

At the Kotel: A Prayer From a Wheelchair

Magen David and Police recently made an exception to allow a man to pray at the Western Wall when he explained his illness may not allow him another chance.

Handicapped accessibility at the Western Wall (Kotel) usually must be made in advance, but an exception was made for patient David Schneer, who made the sudden request to

Magen David Adom medics who were transferring him from a Jerusalem hospital to his home in the metropolitan Tel Aviv area.

The patient was hospitalized after suffering extreme pain from an illness that is worsening. After his release, he told medics he had one "small request."

"I want to go to the Kotel," he said.

The "simple" request is not so simple because of the special arrangements and permission

needed. Magen David medics contacted security personnel at the Western Wall and explained that Schneer would be confined to his bed for medical care.

"I am a man of faith," Schneer told medics. "I am not even able to go the synagogue any more, and I may not be able to pray at the Kotel again because of my illness."

Special permission was granted, and paramedics and police escorted the ambulance into the Western Wall Plaza and Schneer, on his stretcher bed, to the Kotel to pray. He put on his tefillin and placed a written request between the stones of the Wall while tears flowed down his cheeks.

Magen David medics, who have seen more than a few emotional scenes in their work, thanked Schneer for allowing them to participate in the mitzvah of taking him to the Kotel, for perhaps the last time in his life.

Magen David Adom medic Yoni Uziahu said, "I have been an MDA medic for 12 years and have helped treat thousands of people, but I have never come across a case so emotional as this one.

"I was crying as I stood next to him at the Kotel."

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