tells us that Christ marveled – “I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel. Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.”
- Acts 14 – At Lystra a man who was crippled in his feet from birth was listening to Paul speak “And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And he sprang up and began walking.
- “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” (James 5) - the oil needs to be accompanied with faith
- Mark 6:13 - And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them. – Institution of the Sacrament

## What is the relationship between sin and sickness?

- When God created man, it was not in the plan for man to get sick (body was created perfect)
- It's like a new device like a computer. If it's made by a good brand from good materials, it should last forever. And it will. But if you start to load the wrong things on it and it gets a virus – or if you drop it and damage the screen or the hard drive. From use, it may deteriorate.
- How does sickness work? If I go to the doctor with ten different symptoms – headache, vomiting, etc. He can do one of two things. He can say “here's a medicine for headache, here's one for vomiting, here's one for nausea etc.” Treating the symptoms. But he may instead find the diagnosis and treat the actual sickness.
- Christ did the latter. When the paralyzed man was dropped from the ceiling He saw their faith and said “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” – the scribes went crazy! And Christ asked them a question that has no answer – what is easier to say? Your sins are forgiven you? Or arise take up your bed and walk? – For the scribes, it is “Your sins are forgiven” – it's just a word that you say. It's like when Abouna says “God bless you” – it's a word. Sure it is a word for God and it's good – but compared to “Take up your bed and walk” that's not easy. If I tell someone “take up your bed and walk” that's a healing. A word is easier than a healing. But for God it is the opposite. For God, the healing is the easy part – but to forgive sins? This involved the Cross and the suffering and the death and Resurrection. So He said “that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins. I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”
- There are two types of relationships of sin and sickness
  - Sin that directly leads to sickness. Cigarette smoking – literally inhaling something that will damage your lungs. Same with the effect of other drugs and alcohol to the mind. Alcohol to the liver. Someone living a life with sex outside of marriage – STDs. Psychosomatic diseases (psycho = mind, Soma = body) – I am always anxious and it leads to affects on my body
  - Punishment
    - 1 Corinthians 11:29 “For he who eats and drinks [Eucharist] in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.
    - “So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.” (Exodus 23:25)

## Does this mean the righteous do not get sick?

- Absolutely not!
- Sickness does not always mean sin
- St Paul had a thorn in the flesh and pleaded three times with God to take it away and he said “lest I be exalted above measure.”
- “Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty. For He bruises, but He binds up; He wounds, but His hands make whole.” (Job 5:17-18)

## What's the place of doctors?

- King Asa was a righteous king who did good for most of his life. But he made a treaty that the Lord did not approve of, and a prophet was sent to him and he threw the prophet in jail. Then at the end of his life he got some disease in his feet and the Bible tells us “he did not seek the Lord, but sought physicians” – and it says it in a very bad way like doctors are bad.
- So that's the question – are doctors bad? If I'm sick should I go to a doctor? Or should I pray? Both!
- “Honor doctors for their services, since indeed the Lord created them. Healing comes from the Most High, and the king will reward them. The skill of doctors will make them eminent, and they will be admired in the presence of the great. The Lord created medicines out of the earth, and a sensible person won't ignore them. Wasn't water made sweet by means of wood so that the Lord's strength might be known? And he endowed human beings with skill so that he would be glorified through his marvelous deeds. With those medicines, the doctor cures and takes away pain. Those who prepare ointments will make a compound out of them, and their work will never be finished, and well-being spreads over the whole world from them. My child, when you are sick, don't look around elsewhere, but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you. Stay far from error, direct your hands rightly, and cleanse your heart from all sin. Offer a sweet-smelling sacrifice and a memorial of fine flour, and pour an offering of oil, using what you can afford. And give doctors a place, because the Lord created them also, and don't let them leave you, because you indeed need the,. There's a time when success is in their hands as well. They will also ask the Lord so that he might grant them rest and healing in order to preserve life. May those who sin against their creator fall into the hands of a doctor.” (Sirach 38:1-15)
- Christ told the parable of the Good Samaritan – the Good Samaritan did not just pray for the guy; he bandaged his wounds, took him to the innkeeper and charged the innkeeper with taking care of him and spending what he needs to spend.
- Luke himself was a physician

## When we have a sick person:

1. Pray for him - Take him to the doctor
2. Anoint with oil – Receive treatment
3. If we think it's an evil spirit, go for an exorcism. If it doesn't work, take him to a mental health professional

We have to be balanced in our thinking