

The Daily RYS - 7/14/06 - Speed of Davening

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 2, pages 224 - 225.

Praying alone on Saturday nights or at the end of fast days, R. Israel would defer his Tefilah till an hour or more after dark. When praying with the congregation however, he would hurry to start immediately and not wait a minute beyond the earliest permissible time, so as not to hold back the congregation. So, too, he would take very long to recite the Tefillah when alone. When he prayed with a congregation that would wait for him to finish, however, he would be among the first, "so as not to burden the public." [49]

Even in the month of Elul and the Ten Days of Penitence, when he would observe special stringencies, he would only take a little longer than usual to recite the first three berachot of the Shemoneh Esreh, but hurry through the rest as was his custom, and so finish together with the congregation.

[49.] See Berachot 31a: `Such was the custom of R. Akiva. When he prayed with the congregation, he would curtail his devotions