The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Sun, Feb 15, 2026 ■ כ"ח שבט, תשפ"ו
סימן נ"ח סעיף א'

Overview

Siman 58 Seif 1:

The time for *krias shema* in the morning is from when one could recognize an acquaintance at a distance of four *amos*. The time extends until the end of the third hour which is a quarter of the day. The ideal fulfillment of the *mitzvah* is to read *krias shema k'vasikin* (Lit. students referring to those who are humble and love performing *mitzvos*) **who timed their reading until a little before *hanetz hachama*** (when the sun emerges) so that he could complete *krias shema* and the *berachos* with *hanetz hachama* so that one could juxtapose גאולה to תפילה at *hanetz hachama*. **One who can do this will be rewarded greatly.** The duration of *hanetz hachama* is an hour before the entire sun is visible over the earth.

- *Birchos krias shema* should also not be read before this time. (M.B. 1)
- An acquaintance is a guest who visits occasionally. (M.B. 2)
- Preferably one should not wait until the latest time. (M.B. 3)
- According to Magen Avrohom the three hours are calculated from *amud hashachar* whereas according to Gra it is calculated from *hanetz hachama*. (M.B. 4)
- The daytime is divided into twelve units and one quarter of the total is the latest time for *krias shema,* regardless of the season. (M.B. 5)
- One should not miss the time of *krias shema* to wait for his *talis* and *tefillin* and if there is even a possibility that one will miss the correct time he should not delay. (M.B. 5)
- Those who miss the time for *krias shema* so that they could daven with the *tzibbur* are also mistaken. On Shabbos and Yom Tov it is common for people to *daven* late and one should either make an early *minyan* or at least read *krias shema* before *davening*. (M.B. 5)
- The preferred time to *daven* is at the beginning of *hanetz hachama*. (M.B. 6)
- *Hanetz hachama* is when the sun shines on the tops of the mountains. (M.B. 7)
- Someone who *davens* at the ideal time is assured of being a בן עולם הבא and won't be harmed a whole day. (M.B. 8)
- According to another version the duration of *hanetz hachama* is a tenth of an hour. (M.B. 9)

Halacha Highlight

Calculating the latest time for *krias shema*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 58 Seif 1

ומשך זמנה עד סוף שלש שעות

And the time extends until the end of three hours of the day

Shulchan Aruch writes that the latest time that one could read *shema* and fulfill the *mitzvah* of reading *shema* in its correct time is three hours into the day which is one quarter of the day. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ד) quotes two opinions how to calculate this time. According to Magen Avrohom the day begins with *amud hashachar* whereas Vilna Gain maintains that the day begins at *hanetz hachama*. Elsewhere (סי' רל"ג סק"ד ושעה"צ שם סק"י) Mishnah Berurah explains that according to Magen Avrohom the day begins with *amud hashachar* and ends with *tzeis hakochavim*. According to Vilna Gaon the day begins with *hanetz hachama* and concludes at *shkiah*. Accordingly, the latest time for *shema* according to Magen Avrohom ends earlier than the latest time for *shema* according to Vilna Gaon.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"א סי' כ"ד) asserts that Mishnah Berurah consistently indicates that he follows the lenient position of Vilna Gain which is the opinion of many Rishonim. Additionally, the Vilna Gaon has the status of a later authority (בתראה) and as such halacha should follow his position. Furthermore, Shulchan Aruch HaRav also subscribes to this position and consequently, most places in Russia and Lithuania followed their ruling. Consequently, halacha follows the lenient position and it was only individuals who were stringent in accordance with Magen Avrohom's position. Orchos Rabbeinu (ח"א אות קס"ד עמ' נ"ב) writes in the name of Chazon Ish that one may rely upon Vilna Gaon's position even *l'chatchila*.

On the other hand, the Steipler Gaon (אורחות רבינו שם) maintained that one should follow the stringent position of Magen Avrohom since *krias shema* is a Biblical *mitzvah*. Teshuvos V'Hanhagos (ח"א סי' נ"ו) reports that R' Aharon Kotler told him that the matter is considered a matter of doubt concerning a Biblical *mitzvah* and one may not be lenient. Teshuvas Divrei Yatziv (שו"ת דברי יציב או"ח סי' נ"ז) agrees that one must be stringent with regards to a Biblical *mitzvah* and he relates that the common practice of our leaders was to follow the stringent opinion.

Stories to Share

"Should I Not Weep?"

מ"ב סי' נ"ח, ס"ק ד': "ודעת הגר"א משעת הנץ החמה..."

On today's amud we find the famous dispute between the Magen Avraham and the Vilna Gaon regarding the precise time to recite shema.

A certain person woke up later than usual and rushed to shul. When he had reached the middle of pesukei d'zimra he realized that it was almost the Magen Avraham's time to say shema. Although he had recited the shema in korbanos, he had not focused on discharging his Torah obligation to say shema in the morning. He knew that the Chazon Ish and many other gedolim hold that the halachah follows the Vilna Gaon but wondered whether he could say shema in the middle of pesukei d'zimra. Although usually one may not interrupt without a proper reason, he reasoned that saying shema before the Magen Avraham's time may be no less than interrupting in order to answer any amen, which is required.

When this question reached Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l, he answered, "One may not interrupt to say shema since he will easily make the Gaon's time."

דולה ומשקה, ע'

But not everyone agreed that the halachah follows the Gaon. Some hold that it is a question and like all questions regarding a Torah obligation it incumbent upon all to be stringent in this matter. Rav Shach was always careful to make the zeman keriyas shema of the Magen Avraham. Once, when he was much older, his family found him crying bitterly. When they asked him why, his answer gave a bit of insight into the workings of the heart of a gadol with profound yiras shomayim.

Rav Shach answered, "When I was very young I once missed the Magen Avraham time for shema. I felt inconsolable by this oversight and cried the entire day. Today, after many, many years of always making the earlier time, I again missed it. Should I not weep?"

כן שמעתי מדודי הרב שמחה גולשבסקי, ז"ל שהיה תלמיד מרן, זצ"ל