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Halakha

If One Speaks During the Reading of the Meghillah

One may not speak while the Meghillah is being read. If one spoke between the Berakha (blessing) and the reading, one has to repeat the blessing. However, if the speaking was for the purpose of the reading of the Meghillah, then Bedi'abad (post factum) one does not need to repeat the blessings.

Since reading the Meghillah is not on a higher level than the Shema' or Hallel, the Hazzan can interrupt between paragraphs out of respect or fear for the other person. If the Hazzan speaks during the reading itself, it is not considered an interruption and he does not repeat. He must go back to the place where he stopped reading and continues from there.

This is not true for those who are listening to the reading. If one who is listening speaks during the reading, he cannot hear the words that are read while he is speaking. As such, he does not fulfil his obligation of Meghillah.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh 692:2. Kaf Haḥayyim ibid, Oth 21,22,23.
Mishnah Berurah ibid, 9)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5779 פרשת ויקרא

Parasha

Wayyiqra: Do Sacrifices Make Sense?

אִם כִּי־יָקִיב מִכֶּם קָרְבָן לַה' *When a man from amongst you (Mikkem) brings an offering to G-d (Wayyiqra 1:2).* The word *Mikkem* (from amongst you) needs explanation, because it does not appear to add any content to the sentence.

It is illogical in our minds that when a person sins he will be forgiven by offering a sacrifice. The punishment or fine that is meted out for a transgression, should be proportionate to the person against whom we have sinned. When we sin against G-d it does not appear to make sense that a mere sacrifice would be a sufficient fine for sinning against the Creator of the world! If we answer that the sacrifice is a gift, this would not make sense either, since G-d does not lack anything.

There are, in fact, many explanations to this question. The general consensus of the *Mefarshim*, however, is that a human being's knowledge is too limited to correctly understand it. The explanation of the Ramban, however, is that when a person sins, he does so on three levels, *Maḥashabah* (thought), *Dibbur* (speech) and *Ma'aseh* (the actual action). When he brings a sacrifice, there is the act of placing one's hands on the sacrifice (which is *Ma'aseh*). He then utters the confession (which is *Dibbur*). Finally, when the parts of the sacrifice are burned, he is supposed to think (*Maḥashabah*) that really he should have been in place of the sacrifice, if not for the kindness of G-d.

That is why the word *Mikkem* is used to make us understand that really it should have been the person himself, but through G-d's kindness we are offering a substitute.

(See Kether Şaddiq, Wayyiqra)

For the 'Illui Neshamah of
Yeshayahu Ben David & Regina, 'a"h

Torah and Rejoicing During the Purim Meal

When having the Se'udath Purim (festive meal), one should invite one's family and friends to the Se'udah, because how can a man sit all by himself and yet be happy as we are required to? This assumes, of course, that there will be songs of praise sung at the table and words of Torah and Hiddushim connected with the Meghillah, which will be spoken there. If, on the other hand, it will consist of idle talk, or especially, if it will degenerate into inappropriate discussion, it is preferable to sit and eat on one's own.

Before starting the meal it is good practice to study some Torah. Support for this comes from the verse, *For the Jews there was light and rejoicing*. The word *light* (Ora) refers to the Torah which precedes the word *rejoicing* (Simcha), which is the Purim meal. Through this study, the Torah will protect us throughout the meal.

(See Rama, 695:2. Kaf HaChayyim ibid, Oth 24 & 27. Mishnah Berurah ibid:9. Q. Sh. 'A. H' Rafael Barukh Toledano 636, Oth 15)

When One Should Not Drink Much on Purim

It goes without saying that if drinking wine and getting inebriated is harmful to one's health, one is not obligated to do so. We see from the Talmud Yerushalmi that Ribbi Yehudah Bar El'ai, 'a"h, did not drink wine from one Pesach (Passover) to the next. This implies that he did not drink on Purim for reasons of health. Nevertheless, one who is unable to drink a lot should still drink a glass of wine during the meal to fulfill the Pasuk (verse) *Yemei Mishtei Wesimcha* (days of banqueting and happiness).

One who knows that if he drinks too much on Purim, he will come to neglect one or more of the Mitzvot (commandments), such as Netilat Yadayim (the ritual washing of hands), the blessings that need to be recited, Birkath Hamazon (grace after meals), or he will not pray Mincha or 'Arbit, or will behave in a light headed manner, should not get drunk.

(See the Kaf HaChayyim 695, Oth 16-17)

Women's Corner - by Rabbanith Ruth Menashe, 'a"h

Queen Esther: Above Human Nature, Part 2

Why did G-d hear the cry of Rachel Immenu (the Matriarch) but not the prayer of the Patriarchs (Aboth) or Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h, at the time of the exile to Babylon? (see A Torah Minute™, vol.,2, Women's Corner, Who is Rachel Immenu?). It was because she was willing to do something above and beyond that which could be asked of her (when she gave the signs to her sister).

Yoseph HaShaddiq (Joseph), 'a"h, protected the Jewish people, by repaying his brothers' earlier actions of hatred and jealousy with benevolence and kindness. This act was also above and beyond what one might expect.

Rachel Immenu, Yoseph HaShaddiq and Queen Esther, 'a"h, all went against human nature and against what one could reasonably expect, and all brought salvation to the Jewish people. In the case of the period that we commemorate on Purim, deliverance occurred through Queen Esther because she, personally, did not stand to gain by her actions (since she would anyway have been spared), and because she initiated this selfless action herself. As a result, she was the only one fit to plead to the Heavenly Court to change the decree.

When the Holy One blessed be He sees that human beings, who are made of flesh and blood, go against their nature, G-d, Who is the source of mercy and compassion, acts with us *Lifnim Mishurath Haddin* (beyond the letter of the law) to forgive us.

(See Ben Ish Hai, Derush 4, Shabbath Zakhor)