

SIMAN 89: THE LAWS OF PRAYER AND THEIR PROPER TIME

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89:1. The time for the Mitzvah of the Shacharis [morning] Amidah starts (1) with sunrise, as it is written [Psalms 72:5] "Those that fear You [come] with the sun". And if one prayed the Amidah at (2) daybreak and it was lit up on (3) the eastern horizon (4) he has fulfilled [the Mitzvah]. Its time extends up to the end of 4 [seasonal] hours which is a third (5) of the day. If he made a mistake (6) or transgressed and prayed after 4 hours but up to midday [ie. up to 6 seasonal hours], then even though he will not receive the reward for praying the Amidah at the correct time, there is nonetheless a reward for praying. {Rema: (7) After midday it is forbidden to pray the morning Amidah (Beis Yosef in the name of the Rashboh in the chapter entitled "Morning Amidah") and see later at the beginning of Siman 108.}

MB 1: *With sunrise - This is the point in time where the sun begins to shine over the mountain tops. It is right and proper to be careful about this in the first instance, even during the days when the penitential prayers [Selichos] are being said. So also in winter when people get up early and go to Shul early, they should wait to pray the Amidah until sunrise, as mentioned above in Siman 58:1, see there. But where people get up early to go on a journey or in such other cases of pressing or unavoidable circumstances where it is permitted to pray the Amidah early, as we shall see in paragraph 8 below, they should in any event wait to make the Blessings on the Tefillin until [it is light enough] that he can recognise at 4 cubits a friend with whom he is slightly familiar, because before that it is forbidden to make the Blessings on them, as mentioned above in Siman 30:1, see there in the Mishnah Berurah.*

The P'ri Megadim writes that on the Festival of Shavuot where we stay up all night, it is permitted to pray the Amidah before sunrise because since they go back home so early it would be an imposition to gather them together [in Shul] a second time. Nevertheless, one should take care not to read the Shema too early, namely before [it is light enough] to see a friend at 4 cubits and recognise him, because this is forbidden in the first instance as mentioned above in Siman 58, see there.

MB 2: *Daybreak - Daybreak is when a small part of the sun very gradually begins to brighten, and it may be inferred from the words of the Author [of the Shulchan Aruch] that before it gets light even after the fact one has not fulfilled [the Mitzvah], and so agreed many of the later Rabbis that [the law] is not like the Magen Avraham, and see in the Biur Halacha.*

MB 3: *The eastern horizon - And in such a way that the whole of the eastern horizon is lit up; it is not*

sufficient when there is only a speck of morning light. It is written in the novellas of Rabbi Akivah Eiger that even if the stars can still be seen in the sky, it is still considered as daytime.

MB 4: *He has fulfilled - After the fact, even if not in a case of pressing circumstances. In pressing circumstances, for instance where he gets up early to go on a journey or in such other cases of pressing or unavoidable circumstances, even in the first instance [he has fulfilled the Mitzvah] as mentioned in paragraph 8 below, see there.*

And you should know that the words of the Shulchan Aruch are only talking about the case of the obligation to perform the Mitzvah of praying the Amidah where one has fulfilled its [Mitzvah] once the eastern horizon gets light, since at that point the time [for praying the Amidah] has already arrived, [the reason being] that [the Amidah] was prescribed in respect of the Tamid [continual] Sacrifice [brought every morning in the Temple] and the time for the slaughtering of the [animal for] the Tamid Sacrifice started immediately the eastern horizon lit up. But the case of reading the Shema which is before the Amidah, the Author is not talking about that in this Siman. See above in Siman 58 in MB 19 that one has not fulfilled his obligation to read the Shema, even after the fact if he usually does this, until he can recognise at 4 cubits a slightly familiar friend, which is later in time than when the east lights up, and especially when he wants to put on Tefillin then and make the Blessings on them that definitely he should not make the Blessings until the time he can recognise [a friend, etc.] as mentioned above.

MB 5: *Of the day - If the daytime is 18 [60 minute] hours long then [4 seasonal hours] will be 6 hours into the day, and when the daytime is 9 [60 minute] hours long, then [4 seasonal hours] will be 3 hours, as we always measure these [seasonal] hours according to the amount of daylight and they are called "seasonal hours" [Sho'os Zemani'os] because the day is divided into 12 parts. The [reason why the Amidah has to be said during the first] third of the day is because morning prayers relate to the Tamid Sacrifice and [in the Temple] they never delayed bringing it beyond a third of the day and therefore one is required to finish the Amidah during the first third of the day.*

MB 6: *Or transgressed - He means to say that he deliberately delayed saying the Amidah until after its correct time and he said it afterwards. Even so, he has still fulfilled his obligation to pray the Amidah even though it was not in its correct time. The same law applies if in the first instance he did not pray the Amidah before [a third of the day had passed], he still is required to pray after 4 [seasonal] hours up to midday, save that he does not receive the reward for praying the Amidah in its correct time. In that case it is good if he prays the Amidah as a voluntary prayer because there are some decisors who hold that if he deliberately [waited to pray the Amidah] until 4 hours had passed then he is no longer able to pray the Amidah [after that time]. Therefore, he should pray the Amidah and make a [mental] condition [beforehand] that if he is legally exempt from praying [because it is too late] then he is praying it as a voluntary prayer (P'ri Megadim).*

MB 7: *After midday - It may be inferred from the language of the R'av [the Rema] that even immediately after midday i.e. even though this may be before the time for Minchah (afternoon) has arrived which is half a seasonal hour after midday --SP] it is forbidden to pray the morning Amidah, and this law refers to the cases mentioned previously in the paragraph, [namely one who delayed praying] whether deliberately or by mistake. Some are lenient [to allow praying the morning Amidah] during the period of a half [a seasonal] hour after midday, but as far as the law is concerned it may be inferred from the P'ri Mgadim and the Derech HaChaim that one should not budge from the decision of the R'av [the Rema]. So may be inferred from the Biur HaGr'a that in fact [at midday] the time for the Minchah Amidah has already arrived as [this time] starts at the beginning of the 7th hour, but because we are not experts [at judging what time of day it is precisely] perhaps he will err [and pray Minchah before midday, so we make the time for Mincha at a half an hour after midday to be on the safe side --SP] and accordingly our Rabbis of blessed memory forbade [praying the morning Amidah after midday]. Therefore, one who mistakenly or by dint of unavoidable circumstances did not pray the Amidah before midday should wait half [a seasonal] hour after midday (i.e. which is when the time for Minchah starts) and pray the Minchah Amidah and then afterwards pray the morning Amidah by way of "making up" [for the missed Amidah] but not the other way round i.e. at that point in time praying Minchah is an obligation and so it must come first --SP], and then only if he [missed praying the morning Amidah] by mistake or because of some unavoidable circumstance, but [if he missed it] deliberately then there is no way of correcting the situation - all of this [the laws regarding "making up" a missed Amidah] will be explained in Siman 108. But if after the fact he prayed the morning Amidah in the half hour after midday, he has fulfilled [his obligation] and there is no need to pray it a second time (Derech HaChaim - see there again), and see in the novellae of Rabbi Akivah Eiger what he writes about this matter in the name of the Tz'lach.*

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***** Today's Halacha is dedicated in memory of Maya ben Isaac Tzvi HaKohen, A"H (may he rest in peace), dedicated on the occasion of his first Yahrtzeit. Dedicated by his son. *****

Siman 89. The Laws of Prayer and Their Proper Time

89:2. Once (8) the time for prayer has arrived, it is prohibited to (9) go to (10) a friend's house and greet him by saying "Shalom" since [one of the] (11) names of G-d is "Shalom". It is permissible to greet him by saying "Good Morning." This also is only permitted when there is a (12) necessity to go and check on some matter in that direction, but if he is going [out of his way] to greet his friend before his prayers, even this is prohibited.

Additionally, it is prohibited to bow along with this greeting, and (13) some say that bowing is prohibited even if he did not go to his friend's house and if he has begun to say the morning blessings, (14) one need not be concerned. If he did not go to his friend's house but met him on the way, it is permitted to say "Shalom". Some say that even if he (15) meets his friend in the street he

should only say "Good Morning" so that (16) he will be aware that it is prohibited to engage in other activities before praying.

MB 8: *The time [that it is permissible to _begin_ saying] the Amidah - daybreak, and see the Biyur Halacha in Siman 1. [First of all a couple of definitions of phrases relating to time: Amud Haschar - Daybreak or the first light. This is 72 minutes before sunrise. Haiyer Hamizrach - Lighting the horizon. This is after daybreak and before sunrise. The Biyur Halacha discusses the situations that one may pray during each of these times. - NW]*

MB 9: *To go to - The same rules are applicable to one who leaves his place in the Synagogue to greet his friend who is elsewhere in the Synagogue.*

MB 10: *His friends house - The same is applicable if [the house is that of] his father or teacher. If he is afraid of insulting a powerful person, if he can get away by extending his hand without saying "Shalom" that is preferable. If he meets a powerful person in the street it is even permissible to say "Shalom" to him since according to the letter of the law it is permissible, as we see later.*

MB 11: *Name of - It is not proper to mention G-d's name as a part of honoring a person prior to honoring G-d Himself. Further investigation is required regarding using G-d's name in languages other than Hebrew. It is logical to conclude that saying "The Merciful One shall have mercy on you" is permitted since he is blessing his friend in the name of G-d.*

MB 12: *Necessity to go - Meaning that there was another purpose requiring him to be in the courtyard of his friend, and since he was there he went to his friend's door to say "Good Morning". However to say "Shalom" even in the synagogue is prohibited, and see in the Biyur Halacha (*). This "necessity" refers only to _checking_ on some matter, but to become _involved_ in some matter is prohibited. [* The Biyur Halacha discusses the case where there was some other reason that required to go to his friend's door. In that case there is a difference of opinion whether he is permitted to say "Shalom" to his friend. The Pri Megadim permits him to say "Shalom" in such a case while the B"ach and the G"RA prohibit - NW]*

MB 13: *Some say that bowing is prohibited - This is the proper way to act.*

MB 14: *One need not be concerned - Meaning that it is permitted to bow when he has not gone to his friend's house to greet him. However to go to his friend's house and either bow or say "Shalom" even after he has begun to say the morning blessings is prohibited.*

MB 16: *Meets him - He should not say "Shalom" even if he usually says "Shalom" to him.*

MB 17: *He will be aware - Although this is halachically permissible, it has become the custom to be*

strict for this reason (). If he has began the blessings, one is not required to be strict and may say "Shalom". This all refers to initiating the greeting, but if one is greeted by a friend, it is permitted to respond. It is certainly permitted, after one has prayed, to go to his friends house and say "Shalom", even though his friend, who has not yet prayed, will respond to his greeting. [* To be aware that other activities are prohibited before praying - NW]*

89:3. It is prohibited to become (17) involved in (18) one's needs or (19) to begin a trip (20) before reciting the Amidah. [Rama: Some are lenient and say once he recites some of the blessings said before "Boruch Sheamar" [it is permitted], but it is preferable to be strict]. (21) One should not eat or drink, but it is (22) permissible to drink water before praying whether during the week or on (23) Shabbos and Yom Tov. Eating or drinking when health issues are involved is (24) permissible.

MB 17: *Involved in - Before the light of morning it is permissible to work but the Eliyahu Rabba writes that one should first recite the morning blessings. This recitation of the morning blessings is permissible only within the half hour before dawn.*

MB 18: *One's needs - One who has Jewish servants that must attend to him [in the morning] should instruct [the servants] that when they waken, they should first wash their hands, say the morning blessings, recite a paragraph of Shema and then attend to their master. This is the preferred way but according to the letter of the law is not a requirement.*

MB 19: *To begin a trip - Similarly, if the time for saying the afternoon or evening prayers has commenced and one wants to begin a trip, the same laws are applicable.*

MB 20: *Before reciting the Amidah - Even if he will reach his destination in time to pray with a Minyan at the proper time, it is prohibited to travel since traveling is considered a _personal_ need. This is only in an normal situation, however if the situation is pressing, such as he is traveling with a caravan which will not wait for him, it is permissible to travel and pray along the way. Most authorities permit this even if the sun has already risen.*

MB 21: *One should not eat or drink - One who transgresses this is referred to by our sages as one who first fulfills his own desires before accepting upon himself the sovereignty of the Almighty. The sages also interpreted the phrase of the bible "Lo Toachlu Al Hadam" (Don't eat on the blood) to mean that one should not eat prior to praying for ones life (literally blood). Tasting a slight amount is also prohibited.*

MB 22: *Permissible to drink water - As this does not constitute haughtiness (*). This is only without sugar, but sugared water is prohibited and certainly beer is prohibited. Tea and coffee are permitted before praying if he is drinking so that he will be able to concentrate upon his prayers, especially if he is used to*

drinking them and will not feel relaxed without them. This is only without milk or sugar [in the coffee or tea]. It is customary to be lenient and put sugar [in one's coffee or tea]. In order to resolve [the custom of using sugar with the prohibition of using sugar] one can say that the opinions (including that of the Radva"z) that said that using sugar is a sign of haughtiness referred to using sugar to sweeten the drink, but if one puts sugar in his mouth to enable him to drink (and without this sweetness the tea or coffee is tastes too bitter) would not be considered haughtiness. In summary, putting sugar in the tea or coffee or eating sweets along with the drink is a leniency which is prohibited before praying unless one has a weak constitution and needs to eat for health reasons. In any case, it is preferable to first say the paragraph of "Shema Yisroel". The P"T (The Mishnah Brurah brings from the Sefer P"T Hachadash - I don't know who that is - NW) says that it is proper to avoid drinking tea in a group before praying - see his reason there. There is another reason to prohibit this custom as the Rashb"a writes and so says the Bais Yoseph in his name, and it is brought in the Shulchan Aruch Seif 2 that it is prohibited to become involved in ones needs before praying so that he does not become distracted and by getting together to drink tea one can become involved and miss the time for saying Shema and the Amidah. [Which would be the case if one eats a meal before praying since one is putting his personal needs ahead of praying to G-d who is the _source_ of all of those needs - NW]*

MB 23: *Shabbos - The prohibition is not due to the fact that he has not made Kiddish, as this prohibition [of not eating before Kiddish] is only applicable after the time that it is permissible to make Kiddish. Here since he has not yet prayed, he can not yet make Kiddish. After Musaf, one must not eat prior to Kiddish. As far as before Musaf is concerned see 186:3.*

MB 24: *Permissible - Even elaborate foods that would otherwise be considered haughtiness are permitted, even for a person who is not ill, since he is eating for health reasons and not for haughtiness. Certainly it is permitted to drink potions or liquid medications.*

89:4. One who is thirsty or (25) hungry is considered as if he is ill and if he can concentrate on praying, he should pray, and if not, he can delay praying until he has eaten and (26) drunk.

MB 25: *Hungry - This refers to somebody who is _very_ hungry.*

MB 26: *Drunk - We can infer that he is not _required_ to eat. The reason [that he is not required] is that we have lost the ability of full concentration (*) but if one wants to eat or drink to improve concentration is permitted. [* meaning that even eating will not restore the ability to fully concentrate - NW]*