

Tractate Brachos

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First read the Gamorah as is. Ponder it for a few seconds, and see how you understand it. Then, move on and we will learn it.

Gamorah: To what is the Tanna referring that he asks “From when”? And furthermore, why does the Tanna teach of the evening first? Let him teach of the morning first. The Tanna refers to the verse where it is written, “... when you lie down and when you arise.” And that is what [he] is saying: When is the time for reciting the Shema of lying down? From the time that Kohanim enter to eat their terumah. And if you prefer, say; [he] learned from the Creation of the world, where it is written, “And there was evening and there was morning, one day.” If so, the end of the Mishnah, in the morning one recites two blessings before [the Shema] and one after it, and in the evening one recites two blessings before [the Shema] and two after it, let [him] teach of the evening first. The Tanna opens with the evening, and then teaches the morning while he is involved with the morning, he explains matters of the morning and he then explains matters to the evening.

Explanation:

To what is the Tanna [our author of the Mishnah] referring that he asks “from when”? [Where is he holding. This statement presents two sides: 1) there is an obligation, 2) there is a time limit]. And furthermore why does the Tanna teach the evening first? Let him teach the morning first. [Why should he start with the evening recital of the Shema, let him start with the morning recital. Just as in Exodus 29:39 we see that the morning tamid (daily offering) is listed before the afternoon tamid. This would be accord with the daily order of man, who first arises in the morning (Tosafos). But our Tanna starts with the evening, and then on a later page in the Mishnah, he discusses the morning]. The Gamorah will try and resolve: **The Tanna refers to the verse where it is written “... when you lie down and when you arise.”**

And this is what the Mishnah is saying: When is the time for reciting the Shema of “lying down”? From the time that Kohanim enter to eat their terumah. [It does not seem that our Tanna is giving an obvious indication to preference of the evening. He is however following a particular order, and we must try and understand the reason of his order. Our Gamorah is saying that he is following the order which is indicated in the verse of the Shema: “... when you lie down and when you arise.” Placing the lying down before the rising, and that is why our Tanna starts with the explanation of the evening Shema before he speaks about morning Shema. He is further stating that one may not say the evening Shema before the Kohanim (priests) are permitted to eat of their Terumah (the offering given to them. The Gamorah will elaborate on this later).

The Gamorah will now try and assure itself by analysing another point of view: **And if you prefer to say: The Mishnah learned from the Creation of the world, where it is written, “And there was evening and there was morning, one day. [Maybe our Tanna is not following the verse from the Shema, “when you lie down...”, but rather he is holding by another verse in Genesis 1:5 which mentions that first there is evening and then morning (as we know, the Jewish day starts after sunset, until the next sunset). Therefore, he is starting with the first recital of the day. The Gamorah will now continue to analyse this point of view:] If so, the end of the Mishnah [on a later page of this Mishnah, near the end, he discusses the following] In the morning one recites two blessings before and one blessing after it, and in the evening one recites two blessings before and two after it, let the Tanna teach of the evening first. [There, he discusses the blessings which are said before and after the Shema. However, he discusses in that section the morning first, and then he moves on to the evening. If he holds by the verse in Genesis, as per the order of Creation, and the order of a day, let him also continue in this order, and discuss the evening before the morning. The Gamorah will try and answer it’s own question:] **The Tanna opens the evening [in our Mishnah] and then teaches the morning, while he is involved with the morning he explains matters of the morning and****

he then explains matter to the evening.

[He does follow the order of Creation, however, when he finishes discussing the Shema (of the morning), since he is already on the events of the morning, he just continues from there to the evening in order to complete the service of one Jewish day.]

We have now seen that it seems that the Gamorah is content with understanding our Mishnah in this way: The Tanna holds: We discuss the evening Shema first because we follow the order of Creation. First there was evening, then morning, and then one day is complete.

Since we can now hold the order of thought of our Tanna, we can continue to the next stage of our Gamorah. When studying Gamorah, one should constantly, throughout the day, repeat that small part of the Mishnah, by memory (more or less) and explain it as our Gamorah does, in a loud voice, to one's self. For example: "The Mishnah says: From when may we recite the Shema in the Evenings? The Gamorah says: What does the Tanna mean "from when" and why does he teach evening first...", etc. You must review this study every day.