

# Bikur Cholim

**\*a text for older children\***

Below you will find two texts about bikur cholim from Jewish tradition. As a family, read the information of each source followed by the text. Then answer the questions below.

**Source #1:** Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) is one of the 40 books found in our Tanakh. The Tanakh is made up of three main parts: Torah (the Five Books of Moses), Nevi'im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings). Kohelet is found in Ketuvim. The book dates from 450-180 BCE, and is a collection of thoughts by King Solomon. In Kohelet, he discusses the meaning of life and the best way to live.

**Text #1:** "Two are better than one...For should both of them fall, one can raise up the other; but sadness to the one who is alone and falls with no friend to raise that person up..." (Kohelet 4:9-10).

**Source #2:** Martin Buber was born into an Orthodox Jewish family in 1878 in Vienna and died in 1965 in Jerusalem. Buber was a philosopher and scholar, known best for his philosophy of dialogue.

**Text #2:** "Rabbi Pinchas said: 'When a person is singing and cannot lift his or her voice, and another comes and sings along, another who can lift their voice, then the first will be able to lift his or her voice too. That is the secret of the bond between spirit and spirit'" ("When Two Sing" from Martin Buber, Tales of the Hasidim: Early Masters, p. 126).

1. Go back and read each text. Who are you in the text? Who is the sick person?
2. What role do we play when we visit someone who is unwell?
  - a. Have you ever been really sick or hurt? How did it feel when someone came to visit you or kept you company?
3. Do you have anyone in your life who is sick/hurt? What are some ways you can "lift" and "raise up" that person/people?