

Times of the Day in Halacha



When does the **night** end and the **day** begin

Times of the day related to morning hours

Time of **dawn** and time of **sunrise**

Earliest time for *tzitzis* and *tefillin*

Earliest and latest times for **Krias Shema**

Earliest and latest times for *davening* **Shemoneh Esrei**

Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, *simanim* 18, 30, 58, 89

When Is the Transition Between Night and Day?

Most people can't identify when dawn occurs



When Is the Transition Between Night and Day?



מגילה דף כ עמוד א

Megilah, 20a

אין מביאין ראיה מן המתיר: מתני' "אין קורין את המגילה יולא מלין יולא טובלין יולא מזין יוכן שומרת יום כנגד יום לא תטבול עד שתנץ החמה וכולן שעשו משעלה עמוד השחר כשר: גמ' מנלן

MISHNA: One may not read the Megilah, nor perform a circumcision, nor immerse himself in a *mikva*, **nor sprinkle** water of purification to purify people and objects that had contracted ritual impurity through contact with a corpse until after sunrise.

And also a woman who observes a clean day for each day she experiences a discharge, i.e., a woman who experienced one or two days of non-menstrual bleeding, and must now wait until a day has passed without any discharge of blood before regaining ritual purity, she too **may not immerse herself until the sun has risen. And** with regard to **all these** activities that are supposed to be performed during the day, **if one did them after daybreak**, i.e., after the appearance of the first light of the sun, even before sunrise, **they are valid**, as at this point it is already considered daytime.

When Is the Transition Between Night and Day?

מגילה דף כ עמוד ב

דעד צאת הכוכבים לאו לילה הוא אלא אמר
רבי זירא מהכא ²³ ואנחנו עושים במלאכה
וחצים מחזיקים ברמחים מעלות השחר עד
צאת הכוכבים ואומר ⁴³ (והיה) לנו הלילה
⁷ (למשמר) מאי ואומר וכ"ת משעלה עמוד
השחר לאו יממא ומכי ערבא שמשא ליליא
ואינהו מקדמי ומחשכי ת"ש ⁸ (והיה) לנו
הלילה משמר והיום מלאכה: מתני' "כל

Rashi explains
(and similarly the Rosh):

Most people can't identify
the precise time of dawn,
**thus *lechatchila* we wait
until sunrise**





Megilah, 20b

Rather, Rabbi Zeira said: We derive this *halacha* from here, as it is stated: **“So we labored in the work; and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared”** (*Nechemiah* 4:15), where “rising of the morning” means daybreak, **and** the next verse **states: “So that in the night they may be a guard to us; and labor in the day”** (*Nechemiah* 4:16). This demonstrates that the day begins with the dawn.

The Gemoro clarifies Rabbi Zeira’s statement: **What** need is there for the additional verse introduced by the words **“and it states”**? Why does the first proof-text not suffice? The Gemoro explains: The second verse comes to deflect the following possible objection: **You might say that even after “the rising of the morning” it is not yet considered day, and that from the time when the sun sets it is already considered night, and** in this particular incident it happened that **they began** their work **early**, before the official beginning of daytime, **and remained** working **late**, after the official end of daytime. Therefore, Rabbi Zeira continued and said: **Come and hear that which** is stated in the next verse: **“So that in the night they may be a guard to us; and labor in the day.”** The entire time during which they worked is referred to as “day,” which proves that the day begins at daybreak.

Defining Sunrise (*Netz hachama*)

The top edge
of the sun's
disc comes
into view



When the
sun's disc
begins to rise

Defining Sunrise (*Netz hachama*)



Astronomical sunrise



2 to 4
minutes



Apparent sunrise

Defining Sunrise (*Netz hachama*)

Astronomical sunrise

Apparent sunrise

Practical difference for those who *daven vasikin*, timing Shemoneh Esrei right at sunrise

The accepted view is to follow the apparent sunrise



Acharonim: Begin around sunrise, and Hashem accepts our good intentions

Defining Sunrise (*Netz hachama*)



Astronomical sunrise

Regarding calculating proportional hours
everyone agrees we follow astronomical sunrise

Defining Dawn (*Alos hashachar*)

פסחים צד עמוד א

Pesachim, 94a

וחדא סברא סבר לה כי הא דאמר רבה בר בר חנה א"ר יוחנן כמה מהלך אדם בינוני ביום י' פרסאות מעלות השחר ועד הנץ החמה ה' מילין משקיעת החמה עד צאת הכוכבים חמשה מילין נמצא עוביו של רקיע אחד מששה ביום מיתיבי רבי יהודה אומר עוביו של רקיע אחד מעשרה ביום תדע כמה מהלך אדם בינוני ביום עשר פרסאות ומעלות השחר עד הנץ החמה ארבעת מילין משקיעת החמה ועד צאת הכוכבים ארבעת מילין נמצאת עוביו של רקיע אחד מעשרה ביום תיובתא דרבא תיובתא דעולא תיובתא

Rabba bar bar Chana said that **Rabbi Yochanan said: How far can an average person walk in a day?** One can walk **ten *parsa***, which are forty *mil*. This is explained: **From dawn until sunrise** one can walk a distance of **five *mil***; **from sunset until the emergence of the stars** one can walk another **five *mil***. Therefore, **it is found** that **the thickness of the firmament is one-sixth** of the distance that the sun travels during **the day**. Between sunrise and sunset, the sun travels a distance of six thousand *parsa* during the amount of time an average person can walk thirty *mil*. During the dawn and twilight periods in the morning and evening, when the sun passes through the thickness of the firmament, an average person can walk five *mil*, which is one-sixth of the distance he can walk between sunrise and sunset. Consequently, during dawn and twilight the sun must also travel one-sixth of the distance it travels between sunrise and sunset, i.e., one thousand *parsa*, which is the thickness of the firmament.

The Gemara **raises an objection** from the following *baraita*: **Rabbi Yehuda says: The thickness of the firmament is only one-tenth** of the distance that the sun travels during **the day**. **Know** that this is true because **how far can an average person walk in a day** between dawn and the emergence of the stars? One can walk **ten *parsa***, which are forty *mil*, **and from dawn until sunrise** one can walk only **four *mil***, which are one *parsa*. Therefore, **it is found that the thickness of the firmament is only one-tenth** of the distance that the sun travels during **the day**.

Defining Dawn (*Alos hashachar*)



Amount of time it takes to walk a *mil*:

18 minutes

22.5 minutes

24 minutes

Defining Dawn (*Alos hashachar*)

According to this, how long before sunrise is dawn?

18 minutes

22.5 minutes

24 minutes

Sefardim and
most Ashkenazim

Ashkenazim in
Yerushalayim

View of
R. Chaim Naeh

72 minutes
(4 *mil* * 18 minutes)

90 minutes
(4 *mil* * 22.5 minutes)

120 minutes
(5 *mil* * 24 minutes)

There are multiple views how to extrapolate the **Alter Rebbe's opinion**

“Misheyakir”

ברכות ט עמוד ב

Berachos, 9b

שעות הקורא מכאן ואילך לא הפסיד כאדם הקורא בתורה: גמ' מאי בין תכלת ללבן אילימא בין גבבא דעמרא חיורא לגבבא דעמרא דתכלתא הא בליליא נמי מידע ידעי אלא בין תכלת שבה ללבן שבה. תניא רבי מאיר אומר משיכיר בין זאב לכלב ר"ע אומר בין חמור לערוד ואחרים אומרים משיראה את חברו רחוק ד' אמות ויכירנו אמר רב הונא הלכה כאחרים אמר אביי

The mishna stated that the time for the recitation of the morning *Shema* begins “when one can distinguish between *techeiles* and white.”

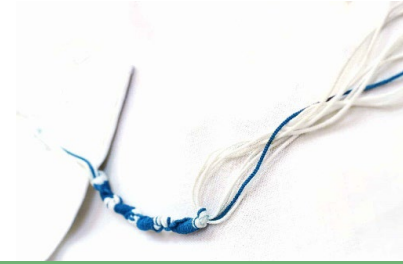
Q: To **what** is **between *techeiles* and white** referring? **If you say** that it means distinguishing between **a pile of white wool and a pile of *techeiles* wool, wouldn't one know** the difference **at night, as well? Rather**, it must be a reference to *tzitzis* fringes made with *techeiles* strings along with white strings, and one must be able to distinguish **between the *techeiles* strings and the white strings in** the *tzitzis* fringes.

With regard to the beginning of the time for the recitation of the morning *Shema*, a *beraisa* cites additional opinions not cited in the mishna. **It was taught** in a *beraisa*: **Rabbi Meir says** that the day begins when **one can distinguish between** two similar animals, e.g., **a wolf and a dog**. **Rabbi Akiva** provides a different sign, and **says that the** day begins when there is sufficient light to distinguish **between a donkey and a wild donkey**. **And Acherim say: When one can see another** person, who is merely an acquaintance, from **a distance of four cubits and recognize him**. **Rav Huna said: The *halacha* is in accordance with Acherim**.

“Misheyakir”



“When one can recognize
an acquaintance”



“When one can distinguish
between *techeiles* and white”

Dawn

“Misheyakir”
50-60 minutes before sunrise

Sunrise



Earliest Time for *Tzitzis*

“You will see it [the *tzitzis*]”
“וְרָאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ”

Chazal derive that the mitzvah of *tzitzis*
applies only at a time you can see

Rambam

Wearing it at night – exempt
Wearing it during day – obligated

Rosh

Night garment – always exempt
Day garment – always obligated

In practice:

We only recite bracha on **day garment**
that is being worn **during day**

Earliest Time for *Tzitzis*

What is earliest time to recite bracha on *tzitzis*?
“From when he can distinguish between *techeiles* and white”

There is an opinion

If need to put on *tzitzis* earlier –
may recite bracha from dawn and on

Primary halacha

Bracha isn't recited until
time of “*misheyakir*”

B'dieved, if already made bracha even before dawn:

Don't repeat it – since it counted according to view of Rosh

Earliest Time for *Tefillin*

Min hatorah

Even night
is time for *tefillin*

Miderabonon

Forbidden to put on *tefillin*
at night lest one sleep in them

Earliest time to put on *tefillin* is from “*misheyakir*”

Earliest Time for *Tefillin*



Someone who didn't yet put on *tefillin* that day:

If it's before nightfall

He should put them on:

Mishna Berura – without bracha;
Many *Acharonim* – with bracha

If it's before the later nightfall
following Rabbeinu Tam's view

Put them on without bracha

If it's past nightfall

Don't put them on

Earliest Time for Krias Shema

What is the earliest time to recite Shema in the morning?
Once he can recognize his acquaintance from 4 *amos* away



Optimal manner is to recite Shema slightly before sunrise
So he can begin Shemoneh Esrei at sunrise

If didn't recite Shema before sunrise – do so at earliest opportunity

Earliest Time for Krias Shema

If recited Shema with its brachos
after dawn – fulfilled obligation

If read Shema without its brachos:

Rama writes to recite again
with brachos in proper time



Earliest Time for Krias Shema

ברכות ט עמוד ב

Berachos, 9b

לכם אחורנית: מתני' מאימתי קורין את שמע בשחרית משיכיר בין תכלת ללבן ר' אליעזר אומר בין תכלת לכרתי (וגומרה) עד הנץ (החמה) יהושע אומר עד שלש שעות שכן דרך מלכים לעמוד בשלש שעות הקורא מכאן ואילך לא הפסיד כאדם הקורא בתורה: גמ' מאי בין פתח

MISHNA: From when does one recite *Shema* in the morning? From when one can distinguish between *techeiles* and white. Rabbi Eliezer says: From when one can distinguish between *techeiles* and leek-green.

And one must **finish** reciting *Shema* **until** the end of the period when you rise, i.e., **sunrise**, when the sun begins to shine.

Rabbi Yehoshua says: One may recite the morning *Shema* **until three hours** of the day, which is still considered when you rise, **as that is the habit of kings to rise** from their sleep **at three hours** of the day.

One who recites *Shema* from that time onward loses nothing. Although he does not fulfill the mitzvah of reciting of *Shema* at its appointed time, **he is** nevertheless considered **like one who reads the Torah**, and is rewarded accordingly.

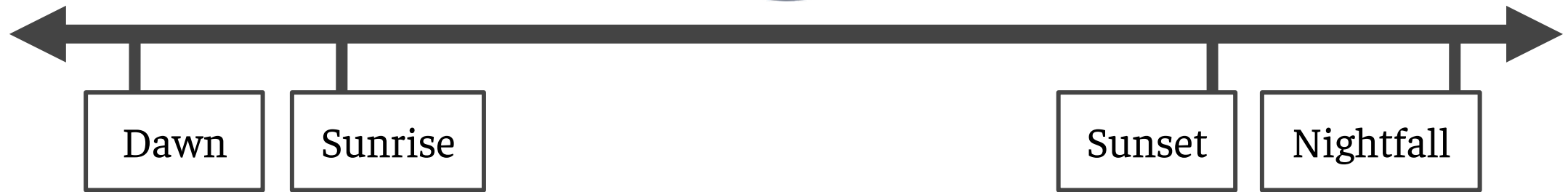
Halacha follows Rabbi Yehoshua

How to Calculate Proportional Hours



All the daytime hours
are divided into 12

How to Calculate Proportional Hours



Magen Avrohom

We split the hours of light
From dawn to nightfall

Gra and Gra"z

We split the hours of visible sun
From sunrise to sunset

Latest Time for Brachos of Krias Shema

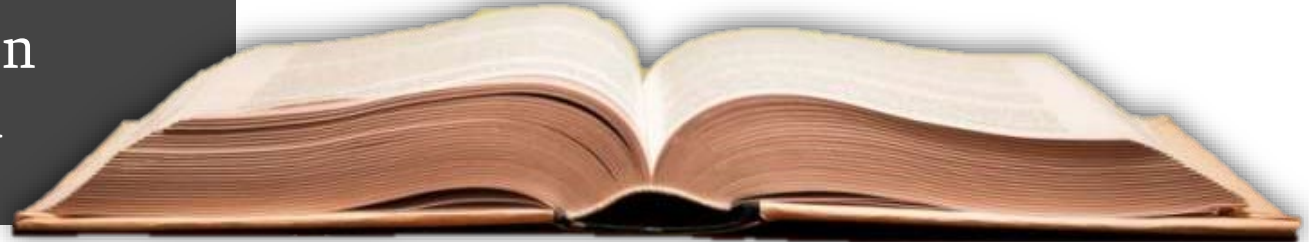
ברכות י עמוד ב

איכא דאמרי אמר רב חסדא אמר מר עוקבא מאי לא הפסיד שלא הפסיד ברכות תניא נמי הכי יהקורא מכאן ואילך לא הפסיד כאדם שקורא בתורה אבל מברך הוא שתיים לפניו ואחת לאחריה א"ר מני גדול

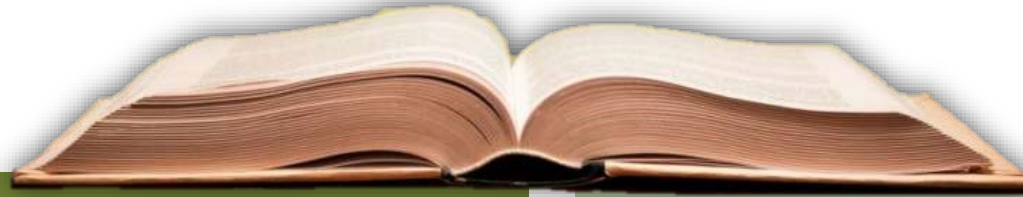
Berachos, 10b

That was also taught in a *beraisa*: One who recites *Shema* after this time loses nothing, and is considered like one who reads the Torah, but he recites two blessings beforehand and one thereafter.

But not explicit until when
the brachos may be said



Latest Time for Brachos of Krias Shema



Rosh

Only until end of fourth hour

So is *psak* of Shulchan Aruch
and *Acharonim*

Rambam

May be said entire day

Latest Time for Brachos of Krias Shema

In practice, the *poskim* bring various opinions:

The entire day

Ruling of **Badei Hashulchan** for someone withheld beyond their control

Until *chatzos*
(halachic midday)

Ruling of **Mishna Berura** for someone withheld beyond their control

Until end
of fourth hour

Ruling of **Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch** and **Mishna Berura** for l'chatchila

Earliest Time for *Davening* Shemoneh Esrei

שיתפננ חדס כנ היום כונו וחין
כאן עבר זמנו בתפלה אחרת:
טעה

תפלת השחר עד חצות ר' יהודה אומר
עד ר' שעות תפלת המנחה עד
הערב רבי יהודה אומר עד פלג המנחה

תפלת הערב אין לה קבע ושל מוספים כל היום (ר' יהודה אומר עד
ז' שעות): **גמ'** ורמינהו מצותה עם הנץ החמה כדי שיסמוך גאולה
לתפלה ונמצא מתפלל ביום כי תניא **היא לותיקין דא"ר יוחנן ותיקין היו**
גומרים אותה עם הנץ החמה וכ"ע עד חצות ותו לא והאמר רב מרי בריה דרב

ברכות
חזקתא

Berachos, 26a

MISHNA: This mishna discusses the times in which the various prayers may be recited. According to the Rabbis, **the morning prayer** may be recited **until noon**. **Rabbi Yehuda says:** It may be recited only **until four hours** after sunrise. According to the Rabbis, **the afternoon prayer** may be recited **until the evening**. **Rabbi Yehuda says:** It may be recited only **until the midpoint of the afternoon [pelag hamincha]**, i.e., the midpoint of the period that begins with the sacrifice of the daily afternoon offering and ends at nightfall, which is the end of the afternoon.

The evening prayer may be recited throughout the night and **is not fixed** to a specific hour. According to the Rabbis, **the additional prayer** (musaf) may be recited **all day**. **Rabbi Yehuda says:** It may be recited only **until seven hours** after sunrise.

GEMORO: We learned in the mishna that the morning prayer may be recited only until a few hours into the day. The Gemoro **raises a contradiction** based on what was taught in a *baraita*: **The mitzvah** is to recite the morning *Shema* **with sunrise** so that **he will juxtapose redemption**, which is mentioned in the blessings following *Shema*, **to the Amida prayer**, which is recited immediately after sunrise, and **find himself praying in the daytime**. Clearly, the time to recite the morning prayer is immediately after sunrise. A: This *beraisa* does not establish a binding *halacha*. Rather, it **taught that** rule specifically **with regard to those who are scrupulous in fulfillment of mitzvot [vasikin]**. **As Rabbi Yochanan said: Vasikin** would finish reciting the morning *Shema* **with sunrise**, but those who are not *vasikin* may recite their prayers later.

Earliest Time for *Davening* Shemoneh Esrei

Shulchan Aruch based on *Rishonim*



זמן תפלת השחר:
מצוותה שיתחיל עם
הנץ החמה, כדכתיב:
"ייראוך עם שמש". ואם
התפלל משעלה עמוד
השחר והאיר פני המזרח
– יצא.

The time for the morning prayer: it is a mitzvah to begin it at sunrise, as the passuk states: "they will fear you with the sun." If he prayed from when the rays of dawn rose and the "face of the east" brightened, he fulfilled his obligation.

Latest Time for *Davening* Shemoneh Esrei

ברכות כו עמוד ב

Berachos, 26b

בי ותניא כוותיה דר' יהושע בן לוי ^זמפני מה אמרו תפלת השחר עד חצות שהרי תמיד של שחר קרב והולך עד חצות ורבי יהודה אומר עד ארבע שעות שהרי תמיד של שחר קרב והולך עד ארבע שעות ומפני מה אמרו

And it was taught in a *beraisa* **in accordance with** the opinion of **Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi** that the laws of prayer are based on the laws of the daily offerings:

Why did the Rabbis **say** that **the morning prayer** may be recited **until noon**? **Because**, although the **daily morning offering** is typically brought early in the morning, it may be **sacrificed until chatzos (halachic midday)**.

And Rabbi Yehuda says: My opinion, that the morning prayer may be recited **until four hours** into the day, is **because the daily morning offering is sacrificed until four hours**.

The halacha follows R. Yehuda

Latest Time for *Davening* Shemoneh Esrei

Ruling of **Shulchan Aruch** based on **Rif** and **Rambam**

ונמשך זמנה עד סוף
ארבע שעות שהוא
שליש היום. ואם טעה
או עבר והתפלל אחר
ארבע שעות עד חצות:
אף על פי שאין לו שכר
כתפלה בזמנה, שכר
תפלה מיהא איכא.

Its time continues until the end of four hours, which is a third of the day. If he was mistaken or transgressed and *davened* after four hours but before *chatzos* — although he doesn't receive reward like *davening* at its proper time, there is still reward for *davening*.

Latest Time for *Davening* Shemoneh Esrei

Someone who intentionally didn't daven until 4 hours into the day:

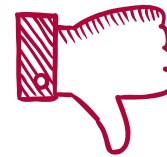
Shulchan Aruch Harav

Daven until chatzos



Mishna Berura

Preferable to *daven* before
chatzos in manner of “*nedava*”



Latest Time for *Davening* Shemoneh Esrei



Forbidden after *chatzos*