

Timely Prayer

Excerpted and adapted from a shiur by Dayan Yehoshua Grunwald

October 28, 2021

https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/BER82_005_Chayei_Sar_a_While_the_Sun_Shines_Davening_Mincha_Before_Shekia.mp3

And Yitzchak went out to pray in the field toward evening...

Bereishis 24:63

According to Chazal (Brachos 26b), this *pasuk* teaches that Yitzchak instituted the practice of davening Mincha daily. The Gemara records a *machlokes* about the latest time for davening Mincha. R' Yehudah holds that one must do so before *plag* haMincha (an hour and a quarter before *shkiah*, according to *sha'os zmaniyos*), while the Chachamim hold that one may daven until nightfall.

Although the Gemara rules that one may adopt either approach on a consistent basis, the practice of most people is to follow the Chachamim (except on Shabbos, which may be more lenient). But authorities differ concerning the definition of nightfall in this context. According to Rabeinu Yonah, nightfall refers to *shkiah*, while the Magein Avraham holds it means *tzeis hakochavim* (when the stars emerge).

Later Acharonim differ as to the practical halacha. The Gra (Ma'aseh Rav) and Aruch Hashulchan strongly argue that *shkiah* is the latest time for Mincha. The Divrei Yatziv (the Klausenberger Rebbe) says that one may daven Mincha until *tzeis hakochavim*. The Mishnah Brurah rules that one should daven Mincha before *shkiah*, but *bedi'eved*, if *shkiah* has passed, he may still daven. He cites opinions that recommend making a *tenai* (stipulation) that if it is too late for Mincha, one's *tefilah* should count for Ma'ariv instead, and his Ma'ariv later will serve as *tashlumin*. Rav Elyashiv is cited as ruling that such a *tenai* should be made even if one davens immediately after *shkiah*, while others do not require one even when davening long after *shkiah*.

Today, different communities' minhagim vary widely, and one's approach in this issue should depend upon the practice of his community and his Rabbinic authority.