

MISSED OPPORTUNITY

by Rabbi Raymond Beyda

When someone is running late their mind is busy with a variety of good excuses to present on arrival. If a person missed an important business meeting, a class in school or an appointment one feels an urgency to come up with a good story to smooth over his or her absence. Well, someone who is good at covering up a miscue with a good excuse may be good at excuse making but he or she may not realize the loss incurred by their inability to keep a commitment.

If someone missed a class the teacher may graciously accept the student's excuse but the student has missed the knowledge he or she might have acquired had the class been attended. A salesperson may get away with the excuse he or she fabricated to cover up for his or her lateness but the effectiveness of the sales presentation has been damaged and the financial loss incurred is hard to pinpoint. Someone who is good at making excuses only proves that one is good at making excuses.

Whenever you are in a pickle and your mind starts to race to the excuse file remember that the excuse doesn't help fulfill the missed opportunity. It may help you get by momentarily but it doesn't help recover what you have missed. Plan your situations so as not to have to make excuses. It only takes a minute but it will enable you to devote your energies and brainpower to productive pursuits.

CONSIDER THIS FOR A MINUTE

The Zohar [Haye Sarah 132] says that a verse in Tehillim reveals to us how different types of prayers reach the Heavens. The verse states [Tehillim 39:13] "Hear my prayers G-d, and my cries; listen to my tears do not be silent." The silent prayers are referred to simply as "prayers" but there is a type of communication with Hashem that is called "shav-ah" which means crying out. When one cries to Hashem, raises his or her voice to the heavens, and raises one's eyes and heart skyward the prayer breaks through the gates of heaven. David Hamelekh [King David] then reveals that when one cries while praying the tears rise to heaven, reach the King's throne and cannot be denied. So we see 3 levels to prayer. The silent prayer, crying out and tearful pleading. Each has the potential to reach higher spheres in heaven even to the throne of our King. One should remember that prayers with tears reach the throne and will not be turned away empty. [Hok L Yisrael--Haye Sarah --Thursday, Yom Hamishee]

DID YOU KNOW THAT

After eating a meal that requires Bircat HaMazon one must rinse one's fingers with water called "Mayim Aharoneem." The water should be poured over the fingers to the second knuckle. Some have the custom to pour the water up to the third joint adjacent to the palm as suggested by the Zohar. One rinsing of each hand is sufficient. The water should be poured over the fingers from a container into a container i.e. a bowl, glass, sink etc but not directly onto the ground. The minimum amount needed to clean the hands should be used. There is no blessing on this washing. [Source Yalkut Yosef, volume 3, Siman 181]

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