

Epistemology of Tefila(Class 37) - 1/7/2021 — Topic: Mincha and Maariv - Hello darkness my old friend - Part 2

Recap

1. Mincha refers both to the afternoon offering as laid out in the Torah, carried out in the Mishkan/Beit HaMikdash, the tefila that Yitzchak/Isaac introduced and the translation of the Hebrew word Mincha is “a gift” where the Nefesh/Soul is giving the gift. As mentioned to daven Mincha you take a break in your day to make time for HaShem.
2. When we daven Mincha there is a special significance that we should remember the story of the prophet Eliyahu/Elijah who prayed that HaShem show himself to help return the Jewish people from Idol worship and it was at that time of this afternoon meal offering that HaShem answered him and performed the miracle for all to see.
3. Mincha is a pretty short service but must be recognized as breakthrough time for prayer.

4.

FORM OF DAILY MINCHA		
PAGE NUMBERS	RCA ARTSCROLL	THE KOREN SIDDUR
Ashrei/Praiseworthy/Happy	232	207
Shemoneh Esrei/Amidah	234 - 248	211 - 231
Tachanun/Supplication(omit Fri)	250 - 252	233 - 235
Aleinu/It is our duty	252 - 254	237 - 239

5. We have introduction since it is forbidden for man to simply stand up and approach HaShem so we say Ashrei sitting as a preamble to our prayer to distinguish from the Amidah.

6. Amidah/Shemoneh Esrei has 2 changes in a verse from Devarim/ Deuteronomy (32:3) is added before you begin asking HaShem like Moses for Divine help with the verse we already say from King David and the Shalom/Peace is changed and shortened to focuses only on peace in face of the unknown dangers of the impending darkness.
7. The Tachanun prayer is based on the supplication that Daniel said and it is a very intense plea with HaShem to forgive us and answer our prayers. There are 3 stages from falling on our left arm with our face buried, to sitting up for the second part, and finally rising as if to look upward for our last plea.
8. Just as we have an introduction we conclude Mincha with the Aleinu which is a fitting finale to prayer as its prominent idea is the future harmony of all men in their recognition of HaShem as the One G-D.

Today we continue with Ma'Ariv L'Chol/Weekday Ma'ariv

Class Strategy

There is a dispute in the Talmud in Berachot(26b) about the different reasons for praying 3 times day. Rabbi Yosef, son of Rabbi Chanina said....

BERAKHOT 26B



The William Davidson Talmud

dispute. **It was stated: Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, said:** The practice of praying three times daily is ancient, albeit not in its present form; **prayers were instituted by the Patriarchs.** However,

Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi said

BERAKHOT 26B

The William Davidson Talmud



Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi
said that the **prayers were**
instituted based on the daily
offerings sacrificed in the
Holy Temple, and the prayers
parallel the offerings, in terms
of both time and
characteristics.

So while the dispute of the reason **why** we should daven 3 times a day is not resolved but the fact that it should be 3 times a day is mandated by our Rabbis. Hence a third service called Ma'ariv is added and can be said anytime after Tzait/Nightfall before retiring to bed. Rav Munk says that the Ma'Ariv prayer bears the principle of mercy where just before the day ends when daily work is done we stand before HaShem one more time for judgement and mercy that He will grant us protection until the morning. Since the Torah ordains that we say the Shema upon getting up and lying down we add the Shema to the Ma'ariv service. This according to Rashi serves as the introduction to the Shemoneh Esrei as the Ashrei does for Mincha(Rav Munk page 271). For practical reasons of saying Ma'ariv with minyan it is sometimes attached to Mincha and can be said based on the fact that the burning of the remnants from the sacrifices began 1 1/4 hours before Tzait/Nightfall but then you need to repeat the Shema after nightfall as you do not fulfill the mitzvah of Kriyat Shema after nightfall(Rav Munk page 272).

FORM OF DAILY MA'ARIV

PAGE NUMBERS	RCA ARTSCROLL	THE KOREN SIDDIR
Vehu Rachum/And He the merciful One	256	243
Barachu/Blessed is He	256	243
Kriyat Shema U'Brachot /Shema and its blessings	256 - 266	245 - 255
Shemoneh Esrei/Amidah	266 - 278	257 - 277
Aleinu/It is our duty	280	279 - 281

1. ***Vehu Rachum/And He the merciful One*** — Rabbi Potash(page 370) says we recite this verse to atone for our sins by appealing to his Mercy and ability to forgive. Rav Munk(page 273) says this can be called the motto of the evening service as now darkness descends we invoke His Mercy. Furthermore this verse of mercy was chosen since if you count the words you will see there are 13 which alludes to the 13 Midot/Attributes of HaShem(Rav Munk page 273).

2. ***Barachu/Blessed is He*** — Rav Munk(page 121) explains that the Barachu is like the invitation to begin just like for the Torah reading, Birkat Hamazon, and Savri for Kiddush. The leader begins with an initial invitation, the congregation repeats the invitation with addition of forever and ever and then the leader repeats there words to show he is in sync with them. These repeating blessings serve as an introduction to the Blessings of the Shema if you are davening with a Minyan. If not you skip this and begin with the first blessing of the Shema(Rabbi Potash page 371).

3. ***Kriyat Shema U'Brachot /Shema and its blessings*** — Rav Munk explains that there are 4 brachot surrounding the Shema at night as

opposed to 3 for the morning one which make up 7 as King David refers to in his Psalm (119:164) "Seven times a day I have praised You and Your just laws". Rabbi Potash(page 372) says that the first bracha who brings on evenings again declares our faith in HaShem as the creator of both darkness and light. Bidvaro/With His word is HaShem's creative word that calls forth the evening(Rav Munk page 275) and just as Kohelet says for everything there is a set time/zeman/general and specific time/zeman/limited. The Hebrew word gollel/turns is used to explain that HaShem is turning the earth around making it light in some places and dark in others. The second bracha Ahavat Olam/Everlasting Love Rav Munk(page 277) says is the precious gift of the Torah and its teachings for our enlightenment and guidance. Furthermore they are the heritage of all individuals who are Jewish and have persisted for centuries of our national existence Rabbi Potash(page 373) adds that while most of the focus is how haShem supports us in the darkness there is a middle verse of hope for when the day will arrive when HaShem's reign is apparent to all then there will be no distinction between night and day. Then the Shema and its 3 paragraphs are said as we discussed them in a previous class I will not go over them again. So lets continue to the 3rd bracha of the Shema which is also Ga'al Yisrael/Who Redeemed Israel and reminds us to remember our Geulah/redemption from Egypt. Rabbi Potash(page 374) says that Chazal/ Our sages taught us that he who remembers the miracles HaShem has done for us in Egypt in the evening prayers will merit the world to come. Rav Munk(page 280) explains the format of this prayer begins with Emet VeEmunah/Truth and Trust and are the two ideas that grow out of the remembrance of our redemption. Here unlike the morning where we use the past tense we use the participial form and present form as a constant continuing action(Rav Munk page 281). Which brings us to the 4th which Rav Munk(page 282) says is merely considered a continuation of the 3rd one about the Geulah. Rabbi Potash(page 375) explains this as this is the prayer that was said by Jews in Egypt when they were scared to lay down at night when the Egyptians first born were going to be killed and is still connected to the Geulah. Rav Munk(page 283) says at night if we have undisturbed rest it leads to restored vigor for the tasks of the next day, a time for quiet planning, relaxation and to refresh the mind. Baruch HaShem/ Blessed is HaShem is an additional paragraph was added when it was dangerous to be in a synagogue or place of davening alone(Rabbi Twerski page. 243). Rav Munk(page 285) explains that this shorter prayer than the Shemoneh Esrei which contains 18 Divine names was introduced so people could leave to get home before it got dark. Rabbi Twerski(page 285)

offers another reason was to allow late comers to catch up so the congregation could all daven the Shemoneh Esrei together, so as to have a bond of communal responsibility that unites the whole community. According to Rashi the last paragraph Yiru Ayneinu should be recited with a feeling of joyous elevation as a transition into the Shemoneh Esrei.

4. ***Shemoneh Esrei/Amidah*** — Same as for Mincha

5. ***Aleinu/It is our duty*** — Same as for Mincha

In conclusion I would like to end with a beautiful idea from Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (Rav Munk page 288) consider that one who has surrendered their whole being to HaShem and His Torah will find that ones aims, aspirations, and achievements will burn upon the altar until morning as an offering to HaShem as did the Korban Ma'Ariv.

Next week Thursday 1/14/2021 - Topic Shabbat Mincha.