

EIS RATZON-PRAYING AT VASIKIN, SUNRISE

Even if the Sages did not state that the hour of sunrise is filled with spiritual power and Divine grace, one would sense it. The world feels fresh and new, the air pure, the day yet unmarred by whatever challenges are to come.

The propitious nature of this time of day for prayer is not, however, based on feelings alone. Rabbinic writings cite Psalm 72:5: *They will fear You with [the rising of] the sun...for generations upon generations*, in support to begin prayer at sunrise.

Special blessings accrue to one who prays at sunrise. One sage explains that the beginning of the morning is when the Almighty is filled with mercy of the people of Israel and sustains and supports them, as other nations serve their idols and the nation of Israel comes to pray to Him. Therefore, Psalm 90:14 states: *Satisfy us with Your kindness in the morning then we shall sing out and rejoice throughout our days.*

Because of this infusion of mercy, the very best time to beseech the Almighty for various needs is early in the morning, specifically when on “loses sleep” to pray at sunrise, as Rashi states that God graciously sustains those who deny themselves sleep for Him.

So, important is sunrise that one who is particular to pray at sunrise may pray alone.

The day is just dawning. The neighborhood is still silent, the window shades drawn. One's heart feels clean, hopeful, and full of potential. But it is not just the natural optimism of a new day that energizes the person's spirit. It is the reality, the soul's understanding that this is indeed a golden moment to bask in the light of the Almighty's undiluted mercy.

POINTS TO PONDER

One who prays at sunrise, joining the prayer for Redemption to the Shemoneh Esrei at sunrise, has the promise that no harm will befall him that day.

The Almighty is filled with mercy for all Israel during the earliest hours of morning.

If there is no timely minyan available, one who habitually prays at sunrise is permitted to pray alone rather than miss his designated time of praying.

Psalm 5:4 Hear my voice, O LORD, at daybreak; at daybreak I plead before You, and wait. (TNK)