



Overview

Halacha Highlight

Losing one's place while reading *shema*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 64 Seif 3
טעה בין פרשה לפרשה

If one erred between one paragraph and another

The Gemara Berachos (16a) teaches that if a person errs between one paragraph and another he should go back to the first paragraph. Rashi (ד"ה בין פרק לפרק) explains that the Gemara discusses one who knows that he finished a paragraph but doesn't recall whether he is between the first and second paragraph or the second and third paragraph. The halacha is that he should resume following the first break, i.e. with *שמע* והיה אם שמע. Rambam (פ"ב מהל' ק"יש הי"ג) writes that the Gemara refers to a case in which one became confused about which paragraph he completed and which he should start. The halacha is that he should resume reading with *ואהבת*. Bais Yosef explains, since one must pause between the word *ועד* and *ואהבת* that is considered the first break in *shema*. When the person knows that he reached a break but does not recall which one and we send him back to assure that he reads all of *shema* he must go back to the earliest place where the doubt arose, which in the case, is at the first break.

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ג') follows Rashi's explanation rather than Rambam's and thus rules that if one erred between one *parsha* and another, meaning that he knows that he finished one *parsha* but does not know whether it was the first or second he must go back to the first *parsha* and resume with *שמע* והיה אם שמע. Mishnah Berurah (סק"יח) explains that Shulchan Aruch refers to where the person does not recall saying any words from the second paragraph but if he recalled saying words from the second paragraph he would resume from that point. Furthermore, the case refers to where the person does not recall beginning the paragraph of *ויאמר* but if he began *ויאמר* and then his uncertainty arises he may assume that since he began *ויאמר* he probably read everything until that point.

lar experience. He went to a shul in Yerushalayim which was filled with people collecting for one worthy cause or another. This completely took his mind off what he was reciting, and he wondered what he should do about this. The man wanted to give tzedakah, but doing so ruined his kavanah.

Rav Moshe Sternbuch, shlit"א, offers excellent advice regarding this matter. "The Ritva writes that while one is occupied with one mitzvah it is forbidden to fulfill another one. How can a person give tzedakah even during birchas kriyas shema, let alone shema itself? But it is possible that during birkas kriyas shema and even the second parshah of shema it is permitted to give tzedakah just like one may gesture to someone for the sake of a mitzvah. But during the first parshah where even gesturing for the sake of a mitzvah is forbidden, one must not give tzedakah. If he does so he sins by taking his thoughts out of the first parshah of shema.

He added, "But I have seen some people who have found an excellent way around this entire problem. Before davening, they place a number of coins on the table in front of them. The poor people get a basic idea of what he gives and become accustomed to take by themselves. In this manner he can fulfill the mitzvah and also say shema as is fitting."

תשובות והנהגות, ח"א, סי' ס"א

Siman 64 Seif 1:

One does not fulfill the *mitzvah* if he reads *shema* out of order. This ruling is limited to reading the *pesukim* out of order but although one should not read the paragraphs out of order if one does so he has fulfilled the *mitzvah* since they are not next to one another in the Torah.

❖ Certainly if words are read out of order the *mitzvah* is not fulfilled. (M.B. 2)

Siman 64 Seif 2:

If one made an error while reading a *parsha* – if he knows where he erred, for example he read it all but skipped a *pasuk* he should go back to that *pasuk* and then finish the *parsha* but if he does not know where he erred he should go back to the beginning of the *parsha*.

❖ Pri Chodosh asserts that if one intentionally erred he must reread all of *shema* but Magen Avrohom is uncertain. (M.B. 4)

❖ There is a disagreement whether one must restart a *pasuk* from the beginning if he missed a word or is it possible at times to begin from the skipped word. (M.B. 5)

❖ If one skipped a *pasuk* in the first *parsha* but does not realize until he finishes the second *parsha* he must return to the skipped *pasuk* and then read to the end of that *parsha*. (M.B. 6)

❖ In the first *parsha* if one knows that he read *shema* and ברוך עם with proper concentration he must return to *ואהבת* but if he does not recall whether he read *shema* with proper concentration he must restart from the beginning. (M.B. 7)

Siman 64 Seif 3:

If one becomes confused between one *parsha* and the next, meaning he knows that he finished a *parsha* but does not recall which one he should return to the end of the first *parsha* and then begin with *שמע* והיה אם שמע.

Siman 64 Seif 4:

If one was reading *וכתבתם* and does not recall whether he was up to *וכתבתם* of the first *parsha* or the second *parsha* he should return to *וכתבתם* of the first *parsha*. This applies if he did not begin *למען ירבו ימיכם* but if he began reading *למען ירבו ימיכם* he does not go back to the first paragraph since we assume his reading followed his normal habit.

❖ When a person is uncertain whether he began *למען ירבו ימיכם* after *וכתבתם* of the first or second *parsha* it is assumed that it was read after the second *parsha* since people follow their habit. (M.B. 10)

❖ The *seif* addresses a circumstance in which one is reading by himself but if one is reading with the *tzibbur* he could use the *tzibbur* as a guide to determine whether he is in the first *parsha* or the second *parsha*. (M.B. 11)

Stories to Share

Distracted by a Mitzva

ש"ע ס' ס"ד, ד': "ואינו יודע אם בכתבתם שבפרשה ראשונה אם בכתבתם..."

Today's amud discusses a person who is so confused during *shema* that he doesn't remember his place. A certain person had a simi-