

THE PIRCHEI SHOSHANIM ROADMAP TO PRAYER PROJECT

The Roadmap to Prayer

Lesson 12

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The 7 Blessings recited with Krias She'ma

There are a total of seven blessings (*brochos*) for the two daily Shema Readings (*Birchos Krias She'ma*). One set of blessings (*brochos*) are for the reading in the morning and another set for the evening. They correspond to the verse (*pasuk*) in *Tehillim*, *She'va bayome hillalticha* (Seven times a day I praise you).

The seven blessings (*brochos*) for the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*) are the three that are said in the morning, two before the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) and one afterwards. At night by *Ma'ariv* (nighttime prayers), we recite two before the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) and two afterwards.

Aside from this, we also have a custom of reciting *Kaddish* seven times a day for that is also based on the verse *She'va bayome hillalticha* (Seven times a day I praise you).

The Bracha for Daylight and Nighttime

Each day we recite the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*) twice; once in the morning and once in the evening. Our Sages (*Chazal*²) instituted seven blessings (*brochos*) to accompany them. They are the two blessings of Who forms the light (*Yotzeir Ohr*) and With a great love (*Ahavah Rabba*) which precedes the morning *She'ma* and the blessings (*Bracha* of *Go'al Yisrael*) that comes afterwards. In the evening it is preceded

¹ Tehilim 119:164

² Acronym for *CHachomeinu Zichronam Livracha* (CHZ'L = *Chazal*), our Sages of Blessed Memory

by the *Bracha* of *Hama'ariv Aravim* and *Abavas Olam*, and is followed by two more *brochos*; *Go'al Yisroel* and *Hashkiveinu*.

שחרית לחול Weekday Morning Prayer

First *bracha* begins

ברוך אתה השם, אלקינו מלך העולם, יוצר אור, ובורא חשך, עשה שלום ובורא את הכל.

המאיר לארץ ולדירים עליה ברחמים, ובטובו מחדש בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. מה רבו מעשיך השם, כלם בחכמה עשית, מלאה הארץ קניגין. המלך המרומם לבדו מאז, המשבח והמפאיר והמתנשא מימות עולם. אלקי עולם, ברחמין הרבים רחם עלינו, אדון עזנו צור משגבנו, מגן ישענו משגב בעדנו. אל ברוך גדול דעה, הכין ופעל זהרי חמה, טוב יצר כבוד לשמו, מאורות נתן סביבות עזו, פנות צבאיו קדושים, רוממי שדי, תמיד מספרים כבוד אל וקדשתו. תתברך השם אלקינו בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת, על כל שבח מעשה ידך, ועל מאורי אור שיצרת, המה יפארוך סלה.

תתברך לנצח צורנו מלכנו וגאלנו, בורא קדושים. ישתבח שמך לעד מלכנו, יוצר משרתים, ואשר משרתיו כלם עומדים ברום עולם, ומשמיעים ביראה יחד בקול, דברי אלקים חיים ומלך עולם. כלם אהובים, כלם ברורים, כלם גבורים, כלם קדושים, וכלם עשים באימה וביראה רצון קוניהם. וכלם פותחים את פיהם בקדשה ובטהרה, בשיירה ובזמרה, ומברכין ומשבחים, ומפאירין ומעריצין, ומקדישין וממליכין:

את שם האל, המלך הגדול, הגבור והנורא, קדוש הוא. וכלם מקבלים עליהם על מלכות שמים זה מזה, ונותנים באהבה רשות זה לזה, להקדיש ליוצרים בנחת רוח, בשפה ברורה ובנעימה, קדשה כלם כאחד עונים באימה ואומרים ביראה:

קדוש, קדוש, קדוש, השם צבאות, מלא כל הארץ כבודו.

והאופנים וחיות הקדש ברעש גדול מתנשאים לעמת שרפים, לעמתם משבחים ואומרים:

ברוך כבוד השם ממקומו.

לאל ברוך נעימות יתנו, למלך אל חי וקיים זמרות יאמרו ותשבחות ישמיעו, כי הוא לבדו מרום וקדוש, פועל גבורות, עשה חדשות, בעל מלחמות, זורע צדקות, מצמיח ישועות, בורא רפואות, נורא תהלות, אדון הנפלאות, המחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. כאמור: לעשה אורים גדלים, כי לעולם חסדו. (והתקין מאורות משמח עולמו אשר ברא.) אור חדש על ציון תאיר, ונזכה כלנו במהרה לאורו. ברוך אתה השם, יוצר

המאורות. End of first *bracha*.

אהבת עולם אהבתנו, השם אלקינו, חמלה גדולה ויתרה חמלת עלינו. אבינו מלכנו, בעבור שמך הגדול, ובעבור אבותינו שבטחו בך, ותלמדם חקי חיים, לעשות רצונך בלבב שלם, כן תחננו ותלמדנו. אבינו, אב הרחמן, המרחם, רחם עלינו, ותן בלבנו בינה, להבין ולהשפיל, לשמע, ללמוד וללמד, לשמר ולעשות ולקיים את כל דברי תלמוד תורתך

³ Outside of *Eretz Yisroel* (The Land of Israel) there is a widespread custom to add the *bracha* of *Baruch Hashbem le'olam etc.* See *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* Simon 236

באהבה. והאר עינינו בתורתך, ודבק לבנו במצותיך, ויחד לבבנו לאהבה וליראת את שמך, למען לא נבוש ולא נכלם ולא נכשל לעולם ועד. כי בשם קדשך הגדול הגבור והנורא בטחנו, נגילה ונשמחה בישועתך. ורחמיך השם אלקינו, וחסדיך הרבים, אל יעזבונו נצח סלה ועד. מהר והבא עלינו ברכה ושלום מהרה מארבע כנפות (כל) הארץ, ושבור על הגוים מעל צנארנו, ותוליכנו מהרה קוממיות לארצנו. כי אל פועל ישועות אתה, ובנו בחרת מכל עם ולשון. וקרבתנו מלכנו לשמך הגדול סלה באמת באהבה, להודות לך וליחדך באהבה, ולאהבה את שמך. ברוך אתה השם, הבוחר בעמו ישראל באהבה. End of second bracha

(יחיד אומר: אל מלך נאמן.)

שמע | ישראל, השם | אלקינו, השם | אחד...אני השם | אלקיכם, אשר הוצאתי | אתכם | מארץ מצרים, להיות לכם לאלהים, אני | השם | אלקיכם.

אמת ויציב, ונכון וקיים, וישר ונאמן, ואהוב וחביב, ונחמד ונעים, ונורא ואדיר, ומתקן ומקבל, וטוב ויפה הדבר הזה עלינו לעולם ועד. אמת אלקי עולם מלכנו, צור יעקב, מגן ישענו, לדר ודר הוא קיים, ושמו קיים, וכסאו נכון, ומלכותו ואמונתו לעד קיימת. ודבריו חיים וקיימים, נאמנים ונחמדים לעד ולעולמי עולמים. על אבותינו ועלינו, על בנינו ועל דורותינו, ועל כל דורות זרע ישראל עבדיך.

על הראשונים ועל האחרונים, דבר טוב וקיים לעולם ועד, אמת ואמונה חק ולא יעבר. אמת שאתה הוא השם אלקינו ואלהי אבותינו, מלכנו מלך אבותינו, גאלנו גאל אבותינו, יוצרנו צור ישועתנו, פודנו ומצילנו מעולם הוא שמך, ואין לנו עוד אלקים זולתך, סלה.

עזרת אבותינו אתה הוא מעולם, מגן ומושיע להם ולבניהם אחריהם בכל דור ודור. ברום עולם מושבך, ומשפטך וצדקתך עד אפסי ארץ. אמת, אשרי איש שישמע למצותיך, ותורתך ודברך ישים על לבו. אמת, אתה הוא אדון לעמך, ומלך גבור לריב ריבם לאבות ובנים. אמת, אתה הוא ראשון ואתה הוא אחרון, ומבלעדך אין לנו מלך גואל ומושיע. אמת, ממצרים גאלתנו, השם אלקינו, ומבית עבדים פדיתנו. כל בכוריהם הרגת, ובכורך ישראל גאלת, וים סוף להם בקעת, וזדים טבעת, וידידים העברת, ויכסו מים צריהם, אחד מהם לא נותר. על זאת שבחו אהובים ורוממו לאל, ונתנו ידידים זמרות שירות ותשבחות, ברכות והודאות, למלך אל חי וקיים, רם ונשא, גדול ונורא, משפיל גאים עדי ארץ, ומגביה שפלים עדי מרום, מוציא אסירים, ופודה עניים, ועוזר דלים, ועונה לעמו ישראל בעת שועם אליו. תהלות לאל עליון גואלם, ברוך הוא ומברך. משה ובני ישראל לך ענו שירה בשמחה רבה, ואמרו כלם:

מי כמכה באלם השם, מי כמכה נאדר בקדש, נורא תהלת עשה פלא. שירה חדשה שבחו גאולים לשמך הגדול על שפת הים, יחד כלם הודו והמליכו ואמרו: השם ימלך לעולם ועד.

צור ישראל, קומה בעזרת ישראל, ופדה כנאמן יהודה וישראל. ונאמר: גאלנו השם צבאות שמו, קדוש ישראל. ברוך אתה השם, גאל ישראל. End of third bracha

מעריב לחול Weekday Evening Prayer

והוא רחום יכפר עון ולא ישחית, והרבה להשיב אפו, ולא יעיר כל חמתו. השם הושיעה, המלך יעגנו ביום קראנו.

ש"ץ ברכו את השם המברך.
קהל וש"ץ ברוך השם המברך לעולם ועד.

First bracha begins

ברוך אתה השם, אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר בדברו מעריב ערבים, בחכמה פותח שערים, ובתבונה משנה עתים, ומחליף את הזמנים, ומסדר את הכוכבים במשמרותיהם ברקיע כרצונו. בורא יום ולילה, גולל אור מפני חשך, וחשך מפני אור. ומעביר יום ומביא לילה, ומבדיל בין יום ובין לילה, השם צבאות שמו. אל חי וקיים, תמיד ימלוך עלינו לעולם ועד. ברוך אתה השם, המעריב ערבים.

End of first bracha

אהבת עולם בית ישראל עמך אהבת, תורה ומצות, חקים ומשפטים אותנו למדת. על כן השם אלקינו, בשכבנו ובקומנו נשיח בחקיך, ונשמח בדברי תורתך ובמצותיך לעולם ועד. כי הם חיינו וארך ימינו, ובהם נהגה יומם ולילה, ואהבתך אל תסיר ממנו לעולמים.

ברוך אתה השם, אוהב עמו ישראל.

(יחיד אומר: אל מלך נאמן)

שמע ישראל, השם אלקינו, השם אחד.
ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד.

ואהבת את השם אלקיך, בכל לבבך, ובכל נפשך, ובכל מאדך. והיו הדברים האלה, אשר אנכי מצוך היום, על לבבך. ושונתם לבגידך, ודברת בם, בשבתך בביתך, ובלכתך בדרך, ובשכבך, ובקומך. וקשרתם לאותך על ידך, והיו לטטפת בין עיניך. וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך.

והיה אם שמע תשמעו אל מצותי, אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום, לאהבה את השם אלקיכם ולעבדו, בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם. ונתתי מטר ארצכם בעתו, יורה ומלקוש, ואספת דגנך ותירשך ויצהרן. ונתתי עשב ארצך בשדך לבהמתך, ואכלת ושבעת. השמרו לכם פן יפתה לבבכם, וסרתם ועבדתם אלהים אחרים והשתחיתם להם. וחרה אף השם בכם, ועצר את השמים ולא יהיה מטר, והאדמה לא תתן את יבולה, ואבדתם מהרה מעל הארץ הטבה אשר השם נתן לכם. ושמתם את דברי אלה על לבבכם ועל נפשכם, וקשרתם אתם לאותך על ידכם, והיו לטטפת בין עיניכם. ולמדתם אתם את בניכם לדבר בם, בשבתך בביתך, ובלכתך בדרך, ובשכבך, ובקומך. וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך. למען ירבו ימיכם וימי בניכם על האדמה אשר נשבע השם לאבותיכם לתת להם, כימי השמים על הארץ.

ויאמר השם אל משה לאמר. דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם, ועשו להם ציצת על כנפי בגדיהם לדרתם, ונתנו על ציצת הכנף פתיל תכלת. והיה לכם לציצת, וראיתם אתו וזכרתם את כל מצות השם, ועשיתם אתם, ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם, אשר אתם זנים אחריהם. למען תזכרו ועשיתם את כל מצותי, והייתם קדשים לאלהיכם. אני השם אלקיכם, אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים, להיות לכם לאלקים, אני השם אלקיכם.

אמת ואמונה כל זאת, וקיים עלינו, כי הוא השם אלקינו ואין זולתו, ואנחנו ישראל עמו. הפודנו מיד מלכים, מלכנו הגואלנו מכף כל העריצים. האל הנפרע לנו מצרינו, והמשלם גמול לכל איבי נפשנו, העשה גדולות עד אין חקר, ונפלאות עד אין מספר. השם נפשונו בחיים, ולא נתן למוט רגלנו. המדריכנו על במות אויבינו, וירם קרננו על כל שונאינו. העשה לנו נסים ונקמה בפרעה, אותות ומופתים באדמת בני חם. המכה בעברתו כל בכורי מצרים, ויוצא את עמו ישראל מתוכם לחרות עולם. המעביר בניו בין גזרי ים סוף, את רודפיהם ואת שונאיהם בתהומות טבע. וראו בניו גבורתו, שבחו והודו לשמו. ומלכותו ברצון קבלו עליהם, משה ובני ישראל לך ענו שירה בשמחה רבה, ואמרו כלם:

מי כְּמִכָּה בְּאֵלֶם הַשָּׁם, מִי כְּמִכָּה נֶאֱדָר בְּקִדְּשׁ, נוֹרָא תְהִלַּת, עֲשֵׂה פְּלֵא. מִלְכוּתְךָ רָאוּ בְּיָנֶיךָ,
בִּזְקַע יָם לִפְנֵי מִשְׁה, זֶה אֵלֵי עֲנוּ וְאָמְרוּ:
הַשָּׁם יִמְלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. וְנֶאֱמַר: כִּי פָדָה הַשָּׁם אֶת יַעֲקֹב, וּגְאָלוּ מִיַּד חִזְק מִמֶּנּוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
הַשָּׁם, גֹּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

End of third *bracha*

הַשְּׂכִיבֵנו הַשָּׁם אֱלֹקֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ מִלְּכָנוּ לְחַיִּים, וּפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִפַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ,
וְתַקְּנֵנוּ בְּעֵצָה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ. וְהִגֵּן בְּעַדְנוּ, וְהִסֵּר מֵעָלֵינוּ אוֹיֵב, דָּבָר,
וְחָרֵב, וְרַעֲב, וְיָגוֹן, וְהִסֵּר שָׁטָן מִלְּפָנֵינוּ וּמֵאַחֲרֵינוּ, וּבְצַל כְּנָפֶיךָ תִּסְתִּירֵנוּ, כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמְרָנוּ
וּמְצִילֵנוּ אַתָּה, כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ חַנוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה. וְשָׁמֹר צִאתָנוּ וּבּוֹאֵנוּ, לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם,
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה הַשָּׁם, שׁוֹמֵר עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַד.

End of fourth *bracha*.

The *Gemora Yerushalmi*⁴ states:

Mishna: *In the morning we say two blessings (brochos) beforehand and one blessing (bracha) afterwards and in the evening we say two blessings (brochos) beforehand and two blessings (brochos) afterwards.*

Gemora: *Rebbe Simone in the name of Rebbe Shmuel the son of Nachman says it corresponds to the verse (pasuk) V'ehagisa bo yomam vo'layla (you should contemplate it day and night); that your "begayos"⁵ should be in them both in the morning and in the evening.*

Rebbe Yeboshua the son of Levi says it corresponds to the verse (pasuk) Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous judgments (She'va bayome hillalticha al mishpetey tzidkecha).

The **Sefer Chareidim** explains that the first statement of the *Yerushalmi* is equating the commandment (*mitzva*) to recite the evening *She'ma* to that of the morning, saying that they are both equally as important and that they both call for three blessings (*brochos*) a piece. For the purpose of this equation the final *bracha* of *Hashkiveinu* is not counted because it's said as a prayer for protection at night and particularly for the Shema Reading.

⁴ Berachos 1: 5. Note: See also the Gemora in Berachos 11b and *Tosefos 2a d"b Mevorach*.

⁵ *Yeboshua* 1: 8

⁶ Expressions

The second statement of the *Yerushalmi* is commenting on the total number of blessings for the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*), which is seven⁷. Our Sages specifically composed seven blessings, since **Dovid Hamelech** (King David) praised *Hashem* seven times a day.

The Yerushalmi concludes with Rebbe Nachman in the name of Rebbe Manna; whoever fulfills "Seven times a day I praise you" (She'vah bayome hillalticha) is considered as if he has also fulfilled the command of "you should contemplate it by day and by night" (Ve'hogisa bo yomam va'layla).

The seven brochos are holy
and elevated words

What this statement means is that although the importance of the commandment (*mitzvah*) to recite the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*) twice a day is primarily to submit oneself to *Hashem's* dominion and Torah commands, one is at the same time fulfilling the commandment (*mitzvah*) of learning Torah (*Talmud Torah*⁸). The purpose of the seven blessings (*brochos*) is to underscore that Torah study is not an intellectual pursuit. By reciting a blessing before its recital we are demonstrating that it is a holy and elevated commandment of *Hashem*, to learn and study it each and every day. The Gemora in Nedarim 81a attributes the reason for the destruction (*Churban*) of the Holy Temple (*Beis Hamikdash*) to the lack of importance given to the commandment (*mitzvah*) of Torah study which was indicated by that generation by not reciting the blessings for Torah study⁹.

Note: It appears that the *Yerushalmi* predicates that the seven blessings (*brochos*) are blessings that accompany the Shema Readings *Krias She'ma* and are not independent blessings (*brochos*) according to the first explanation as well as according to the final statement.

The **Elya Rabba** in the beginning of *Simon 58* cites the **Tur** that the seven blessings (*brochos*) were instituted for the seven praises that **Dovid Hamelech** praised *Hashem* daily. He adds that the **Levush** explains that four of the blessings (*brochos*) were instituted for the evening prayer since at the time when *Hashem* created the world, He created night first and then He created morning, as the verse (*pasuk*) states in *Bereishis*; *Vaye'hee erev vaye'hee boker yom echad* (And there was evening and there was morning one day).

⁷ This time it does include the *brocha Hashkiveinu*

⁸ See Sha'agas Aryeh *Dinei Krias She'ma Simon 1* that explains the *mitzvah* of *She'ma* as a *mitzvah* to learn Torah twice a day; once in the morning and again in the evening.

⁹ Refer to The Pirchei Shoshanim Shulchan Aruch Project, Orach Chaim Volume 1, Shiur 15.

The **Rashba**¹⁰ explains that both the morning and evening arrangements are equal in the amount of parts that it contains:

- The morning consists of **six** parts; three blessings (*brochos*) and three portions of the Shema Reading (*Krias She'ma*).
- The evening also consists of **six** parts; four *brochos* and two parts to the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*) since at night, the *Yerushalmi* holds that the section (*parsha*) of *Tzitzis* is omitted. According to this interpretation, the seven blessings (*brochos*) correspond to the total amount of blessings (*brochos*) recited in the morning and evening blessings of the Shema Reading (*Birchos Krias She'ma*). The equality of the two arrangements explains the statement of **Rebbe Simone**.

The **Elya Rabba** cites a *Medrash*¹¹ that the verse (*pasuke*) says Seven times a day I praise you (*She'va bayome hillalticha*) is referring to the seven commandments (*mitzvos*) that are performed each morning and seven each evening.

They are:

Morning

1. ***Yotzeir Ohr*** - *Who Forms the Light*
2. ***Ahavah Rabba*** - *With Abundant Love*
3. ***She'ma*** - *The reading of She'ma Yisrael with Ve'avantab*
4. ***Vehayah im Sho'mo'ah*** - *If you listen well – 2nd Section of She'ma*
5. ***Parshas Tzitzis*** - *The paragraph of Tzitzis – 3rd section of She'ma*
6. ***Emmes ve'yatziv*** – *It is True and it is Firm – End of the Shema Reading and the beginning of the last blessing Go'al Yisrael - Who Redeems Yisrael – the third and final blessing.*
7. ***Go'al Yisrael*** - *The Redeemer of Israel*

¹⁰ Responsa Volume 1:51. See also *Rashba* at the end of the first perek of Berachos, where he ends off saying that there is another explanation of the verse *She'va bayome etc.* from the *Medrash Tehilim* (*Shochar Tov*) that there are seven mitzvos in the morning arrangement for *krias She'ma* as well as for the evening *krias She'ma*.

¹¹ *Shochar Tov simon 6*

Evening

1. **Ma'ariv Aravim** - *Who brings on the Evening*
2. **Ahavas Olam** – *With an everlasting love*
3. **She'ma** – *The reading of She'ma Yisrael with ve'ahavtah*
4. **Vehayah im sho'mo'ah** – *If you Listen well*
5. **Parshas Tzitzis** -*The paragraph of Tzitzis – 3rd section of Shema*
6. **Emmes ve'yatziv** – It is True and it is Firm – End of the Shema Reading and the beginning of the last blessing *Go'al Yisrael* - Who Redeems Yisrael – the third and final blessing.
7. **Hashkiveinu** – Lay us down to sleep

At night, since we do not recite the section (*parsha*) of *Tzitzis*¹², the extra blessing (*bracha*) of *Hashkiveinu* was added, bringing the total to seven as well.

The **Elya Rabba** questions why the *Rishonim* avoid explaining that the verse Seven times I bless you (*She'va bayome hillaltichu*) corresponds to the seven commandments (*mitzvos*) of each morning and of each evening as cited in the *Medrash*. He suggests that it is because the *Talmud Bavli* says to recite the section (*parsha*) of *Tzitzis* in the evening as well, thus negating the explanation of the *Medrash*. That is why the **Levush** finds another reason that at night there are four blessings (*brochos*) while in the day there are three, bringing the total to seven.

Until what time in the day may you read the Shema – (Zeman Krias She'ma and Zeman Tefilla)

The official time for reciting the She'ma Yisrael (*Krias She'ma*) in the morning is up until the end of the third hour of the day which is a quarter of the day.

The official time for Prayer ends at a third of the day which is at the end of the fourth hour of the day.

¹² As was the custom of the *Bnei Ma'arava* (the people who lived in Eretz Yisroel) like it's mentioned in the Gemora Berachos 14b

Sha'os Zemaniyos – Determining the actual length of a daylight Hour

How do we calculate the hours of a day?

Each day is divided into twelve equal parts; each part constitutes an “Adjusted *Halachic* (legal) hour”.

There are two ways to calculate this.

The opinion of the Magen Avraham is to calculate the amount of time from *Alos Hashachar*³ (dawn) until *Tzeis Hakochovim*⁴ (*Lit. when the stars first come out*). That amount of time is divided by 12 which gives us 1 hour SZ (*Sha'os Zemaniyos*).

E.g. If *Alos Hashachar* (dawn) is at 5:00 A.M. and *Tzeis Hakochovim* is at 8:00 P.M. then the day is 15 hours long. This gives us 1:15 (1 hours: and 15 minutes) as a *Sha'ah Zemanis* (Adjusted *Halachic* hour). The end of the third hour¹⁵ would be at 8:45¹⁶ A.M. and the end of the fourth hour¹⁷ would be at 10:00¹⁸ A.M.

The Concentration (*Kavanah*) Necessary for reciting Shema

It is necessary to concentrate on two things when reciting the first verse of the reciting of the Shema (*Krias She'ma*):

☞ Before reciting the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) one must recognize that he is about to fulfill the *mitzvah* commanded by the Torah. It is always necessary before performing a Torah based commandment (*mitzvah de'oraissa*) that one should have explicit intent (*Kavanah*) to fulfill one's Torah obligation with this action.

¹³ The rise of the “morningstar”

¹⁴ When 3 medium-sized stars are visible

¹⁵ *Sof zeman Krias She'ma* (ending time for reciting the *She'ma*)

¹⁶ $3 \times 1:15 = 3:45$ added to 5:00 A.M. = 8:45 A.M.

¹⁷ *Sof zeman tefila* (ending time for Prayer)

¹⁸ $4 \times 1:15 = 5$ hours added to 5:00 A.M. = 10:00 A.M.

One cannot assume by *Ma'ariv* that it is self evident that one is reciting *Krias She'ma* for the sake of the *mitzvah*, since we daven (pray) *Ma'ariv* many times before the proper time for reciting Shema. Thus, even when reciting *Krias She'ma*, it is possible that one recites it without intent to fulfill the obligation of reciting the Shema (*Krias She'ma*).

- ✎ Secondly, since the main point of reciting Shema (*Krias She'ma*) is for the express purpose of *kabbalas ole malchus shamayim* (accepting *Hashem's* sovereign dominion over all matters), one must at least understand the first verse of *She'ma Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad*, which declares this principle .
- ✎ If one failed to have these two intentions¹⁹ (*kavanos*), one should repeat the Shema Reading (*Krias She'ma*) again with *Kavanah*.
- ✎ If one needs to repeat the verse *She'ma Yisrael* in *shul*, one should do so quietly so that no one interprets his repetition as a sign that he's a heretic and is practicing multideism as if to say there is more than one Power that governs the world.
- ✎ In private, one may repeat the verse even out loud.

Additional Laws הלכות are:

- ✎ When reciting the verse *She'ma Yisrael* and the verse of *Baruch Sheim Kevode Malchusso* until the end of the verse, one may not interrupt them for any prayer or *Amen*.
- ✎ Likewise, one may not interrupt when one is in the middle of the closing of a blessing. For example, when one is saying *Baruch atta Hashem, Yotzeir hame'oros*, (*Blessed are you G-d, the creator of the Light*).
- ✎ During the other verses of the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*) one may interrupt for:
 - *Amen* of *Hakeil Hakadosh* (G-d the Holy One) and *Shome'ah Tefilla* (Who hears/listens Prayer) (*the end of the middle section of She'moneh Esrei*).
 - *Borchu* of the *Chazzan* (*Before the blessings and the Shema Readings*) or someone receiving an *Alyah* to the Torah

¹⁹ Where applicable; both *kavanos* by *Ma'ariv* and the latter by *Shacharis*

- For the two stanzas of *Kadosh* and *Baruch keevode* of *Kedusha*
- ✎ Hinting without verbally speaking is also forbidden. If a child is disturbing one's *kavanah* during prayer, one is permitted to hint to the child to stop disturbing his prayer.
- ✎ One who omits a word from a verse of the Shema Reading (*Krias She'ma*) must return to the beginning of that verse and continue reciting the verses in order from that point forward.
- ✎ If an entire verse is omitted from the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*), one must return to that point and continue reciting the verses in order from that point forward.
- ✎ One who says the words “**and you should write them on the doorposts of your house and your gates**” (*Uch'savtam al mezuzos bei'secha u'visharecha*) and is not sure whether he's at the end of the first or second paragraph²⁰, if one knows he was reciting it at the same pace of the leader of the congregation (*shali'ach tzibbur*), he can assume that if the *shali'ach tzibbur* is at the end of the second paragraph that he is up to there as well. If he can't time himself this way, then one must act strictly, returning to the end of the first paragraph and continuing with the second paragraph from the beginning.
- ✎ If one recites the morning Shema Reading (*Krias She'ma shel Shacharis*) after the first quarter but before the end of the first third of the day, one should still recite the blessings of the Shema (*Birchos Krias She'ma*) as well.
- ✎ After the end of the first third of the day, one should still recite the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) but without its blessings (*brochos*).
- ✎ One, who missed the proper time for reciting the blessings (*brochos*) not due to negligence, should recite the blessings (*brochos*) up until noon.
- ✎ If when praying (davening) with a *minyán* one sees that they will miss reciting the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) during the first quarter of the day, one should recite the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) at present without its blessings (*brochos*); then continue to pray (*daven*) as usual, reciting *Krias She'ma* with its *brochos*. In such an event, one must be careful about the laws of interruptions during the first Shema Reading (*Krias She'ma*). During the subsequent reading during the *Birchas Yotzeir* one may

²⁰ This is because both the first and second paragraphs contain the very same *pasuk*

interrupt for those things that may interrupt for while between the paragraphs of *Krias She'ma* and even by the verses of *She'ma Yisrael* and *Baruch sheim kevo de malchusso etc.*²¹

- ✎ Furthermore, if on account of repeating *Krias She'ma* by the Blessings of Yotzeir (*Birchas Yotzeir*) one will miss reciting *She'moneh Esrei* (*Tefilla*) with the congregation (*tzibbur*), he may skip the Shema Reading (*Krias She'ma*), finish the Blessings of the Shema (*Birchos Krias She'ma*) and then recite *She'moneh Esrei*.
- ✎ If one started *Yotzeir Obr* and realizes that the congregation (*tzibbur*) will miss the time for reading the Shema (*Krias She'ma*), he may go ahead to recite *Krias She'ma* with its blessings and wait for the congregation (*tzibbur*) at the beginning of “The helper of our Forefathers” (*Ezras avoseinu*) or “With a New Song” (*Shira Chadashah*) or even after just finishing to ***Hashem Elokeichem Emmes***²².
- ✎ One may interrupt *Pesukei De'Zimra* in order to recite *Krias She'ma* in its proper time.

Laws Pertaining to Women עזרת נשים

- ✎ Women should preferably not recite the Blessings of the Shema (*Birchos Krias She'ma*) after the fourth hour of the day.
- ✎ Women are exempt from the *mitzvah* of *Krias She'ma*, since women are generally exempt from positive Torah Commandments (*mitzvos assei*) that are time-bound.
- ✎ Nevertheless, they should continue their practice of reciting the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) as usual.
- ✎ They are not obligated even by custom (*minhag*) to be particular to recite the Shema (*Krias She'ma*) during the first quarter of the day.
- ✎ The Blessings of the Shema (*Birchos Krias She'ma*) are optional for women, and they may recite them voluntarily, even for those women from Sephardic descent according to some opinions

²¹ *Sefer Ishei Yisrael* 19:28

²² See *Sefer Ishei Yisrael* Perek 18 footnote 43

☞ According to other Sephardic opinions, women who follow the Sephardic custom should only recite the blessings by **omitting the name of Hashem** in the opening and closing of the blessings.

VARIOUS LAWS (HALACHOS) FROM THE SHULCHAN ARUCH: ORACH CHAIM SIMON 61

Simon 61 Se'if 23

Mechaber: **One needs to be meticulous not to soften the pronunciation of that which should be pronounced hard, and not to harden that which should be pronounced soft. 13) He shouldn't pronounce a syllable in a way that is stationary and he shouldn't pronounce that which is stationary in the way of a syllable.**

This Law (*Halacha*) is recorded by the **Rambam** in **Hilchos Krias She'ma 2:9**.

The letters *Beis/Veis*, *Kaf/Chaf*, *Pey/Phey*, *Tahf/Sahf* (בבככפפתת) are examples of soft and hard pronunciations. Also some letters are sometimes *dagesh* (emphasized) to indicate that the letter should have been written and pronounced double such as the letter *nun* of *Ve'shinantom* which has the first *nun* with a *dagesh* and should be emphasized when reading it.

The pronunciation of the vowel *she'vah* can either be a *she'vah n'ach* (a “resting” *she'vah*) or it can be a *she'vah n'ab* (a “moving” *she'vah*). One should be careful with this as well as the **Mechaber** points out. The way one knows whether it's a *she'vah n'ach* or a *she'vah n'ab* is if it comes immediately after the following vowels:

- *Chirik malei* (with the letter *yud*) - אֵי
- *Shuruk* - אֹו
- *Tzeireh* - אֵי
- *Cholom* - אֵי
- *Komatze* - אֵי

These vowels are the sounds that are pronounced in the words “*Pituchei Chossam*” (broken down like this Pi - *Chirik yud, tu* – *Shuruk, ch²³ey* – *Tzireh, Cho* – *Cholom, ssom* – *Komat^z*)²⁴.

Simon 61 se'if 24

***Mechaber*: It is necessary to recite Krias She'ma with its trop (tune) as it is read from the Sefer Torah.**

Rama: *But this is not the custom in these countries. Still, 14) meticulous individuals are stringent regarding this.*

The **Beis Yosef** explains the real reason why the **Rabbeinu Yonah** says that the Shema Readings (*Krias She'ma*) should be recited with its tune (*trop*) was in order to facilitate the proper reading and pronunciations of Shema. Therefore, if one can read the Shema properly without slurring words or vowels, one can read it without the *trop* as well..

The **Pri Chodosh**²⁵ concludes that although this is true, it's still preferable to read it with the tune (*trop*) – *bo'il ve'nafik mipumei de'Rabbeinu Yaakov Ba'al Haturim* – (since the Tur said that this is the way to do it).

The opinion of the **Rama** is since we are not accustomed to read it with tune (*trop*), it is better not to do so, since it may interfere with his ability to concentrate properly on reading the Shema (*She'ma*). Still, those who are meticulous in their performance of commandments (*mitzvot*) prefer to recite it with the tune (*trop*) and are able to concentrate like that as well²⁶.

Simon 61 se'if 25

***Mechaber*: When saying U'keshartom le'os al yadecha (you should bind them as a sign on your arm) one should touch the Tefillin shel Yad (of the arm) and when**

²³ The **ch** sound is soft as in the name Chaim

²⁴ See DIK DUK BOOK end of Lesson 1 page 10 and beginning of Lesson 2.

²⁵ *Din* 24

²⁶ Also see Darchei Moshe

he says Ve'hayu le'totafos bein einecha (and they shall be Tefillin between your eyes) one should touch the Tefillin on the Head (shel rosh).

The **Mishna Berura** points out that the same thing applies to the second paragraph (*parsha*) of *She'ma* by the verse (*pasuk*) *U'keshartem ossam le'os al yedchem Ve'hayu le'totafos bein einechem.* (and you should bind them as a sign on your arm and they should be Tefillin between your eyes).

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ז"ל rules that if, when one was reading the verse (*pasuk*) **“and you should bind them (the Tefillin) on your hand”.** (*U'keshartem le'os al yadecha*) and he happened to have one's arms hand close to the Tefillin of the Head (*shel rosh*), one should first touch the Tefillin of the Head (*shel rosh*), then the Tefillin of the arm (*shel yad*) even though the usual order is as it says in the verse (*pasuk*); first the Tefillin of the Arm (*shel yad*) and then the Tefillin of the Head (*shel rosh*). The reason to do this is because of a rule of *Ein ma'avirin al hamitzvos* (one may not pass-up on a *mitzva*). Therefore, since his hand is already near the Tefillin of the Head (*shel rosh*) he should touch that one first. If he is in public and it is possible that others will learn from him to touch the Tefillin of the Head (*shel rosh*) first, he should preferably touch the Tefillin of the Head (*shel rosh*) and then proceed to touch the Tefillin of the Arm (*shel yad*) and the Tefillin of the Head (*shel rosh*) again in the order that everyone does²⁷.

Se'if 25 continued

Mechaber: **When one says U're'issem osso (and you should see them) one should touch the two Tzitziyos that are in front of him.** (See above *Simon 24 se'if 5*)

In *Simon 24 se'if 4* the **Mechaber** cites the custom to look at one's *Tzitzis* upon reaching **“and you should see them”** (*U're'issem osso*) in *Krias She'ma*, and to place them over the eyes. The **Mechaber** praises this custom (*minhag*) and that it show our love for *Mitzvos*. The **Rama** adds that some people have the custom (*minhag*) of kissing the *Tzitzis* when they look at them. He comments that this is all done to show our love for the *Mitzvos*.

When one says **“and you should see them”** (*U're'issem osso*) one should touch his front two *tzitziyos* and look at them²⁸. This Law (*Halacha*) is mentioned in *Simon 24*

²⁷ Ibid. 11 and footnote 17

²⁸ Shulchan Aruch Harav *se'if 24*

se'if 5, that one should look at the two front *tzitziyos* which have a total of 10 knots, corresponding to the Ten Attributes in the *Kabalistic Sefiros*. Together with the 16 strings, it totals 26 which is the *Gematria* (numerical value) of the Name *Hashem*; the Tetragrammaton (spelled *Yud Keyb Vav Keyb*).

The prevalent custom is to kiss all four *tzitziyos* during the recital of the last paragraph of *Krias She'ma*.

One should hold all four *Tzitziyos* in his left Hand between the fourth and the last finger during the entire reciting of Shema. Upon reaching the final paragraph of Shema, one should grasp the ends of the *Tzitzis* with one's right hand. Some kiss the *Tzitzis* when reciting the words *Tzitzis* in *Krias She'ma*. Others just hold them and gaze at them when reciting the words *u're'issem osso*. After finishing the third paragraph of Shema, one releases the *Tzitzis* from his left hand and continues to hold them by the right hand. They are then released completely by the words *ne'emanim ve'nechmadim lo'ad*, as indicated in the Prayer books (*Siddurim*).

Summary סיכום

- ☞ **Do not interrupt** *She'ma Yisrael* and the verse of *Baruch Sheim Kevode Malchusso*.
- ☞ **Do not interrupt** in the middle of the closing of a blessing.
- ☞ **Do not interrupt** by hinting during *Krias She'ma* or *She'moneh Esrei*. It's forbidden unless necessary for *Kavanah*/concentration
- ☞ **Omitted a single word of Shema** - return to the beginning of that verse and continue reciting the verses in order
- ☞ **Omitted a verse of Shema** - return to that point and continue reciting the verses in order from that point forward
- ☞ **Not sure whether one is at the end of the first or second paragraph²⁹ of Shema**
If one is keeping pace with the leader of the congregation; assume being at the same place. If not keeping pace; return to the first paragraph.
- ☞ **When reciting the Morning Krias She'ma after the first quarter but before the end of a third of the day** - recite *Krias She'ma* with the blessings.

²⁹ This is because both the first and second paragraphs contain the very same *pasuk*

- ✧ When one did not recite it by first third of the day - recite the Shema without the blessings (*brochos*).
- ✧ When it was not recited by first third of the day; When not out of negligence - recite it with the blessings (*brochos*) up until noon.
- ✧ One may interrupt *Pesukei De'Zimra* in order to recite *Krias She'ma* in its proper time. It is then recited again later with its blessings.
- ✧ Laws of interrupting *Krias She'ma* apply only to Shema Readings that are recited for the *mitzvah* obligation.
- ✧ During the Blessings of the Shema Readings - one should skip a non-obligatory Shema reading, reciting just the Blessings, to recite *She'moneh Esrei* with a *minyan* or on time.

Questions:

1. What two daily customs are based on the verse *She'va bayome hillalticha* (Seven times a day I praise you)?
2. How many times a day and when are we obligated to recite *Krias She'ma*?
3. According to the *Yerushalmi* as explained by the *Sefer Chareidim*, what two points is the *Yerushalmi* making regarding the *brochos* associated with *Krias She'ma*?
4. How does the Rashba explain the *Yerushalmi*?
5. What is the latest time for *Krias She'ma* in the morning?
6. What is the latest time for the Morning Prayer (*Shacharis*) in the morning?
7. How is a *Halachic hour* (*Sha'a zemani*) determined (the general concept)?
8. What two intents (*kavanos*) are necessary when reciting the first verse of *Krias She'ma*?
9. Explain why women are essentially exempted from the *Mitzvos* of *Krias She'ma*?
10. What is the custom amongst women with regard to *Krias She'ma* in the morning?
11. How does the *Beis Yosef* explain (in the name of *Rabbeinu Yonah*) the reason it is preferred to recite *Krias She'ma* with its tune *trap*?
12. What is the *Rama's* comment on the above-mentioned custom?

Answers:

1. The custom of reciting seven blessings for the daily Shema Readings (this varies according to the opinions mentioned in this lesson) and the seven times we recite *Kaddish* during prayer at the synagogue (*shul*).
2. We are required to recite *Krias She'ma* once in the morning and once in the evening.
3. The *Sefer Charaidim* states that on the one hand the *Yerushalmi* equates the morning Shema reading with the evening Shema reading that they both require three blessings (*brochos*) while including the blessing of *Hashkiveinu* at the evening prayer there are seven corresponding to Dovid Hamelech's seven daily praises.
4. The Rashba divides both the morning Shema reading as well as the evening Shema reading into six parts with their blessings.
5. Until a quarter of the day, which is at the end of the third hour.
6. Until a third of the day, which is at the end of the fourth hour.
7. One divides the length of the daytime hours into twelve equal parts. Each of those parts is a *Sha'a zemani*.
8. One is, a general intent to fulfill one's *mitzvah* obligation. The other intent is to concentrate on the meaning of Shema to accept *Hashem's* sovereign dominion over oneself.
9. They are exempt in general from time-bound positive commands.
10. They recite it anyway but it does not have to be recited at any particular time. However, in order to recite the *Birchos Krias She'ma* (the blessings over the Shema Readings); it must be recited before the time for prayer (*Tefilla*) elapses.
11. He states that it facilitates reading and pronouncing it properly.
12. The Rama states that our custom is not to read *Krias She'ma* with its tune *trap*.