

Instant Divine Gratification (Chayei Sara)

A prayer in its simplest definition is merely a wish turned Godward.
-Phillips Brooks

Jews are supposed to pray three times a day, morning, afternoon, and night. There is a Rabbinic tradition that each Forefather was responsible for the establishment of a different prayer. Abraham was responsible for the morning prayer, Isaac for the afternoon one and Jacob for the night one.

For most people who care to participate in communal prayer, the morning and night ones are typically the easiest. There are early morning meetings in synagogues around the world to fit the schedule of most people. There are typically opportunities at the end of the day to catch the night prayer. However, the afternoon prayer can get tricky to attend (especially during winter months when the afternoon hours are limited).

Though liturgically the shortest prayer, logistically, the afternoon prayer can be the hardest, as it means stopping what we are doing in what is often the middle of meetings, work, school, or travel. I have heard that therefore, one gets the most 'reward' for the afternoon prayer (I don't recall the source, so if anyone knows please send it my way).

Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim of Prague, the *Kli Yakar* (1550-1619) on Genesis 24:63 takes this idea a step further (and brings sources).

“A man should always be cautious with the afternoon prayer, for Elijah (the Prophet) was only answered for his afternoon prayer.” -
Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Berachot 6b.

The *Kli Yakar* then gives metaphysical reasons for why the afternoon prayer is the most powerful one. As further proof, he brings the biblical account that the moment Isaac finished his prayer, he was answered:

“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide; and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, there were camels coming.”
Genesis 24:63

Isaac was praying at that moment for none other than a bride. As soon as he lifted his eyes from prayer, she was there, arriving on the caravan with Abraham's servant.

The *Kli Yakar* states that this is the prime example of the power of the afternoon prayer. The second we finish it, God may answer us.

May we realize the power of our talks with God and take them seriously.

Shabbat Shalom,

Ben-Tzion

Dedication

In memory of Rose Lubin hy”d, of Atlanta, Georgia. May God avenge her death.
<https://funeralobitsmemorial.com/rose-lubin-obituary-a-tragic-loss-for-israel-death/>