

משניות מסכת ברכות

פרק א - משנה א

General Background Concepts & Information:

- Only a Kohen who is טהור can eat תרומה
- A Kohen who became טמא by touching a שרץ, must go to the mikva and then wait until night time to eat תרומה
- *Tzeis Hakochovim* is when you can see 3 stars
- An אשמורה is a period of time.
- Each night has 3 אשמורת
- A 12 hour night, has 3 אשמורת of 4 hours each
- If a night starts at 6pm and ends at 6am, then the 1st אשמורה would start at 6pm and end at 10pm

Short introduction: The Torah commands us to say *Shema* each and every day, בשכבך ובקומך, once in the morning and once in the evening.

This Mishna will discuss **from** what time and **until** what time, is the mitzvah to say *Shema* each evening

מַאימְתִי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּעֶרְבִית

From what time does the *mitzvah* to say *Shema* in the evening, **begin**?

מִשְׁעָה שֶׁהַכֹּהֲנִים נִכְנְסִים לֶאֱכֹל בְּתְרוּמָתָן

From the time that the Kohanim enter their homes to eat their *Terumah* (Which is *tzies hakochovim*)

And **until what time** is the mitzvah of *Krias Shema* in the evening?

עַד סוֹף הָאֲשְׁמוּרָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה

Until the end of the first *Ashmurah*

דְּבַרֵי רַבִּי אֶלְיעֶזֶר

This is the opinion of Rebbe Eliezer

וְחֻכְמִים אוֹמְרִים

עַד חֲצוֹת

However the Chachomim argue and say that you have up until midnight to say *Shema*

רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר

עַד שִׁיעוּלָה עֲמוּד הַשָּׁחַר

However Rabban Gamliel argues and says: the mitzvah to say *Shema* goes on throughout the ENTIRE night, up until dawn.

מעשה שבאו בניו מבית המשתה

There was once a story when Rabban Gamliel's sons came back from a wedding AFTER midnight

אמרו לו

לא קרינו את שמע

They said to Rabban Gamliel "we did not yet say *Krias Shema!*"

Should we say *Shema* now, or did we miss our chance?

אמר להם

Rabban Gamliel said to them

אם לא עלה עמוד השחר

חיבין אתם לקרות

If it is not yet dawn,

you still have the mitzvah, and you **must** say *Shema!*

ולא זו בלבד

And this is not only regarding *Krias Shema*

אלא כל מה שאמרו חכמים עד חצות

Rather, anywhere that the Chachomim said that a *mitzvah* must be done before midnight,

מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר

The *mitzvah* is REALLY--that it should be done before dawn.

For example:

הקטר חלבים ואברים

Burning the fats & limbs of the *korbanos* on the *mizbaeyach*

מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר

The *mitzvah* is that the fats and limbs should be thrown upon the fires of the *mizbaeyach* by dawn

Another example:

וכל הנאכלין ליום אחד

Any meat of a *korban* that must be eaten in one day (for example meat of a *korban todah*, *chatos* or an *ashom*)

מִצְוַת עַד שִׁיעוּלָה עִמּוּד הַשָּׁחַר

The *mitzvah* is that it should be eaten by dawn

אִם כֵּן

לְמָה אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים עַד חֲצוֹת

If so,

Why did the Chachomim say that the meat of the *korbanos* should be eaten by midnight & that *Krias Shema* should be said by midnight?

כְּדִי לְהַרְחִיק אֶת הָאָדָם מִן הָעֲבִירָה

In order to protect a person from doing an *averah* (Meaning: if we wait until the last minute, we may miss our chance, and therefore the Chachomim said that it should be done by midnight)

Additional Notes & Explanations:

- What is the reason of Rebbe Eliezer? He holds that when the Torah says, say *Krias Shema*: בשכבך "when you lay down", it means at the time when most people **GO TO SLEEP**--which is in the first 3rd of the night.
- What is the reason of Rabban Gamliel? He holds that whole night is a time of sleeping. And when the Torah says that you should say *Shema*: בשכבך "when you lay down", it means at the time when people are going to sleep **OR** sleeping; which is the ENTIRE night
- What is the reason of the Chachomim? They really hold like Rabban Gamliel, but they are worried that if we wait until the last minute, we may miss our chance, and therefore the Chachomim said that it should be done by midnight
- We loosely explained Chaztos to mean midnight, but it does not mean it will always be at 12:00 am. It can vary depending on the time of sunset/sunrise and the number of hours in the night.