

TAKING CARE OF ONE'S NEEDS BEFORE TEFILLAH

by Rabbi Daniel Travis

In the late 1980s a massive monetary fraud took place, whose main perpetrator was Jewish. The news rocked the financial world, and many people were affected. Unfortunately, the actions of this non-observant Jew caused a great chillul Hashem.

At about the same time Rav Moshe Feinstein passed away. Seemingly, the Jew involved with the financial scam and Rav Moshe were worlds apart. Rav Moshe had his feet firmly planted in the World to Come, while the other fellow was grounded in a place far less pleasant.

However, one Rosh Yeshivah noted that the famous gadol and the infamous crook shared common ground: both of them started their day at 4 a.m. The person involved in the financial fraud would get up every morning at 4 a.m. to get the edge on the financial world and track the markets on the other side of the globe. Rav Moshe would be studying diligently at that hour, so that he could get an edge on the Torah world and start learning before being approached for guidance in all areas.

"A person should come to pray in a state of joy" (Berachos 31a). The Rema (93,3) writes, "Torah has the power to bring one to a state of great happiness, and therefore it is appropriate to study Torah beforehand for words of Torah gladden one's heart." Let us try to understand which activities augment our prayers and learn to avoid those that would detract from our tefillah.

Text Copyright © 2013 by Rabbi Daniel Travis and [Torah.org](https://torah.org)