

1) According to the Jewish tradition, when does a day start?

Chapter 1, mishna 1

From what time does one recite the Sh'ma in the evening? From the time that the *kohanim* used to enter the Temple to eat of the *t'rumah*, until the end of the first watch; this is the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer. The Sages say: until midnight. Rabban Gamli'el says: until the pillar of dawn rises. It once happened that his sons came home from a feasting house and they said to him: We have not yet recited the *Sh'ma*. He said to them: "If the pillar of dawn has not yet risen, then you are obligated to recite it." And not this alone, for all cases where the Sages said "until midnight," their commandment holds until the pillar of dawn rises: The burning of the fats and limbs - their commandment holds until the pillar of dawn rises. All the offerings which must be eaten in one day - their commandment holds until the pillar of dawn rises. If so, why did the Sages say "until midnight?" In order to distance the person from transgression.

פרק א, משנה א

מאימתי קורין את שמע בערבית? משעה שהכהנים נכנסים לאכל בתרומתן, עד סוף האשמורה הראשונה, דברי רבי אליעזר. וחכמים אומרים, עד חצות. רבן גמליאל אומר, עד שיעלה עמוד השחר. מעשה שבאו בניו מבית המשתה, אמרו לו, לא קרינו את שמע. אמר להם, אם לא עלה עמוד השחר, חיבין אתם לקרות. ולא זו בלבד, אלא כל מה שאמרו חכמים עד חצות, מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר. הקטר חלבים ואברים, מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר. וכל הנאכלין ליום אחד, מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר. אם בן, למה אמרו חכמים עד חצות, כדי להרחיק את האדם מן העבירה:

2) What question are the Rabbis of the Mishna trying to answer here?

3) Why did Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi choose *this* mishna as the first teaching in the entire Mishna?

4) What does this teaching tell us about what we should be doing first thing in the morning?

Chapter 1, mishna 2

From what time does one recite the *Sh'ma* in the morning? From the time (when there is enough light) that one can tell between (the colors) blue and white. Rabbi Eli'ezer says: between blue and green, and one must complete it by sunrise. Rabbi Yehoshu'a says: until the third hour (of sunlight), for it was the custom of princes to arise at the third hour. One who recites the *Sh'ma* from this time and on has not lost out, (he is) like one who reads the Torah.

פרק א, משנה ב

מאימתי קורין את שמע בשחרית?
משיכיר בין תכלת ללבן. רבי אליעזר
אומר, בין תכלת לברתי וגומרה עד
הגין החמה. רבי יהושע אומר, עד שלש
שעות, שכן דרך בני מלכים לעמוד
בשלוש שעות. הקורא מכאן ואילך לא
הפסיד, כאדם הקורא בתורה:

1) What question are the Rabbis of the Mishna trying to answer here?

2) There is no name attributed to the first answer given in this mishna. So, to whom does it belong?

3) Whose opinion gives you the earliest possible starting time for the recitation of the *Sh'ma*?
How do you know this is the correct answer?

4) Based on what you have now studied in these first two mishnayot, what can you say about the lifestyle of the Jewish community in the time of the Mishna? How did they tell time? Why would the terms used in these mishnayot make sense to them?

5) According to the teachings in these first two mishnayot, what is an "hour?"

קריאת שמע וברכותיה במשנה - מסכת ברכות
The Sh'ma and its Blessings in the Mishna - Tractate B'rakhot

1) Read the text of the first paragraph of the *Sh'ma* and describe what instructions it gives about how a person is supposed to recite them? (Think like a choreographer)

Chapter 1, mishna 3

The School of Shammai says: In the evening, everyone must lie down and then recite (the *Sh'ma*), and in the morning, stand up, as it is said: "when you lie down and when you rise up." The School of Hillel says: Everyone should recite in their own way, as it is said: "as you walk along the way." If this is so, why does it say, "when you lie down and when you rise up?" It is referring to the **time** when a person lies down and the **time** when a person rises up. Rabbi Tarfon said: I was once going along the road and I lied down to recite the *Sh'ma* according to the opinion of the School of Shammai, and I endangered myself because of thieves. They said to him: You deserve to forfeit your life because you did not follow the words of the School of Hillel.

פרק א. משנה ג

בית שמאי אומרים, בערב כל אדם יטו ויקראו, ובפקר יעמדו, שנאמר (דברים ו) ובשכבך ובקומך. ובית הלל אומרים, כל אדם קורא בדרך, שנאמר (שם) ובלקחתך בדרך. אם כן, למה נאמר ובשכבך ובקומך, בשעה שפני אדם שוכבים, ובשעה שפני אדם עומדים. אמר רבי מרפון, אני הייתי בא בדרך, והטתי לקרות, בדברי בית שמאי, וספנתי בעצמי מפני הלסטים. אמרו לו, פדי היית לחוב בעצמך, שעברת על דברי בית הלל:

2) What is the main question of this mishna?

3) Whose opinion is the better interpretation of the *p'sukim* from the Torah? Whose custom would you follow? How do we follow **both** customs in our traditions for reciting the *Sh'ma*?

4) What can we learn about the Rabbis' views of Hillel and Shammai from this mishna?

- 1) If you were scripting a service from scratch, where would you put the most important prayer(s)? Describe how you would lay out the prayers. Why would you do it this way?

Chapter 1, mishna 4

In the morning, one recites two before it and one after it, and in the evening, two before it and two after it; one long and one short. In a place where they said to make it long, one is not permitted to shorten, to make it short, one is not permitted to make it long; to recite an end-formula – one is not permitted not to recite an end formula and in not to recite an end formula, one is not permitted to recite an ending formula.

פרק א. משנה ד

בַּשַּׁחַר מְבַרֵךְ שְׁתֵּים לְפָנֶיהָ וְאַחַת לְאַחֲרֶיהָ.
וּבְעֶרֶב שְׁתֵּים לְפָנֶיהָ וּשְׁתֵּים לְאַחֲרֶיהָ. אַחַת
אֶרְבָּה וְאַחַת קְצֵרָה. מְקוֹם שֶׁאָמְרוּ לְהַאֲרִיךְ.
אֵינוֹ רִשְׁאֵי לְקַצֵּר. לְקַצֵּר, אֵינוֹ רִשְׁאֵי
לְהַאֲרִיךְ. לְחַתֵּם, אֵינוֹ רִשְׁאֵי שֶׁלֹּא לְחַתֵּם.
וְשֶׁלֹּא לְחַתֵּם, אֵינוֹ רִשְׁאֵי לְחַתֵּם: יְמֵי חֲיִיד,
חֲיָיִים. כָּל יְמֵי חֲיִיד, הַלֵּילוֹת. וְחֻבְמִים
אוֹמְרִים, יְמֵי חֲיִיד, הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. כָּל יְמֵי חֲיִיד,
לְהָבִיא לְיָמוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ:

- 2) What is the “it” that this mishna is discussing?

- 3) The mishna teaches that two and one of something are to be recited. What are these texts that are to be recited?

- 4) This mishna is 2000 years old. Does the structure explained in this mishna still appear in our *t'filah* services? Take out a siddur and compare the instructions of this mishna to it and describe your findings.

- 1) Thinking back to the previous mishna, where does the *Sh'ma* section of the evening and morning services start and finish?

- 2) Why is the Exodus from Egypt mentioned so often in Jewish prayers and blessings?

Chapter 1, mishna 5

The Exodus is mentioned at night. Rabbi El'azar ben Azariyah said: Behold I am like a man of seventy and I did not merit to rule that the Exodus be mentioned at night until Ben Zoma interpreted it, as it is said: "in order that you will remember the day that you left Egypt all the days of your life." (Deut. 15) "The days of your life" refers to the daytime. "**All** the days of your life" refers to the nighttime as well. But the Sages say: "The days of your life" refers to this world. "All the days of your life" refers to the days of the Messiah as well.

פרק א. משנה ה

מִזְכִּירֵין יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם בַּלֵּילוֹת. אָמַר רַבִּי
אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה, חָרִי אֲנִי בְּכֵן שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה,
וְלֹא זָכִיתִי שֶׁתֹּאמַר יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם בַּלֵּילוֹת,
עַד שֶׁדִּרְשָׁה בֶּן זֹזְמָא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דְּבָרִים טו')
"לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ." "יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ, הַיָּמִים." כֹּל יְמֵי
חַיֶּיךָ, הַלֵּילוֹת. וְחֻבְמַיִם אוֹמְרִים, "יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ,"
הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. "כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ," לְהַבִּיא לִימּוֹת
הַבָּשִׁיחַ:

- 3) Do you recognize this text from any Jewish text besides the Mishna? If so, from where?

- 4) Why are the Rabbis arguing about whether or not the the Exodus from Egypt should be recited at night? What is the cause of the argument and how is it solved?

קריאת שמע וברכותיה במשנה - מסכת ברכות
The Sh'ma and its Blessings in the Mishna - Tractate B'rakhot

1) Is it enough to fulfill a *mitzvah*/commandment without setting your heart to it? Why or why not?

2) For what types of things should you be allowed to interrupt yourself in the middle of reciting *Sh'ma* and its Blessings? Why?

Chapter 2, mishna 1

Someone was reading from the Torah and the time for reciting arrived. If s/he directed his/her attention to it, s/he has fulfilled the obligation. If not, s/he has not fulfilled it. At the breaks, one asks out of respect and answers (all greetings). In the middle (of a paragraph), one asks out of fear and answers (all greetings); this is the opinion of Rabbi Me'ir. Rabbi Yehuda says: in the middle, one asks out of fear and answers out of respect; at the breaks, one asks out of respect and answers anyone's greeting.

פרק ב, משנה א

א הָיָה קוֹרֵא בַּתּוֹרָה, וְהִגִּיעַ זְמַן הַמִּקְרָא.
אִם בֵּינָן לְבָנו, יִצָּא. וְאִם לָאוּ, לֹא יִצָּא.
בַּפְּרָקִים שׁוֹאֵל מִפְּנֵי הַכְּבוֹד וּמִשֵּׁיב.
וּבְאֶמְצַע שׁוֹאֵל מִפְּנֵי הִירָאָה וּמִשֵּׁיב.
דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר,
בְּאֶמְצַע שׁוֹאֵל מִפְּנֵי הִירָאָה, וּמִשֵּׁיב
מִפְּנֵי הַכְּבוֹד, בַּפְּרָקִים שׁוֹאֵל מִפְּנֵי
הַכְּבוֹד, וּמִשֵּׁיב שְׁלוֹם לְכָל אָדָם:

1) What are “the breaks” to which the Rabbis are referring here? How many do you think there are?

2) With which Rabbi(s) do you agree regarding interrupting your recitation of the *Sh'ma* and why?

1) How many paragraphs are there in the actual *Sh'ma* prayer? What are they? Write down exactly where they all come from (not just the title of a book).

2) Write down what you know about the meanings of the paragraphs of the *Sh'ma*?

Chapter 2, mishna 2

These are the breaks: between the first blessing and the second; between the second blessing and the *Sh'ma*, between the *Sh'ma*, and *V'haya eem shamo'a*, between *V'haya eem shamo'a* and *Va'yomeir*, between *Va'yomeir* and *Emet v'yatziv*. Rabbi Yehuda says, one may not interrupt between *Va'yomeir* and *Emet v'yatziv*. Rabbi Yehoshu'a ben Korha says, why does the *Sh'ma* precede *V'haya eem shamo'a*? So that one will accept the yoke of the kingdom of heaven first and then accept the yoke of the commandments. *V'haya eem shamo'a* before *Va'yomeir*? For, *V'haya eem shamo'a* is applicable during the day and night, while *Va'yomeir* applies only during the day.

פרק ב, משנה ב

אלו הן בין הברכות, בין ברכה ראשונה לשנייה, בין שניה לשמע, ובין שמע ליהיה אם שמע, בין והיה אם שמע לויאמר, בין ויאמר לאמת ויצויב. רבי יהודה אומר, בין ויאמר לאמת ויצויב לא יפסיק. אמר רבי יהושע בן קרחה, למה קדמה שמע ליהיה אם שמע? אלא כדי שיקבל עליו על מלכות שמים תחלה, ואחר כך יקבל עליו על מצוות. והיה אם שמע לויאמר? שיהיה אם שמע נוהג ביום ובלילה, ויאמר אינו נוהג אלא ביום בלבד.

3) Were you surprised by the number of paragraphs that the Rabbis include in the *Sh'ma*, proper? Why or why not?

4) Do you find that the Rabbis' explanation for the order of the paragraphs to make sense to you? Why or why not?

5) Why do the Rabbis say that the *Va'yomeir* paragraph applies only during the day?

