בשם טוב מן העולם, ועליו נאמר (קהלת ז, א) טוב שם משמן טוב ויום המות מיום הולדו (ברכות יז ע"א).

[הליכות עולם ח"ח עמ' שפב]

טו. יש אומרים שראוי לו לאדם לישון בחצי הראשון של הלילה, ויעסוק בתורה בחצי השני של הלילה, ויש בזה תועלת לאדם הן מצד בריאות גופו, והן מצד הרוחניות בתיקון הנפש. אולם בתלמוד שלנו (ברכות סב ע"ב), ובדברי הרמב"ם (פ"ד מהל' דעות ה"ד) מבואר, שהשינה בסוף הלילה בזמן עלות השחר מועילה לבריאות הגוף, ולכן אם רצה ללמוד בתחלת הלילה, ולישון בחצי השני של הלילה, יכול לעשות כן.

Our Sages declared (*Berakhot* 17a): Fortunate is the person who toils in Torah study and who brings pleasure to his Maker. His standing increases as he ages and he will pass from this world with a sterling reputation, as the verse states (*Kohelet* 7:1), "A reputation is better than fine oil, and one's dying day is superior to the day one is born."

Day 9

When to sleep

15) Some Torah authorities claim that a person should sleep during the beginning of the night and spend the latter part of the night studying Torah. This, they explain, is better for a person's health and better for him spiritually.

The Talmud (*Berakhot* 62b) and Rambam (*Hilkhot De'ot* 4:4), however, state clearly that sleeping at the end of the night toward dawn is the best for one's health. Therefore, if someone wishes to schedule himself to study Torah during the first hours of the night and to go to sleep afterward, this is permissible.[21]

21. When is it best to sleep

The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Vayishlah* halakha 1) stated that it is healthier physically and spiritually to sleep during the first half of the night.Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* Vol. I, page 44), however, pointed out that the Talmud (*Berakhot* 62b) teaches that sleep is most beneficial to one's health towards dawn. Rambam likewise stated (*Hilkhot De'ot* 4:4) that one should sleep during the latter part of the night until daybreak. Rambam recommended sleeping for eight hours at night and waking up shortly before sunrise. The Rishon Letziyon added that as far as he knows this concurs with contemporary medical opinion.

In the *sefer Mikabtze'el*, Harav Yosef Hayim added when a person first sleeps and then rises to study Torah after midnight, he brings more pleasure to God than when studying Torah at other times. Furthermore, he claimed that one can concentrate best on his studies at that time since it is quiet and there are no disturbances or distractions. Regarding one's physical health, he asserted that two hours of sleep before midnight are more beneficial to one's body than four hours of sleep after midnight.

This matches his comments in the *Ben Ish Hai*, explaining that when one studies Torah during the hours after midnight it is beneficial in multiple ways. He cited the holy *Zohar* extolling the virtues of this practice.

Although Maran the Rishon Letziyon challenged the claim that sleep is more beneficial physically before midnight, he did not challenge the claims that Torah study after midnight has greater spiritual value. The *Ben Ish Hai's* claims about the health benefits of rising before dawn are supported by the *Ru'ah Hayim* Palachi (page 90a) who prescribed a list of behaviors that promote longevity. He stated, "It is known from experience that all those who lived to a ripe old age maintained the practice of rising before dawn. In fact, the British diplomat Wellesley adopted this practice as a cardinal rule of health, based on the adage, 'Early to bed and early to rise make a man healthy, wealthy and wise,' and he lived to the ripe age of eighty-eight. He claimed that this habit promotes one's health, intelligence and strength. There are those who argue that it is better to remain out of bed until one becomes quite sleepy so that one will not suffer lying awake for a long time unable to fall asleep. I promise, however, that it is simply a matter of habit. It is best, therefore, to follow this prescription and rise early each morning even if it is difficult on some days. After keeping such a schedule for six or seven days, it will

ואם אפשר לו לאדם שילמד סמוך לשקיעת החמה עד אחר צאת הכוכבים, ובבוקר סמוך לעלות השחר עד אחר עלות השחר, כדי לחבר היום ללילה בלימוד התורה, ולקיים "והגית בו יומם ולילה", טוב שיעשה כן. ומכל מקום מי שאינו עושה כן יש לו על מה שיסמוך, ובלבד שיעסוק בתורה ביום ובלילה.

[הליכו"ע ח"א עמ' מד]

Connecting day with night

It is recommended to devote some time just before sunset and until after dusk to Torah study, so that he joins the day and night with this endeavor. Likewise, it is recommended to devote the time from just before dawn until after dawn to Torah study for the same reason. This is not imperative, however, and one may choose to ignore these instructions. The main thing is to make sure to devote time both during the day and during the night to Torah study.

become easy to fall asleep early in the evening as soon as one lies down in bed. The main thing is to make sure to rise early each morning no matter what went on the night before. One's health and longevity depend on waking up early in the morning, not on the time one goes to sleep."

Maran the Rishon Letziyon wrote (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. VII, *Y.D.* #20:2): "In my youth I saw that most of the older rabbis, truly holy and devout men, maintained the practice of sleeping during the first hours of the night, rising at midnight and studying Torah until dawn. This is an ancient practice, recorded in the holy *Zohar* (*parashat Emor* 90a).

"I, however, have since my childhood adopted the practice of studying Torah through the evening, going to sleep only after midnight, relying on our Sages' teaching in Yoma 22a. Whichever practice one adopts is fine, as long as one devotes oneself to serving God in the best way one can. God will surely reward everyone for his efforts."

The *sefer Mishmeret Shalom* (1) notes that in modern times people's sleeping and waking schedule have been altered. This is especially true since the advent of artificial lighting both indoors and in the streets. Nevertheless, God does not make unreasonable demands of us.

Connecting day and night with Torah

The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Vayishlah* halakha 2) instructs us to try to rise from bed somewhat before dawn so that we can engage in Torah study as the night ends and the day begins. Likewise, we should engage in Torah study toward evening as the day ends and the night begins. The source for this practice is the *Shene Luhot Haberit*, cited in the *Magen Avraham* (1:1).

There is a basis to justify those who do not observe this practice, however. The *Ha'amek She'ela* (*parashat Va'et'hanan* 143:3) suggests that this practice is alluded to in the Talmud Yerushalmi (*Yoma* chap. 1): Bar Kapara taught, "Even if a person reviewed only two chapters in the morning and again in the evening, he has fulfilled the commandment of 'The book of the Torah must not stray from your mouth; you must study it day and night.'" Apparently, this can be fulfilled by connecting the day with the night on both ends. Therefore, the instructions are to study two portions of halakha at each juncture, morning and evening – one portion during the day and one during the night.

The Talmud Bavli, however, disagrees with this. In *Menahot* 99b it states that one fulfills this commandment by studying only one chapter in the morning and one in the evening. Apparently, it does not make it necessary to connect the day with the night. The instructions given by the *Shene Luhot Haberit*, therefore, are only a recommendation to satisfy the stringent opinion of the Talmud Yerushalmi.

The *Shulhan Esh* wrote that the correct way to connect day and night in the morning is through prayers and reciting *Tehillim*, whereas in the evening the correct way is through Torah study.

Napping during the day

Our Sages taught (*Sukkah* 26b): Rav said, "It is forbidden to sleep during the day for longer than a horse's nap. How long is a horse's nap? Sixty breaths." Rashi explains that daytime napping is forbidden because it wastes time that could have been spent in Torah study.

This passage is cited as the halakha by Rabbenu Yitzhak Alfasi and Rabbenu Asher, and Rambam ruled accordingly (*Hilkhot De'ot* 4:5). The *Arba'a Turim* (231) states: "After eating the evening meal, one should return to his Torah studies. If he cannot learn continuously without napping during the day, this is permitted, but he must not sleep very long." Maran ruled in the *Shulhan Arukh* (231:1) likewise that one must not nap during the day longer than a horse's nap – sixty breaths.

טז. הלומד תורה בלילה עד שעה מאוחרת, ובשל כך קיים ספק אם יוכל לקום להתפלל קודם שיעבור זמן קריאת שמע ותפלה, יפסיק מלימודו, ויסדר זמן לימודו באופן שלא יאחר זמן קריאת שמע ותפלה. אבל אם אינו ישן ועוסק בלימוד התורה, ועקב כך יבטל רק תפלה בהנץ החמה, רשאי לנהוג כן, כל שהדבר גורם לו לחיזוק ההתמדה בלימוד התורה. ובלבד שלא יתאחר מזמן קריאת שמע ותפלה. **ואמנם** מי שאינו טרוד בלימודו, מצוה מן המובחר להשתדל להתפלל בנץ החמה, שמעלתה גדולה.

[ילקו"י עמ' עו]

Balancing Torah with *shaḥarit*

16) The practice of rising at dawn to pray *shaḥarit* at sunrise is given great importance, and anyone who can maintain this practice without it adversely affecting his Torah studies should do so. If studying late at night makes it impossible for one to rise at dawn in order to pray *shaḥarit* with the sunrise but he will still be able to rise in time to pray with a congregation within the proper time, he may continue to study Torah late at night.

If someone is studying Torah late at night and he realizes that if he remains awake any longer he will likely sleep until the time for the morning *Shema* and the morning prayers will have passed, he should stop studying and go to sleep immediately. One must arrange one's schedule so that one will fulfill these mitzvot properly.[22]

The *Maḥatzit Hashekel* (4:15; 231), however, states that this is not always the case. Some people need to nap during the day in order to function properly and serve God. This is cited by the *Mishna Berura* (4:36) and the *Yafe Lalev* (Vol. III, 231:1).

If this issue is examined from a rational standpoint, the ruling of the *Maḥatzit Hashekel* is above any challenge. From the viewpoint of Kabbalah, however, it seems one must invariably avoid daytime naps. The *Sha'ar Hamitzvot* (*parashat Va'et'ḥanan* page 50) is adamant about this, explaining that daytime naps may cause a person to lose part of his soul.

Harav Yosef Ḥayim (responsa *Rav Pe'alim* Vol. II, Unit *Sod Yesharim* #9) was asked if there is any halakhic basis to permit napping for an hour or more each day, as many people have become accustomed to doing. He replied that if people are exhausted because they were up most of the night studying Torah, this can certainly be excused. Although the Arizal warned that this might harm one's soul, this is true only of great tzaddikim with enhanced souls, who are liable to lose some of that enhancement. Nowadays, he asserted, we can assume that we are not worthy of enhanced souls in the first place, and so no spiritual harm will come of daytime napping. He referred us to responsa *Torah Lishmah* (#405).

In conclusion, the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 71) ruled that it is preferable to avoid daytime napping and spend one's time studying Torah. If a nap will help one to concentrate better on his studies, however, it is permitted, but the nap should be of limited length. Whatever one does, one's intentions should be for the sake of Heaven.

22. When studying late at night clashes with the morning prayers

The *Or Letziyon* (*Mussar* page 104) commented that some yeshivah students study Torah diligently until very late at night, but then they wake up late in the morning, after the time for reciting the *Shema* has passed. He expressed his wonder how people could use God's Torah in a manner contrary to His Will. He cited Harav Tzadka Ḥussin relating that his practice was always to rise and pray *shaḥarit* with the sunrise. One day he woke somewhat late and decided not to go to his synagogue. He was afraid that he would cause a *ḥillul Hashem*, a disgrace of God's Name, if people saw him arriving late to the synagogue.

If someone is incapable of rising in time to pray with the sunrise, he must at least make sure not to miss the time allotted for the mitzvah of reciting the morning *Shema*. Nevertheless, one must not disparage others even when one sees them arriving late to the synagogue. Perhaps there is a reason to justify their late arrival.

Relying on the time limit prescribed by Harav Eliyahu of Vilna

The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 77) stated that that there is a halakhic basis for someone to study Torah until late at night

דיני תיקון חצות

יז. ראוי לכל ירא שמים, שיהא מיצר ודואג, על חורבן בית המקדש. [ש"ע ס"ק]. ואמרו רז"ל (ברכות ג ע"א): "שלש משמרות הוי הלילה, ועל כל משמר ומשמר יושב הקדוש ברוך הוא ושואג כארי ואומר: אוי לבנים שבעונותיהם החרבתי את ביתי, ושרפתי את היכלי, והגליתים לבין אומות העולם". ולכן ראוי לכל ירא שמים שיהא מיצר ודואג באותה שעה ולשפוך תחנונים על חורבן בית המקדש כמו שנאמר (איכה ב, יט) קומי רני בלילה לראש אשמורות. [ב"י אות ב-ג בשם הרא"ש] **והמקובלים** האריכו מאוד בגודל מעלת קימת חצות, כי רבה היא. [משנ"ב ס"ק ט. ועי' כה"ח פלאגי' סי' ג באורך ובאחרון].

וראוי לכל אשר נגע ה' בלבו, לקונן בחצות הלילה על החורבן, ועל פיזור ישראל בין האומות, ועל גלות התורה והריגת הצדיקים. וכל מי שאפשר לו להשכים קום בחצות לילה טוב שיעשה

Day 10

Tikkun Hatzot

Joining God in mourning

17) Anyone who possesses genuine fear of Heaven will mourn regularly over the destruction of the *Bet Hamikdash*.[23] Our Sages taught (*Berakhot* 3a) that the night is divided into three time periods. At the junctures between these periods, the Blessed Holy One sits and roars like a [wounded] lion, saying, "Woe unto My children, for due to their sins I destroyed My house, burned my Sanctuary, and exiled [My children] to foreign countries." It is fitting for us to join God in lamenting these things at those times and to pray for the restoration of the *Bet Hamikdash*. This is the meaning of the verse (*Ekha* 2:19), "Rise, sing out at night at the beginning of each time period."

Although this is the teaching of the Talmud and it is the ruling of Maran in the *Shulhan Arukh*, the Kabbalists instructed us that it is more correct to rise at midnight for this purpose. See the footnote to halakha 25. Every devout Jew should rise at midnight or sometime afterward during the night to mourn and lament the destruction of the *Bet*

even though he realizes that by doing so he will not rise in the morning in time to recite the *Shema* within the time prescribed by the *Magen Avraham*. It is permitted if he will rise in time for the time limit prescribed by Harav Eliyahu of Vilna.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsum published in *Yalkut Yosef*, first edition page 98) ruled that it is incorrect to rely on the opinion of Harav Eliyahu of Vilna regarding the window of time for the morning *Shema*. One should also do one's best to recite it within the time prescribed by the *Magen Avraham* unless there is some emergency forcing one to delay reciting it. In such a case it is permitted since many communities have adopted the practice of relying on the opinion of Harav Eliyahu, as Harav HIDA testified. This seems to contradict the leniency forwarded by the *Yalkut Yosef*.

23. Torah study and prayer call for joy

Harav HIDA (*Mahazik Berakha*), cited in the *Mishna Berura* 1:10, explained that although we must mourn regularly for the destruction of the *Bet Hamikdash*, we must be cheerful while studying Torah and praying. The *Ru'ah Hayim* Palachi (1:17) added that this is because our prayers substitute for the daily sacrifices that should be offered in the *Bet Hamikdash*, as our Sages taught in *Berakhot* (26b) and as Maran ruled in the *Shulhan Arukh* (98:4). In fact, our Sages taught (*Megilla* 16b) that prayer is even more exalted than the sacrifices or the act of constructing the *Bet Hamikdash*. Therefore, while praying there is no necessity to mourn the loss of the *Bet Hamikdash*.