The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן קל"ח סעיף א'

Overview

Siman 138 Seif 1:

One who reads the Torah should not leave at the end of a paragraph less than three *pesukim* out of concern for those who may leave the *Bais HaKnesses* at that time who will think that the next reader will only read the two *pesukim* to the end of the paragraph. Similarly, one should not begin a paragraph by reading less than three *pesukim* out of concern for those who will arrive in the *Bais HaKnesses* and think that the previous reader read only two *pesukim*. Regarding these matters there is no difference between an open paragraph and a closed paragraph. It is permitted to stop before a paragraph that has only two *pesukim*. One should begin reading about something good and finish reading about something good. See below *siman* 428.

- If someone stopped reading with two *pesukim* left in the paragraph and those two *pesukim* complete the reading the next reader should repeat the last *pasuk* that was read in addition to the two *pesukim* that complete the reading. If the two *pesukim* do not complete the reading the next reader should read those two *pesukim* plus at least another three *pesukim* in the next paragraph. (M.B. 1)
- There is no difference between the regular seven *aliyos* or additional *aliyos* and even the *maftir* should not begin after the second *pasuk* of a paragraph. For example, if a paragraph contains five *pesukim* he should read all five *pesukim* rather than read only the last three. If the *maftir* does read the last three *pesukim* it is not necessary to go back even if he did not yet recite the *beracha* after Torah reading. (M.B. 2)
- Some authorities adopt a stringent position and maintain that one should not stop before a paragraph that contains only two *pesukim* other than on Rosh Chodesh when there is no alternative. (M.B. 4)
- Rema refers to beginning and ending with something that is good for the Jewish People. (M.B. 5)
- Sefer Chassidim warns against calling someone who is blind or blemished for the *aliyah* that discusses blemishes or calling someone suspected of illicit relations for the *parsha* of *arayos*. The reader should not think that he is blessing or cursing someone as he reads about blessings and curses. (M.B. 5)
- An *Aliyah* should not end with someone who did something bad. (M.B. 6)

Halacha Highlight

Beginning and ending an *aliyah* with something good

Rema Siman 138 Seif 1

ויכיון שיתחיל תמיד לקרא בדבר טוב וכו'

It should be arranged that an *aliyah* begins with something good.

Rema writes that one should attempt to begin reading about something good and finish reading about something good. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ה) explains that Rema means that one should begin and end with something good about the Jewish People. Included in the restriction against concluding with something bad is a restriction against ending with someone who did something bad.

Teshuvas Mishnah Halachos (ח"ו סי' ל"ב וח"ז סי' כ') notes that seemingly there are many instances in which we conclude an *aliyah* with bad things. For example, in *parshas kedoshim* one of the *aliyos* concludes with the words דמיהם בם—their blood is upon them—a reference to the execution of sinners. In *parshas balak* an *aliyah* concludes with the words ויהי המתים במגפה ארבעה ועשרים אלף—and the number of those that died in the plague was 24,000. One possible resolution is that mentioning bad things that happen to wicked people is not considered as though one concluded with something bad. The basis for this approach is the *pasuk* (Mishlei 11:10), that states that destruction of the wicked calls for song. However there are many other instances in which an *aliyah* ends with something bad that is not related to wicked people. Teshuvas Rav Pealim (ח"ד סי' מ"ב) suggests that this issue is not relevant nowadays when each person finishes his *aliyah* with the *beracha* after Torah reading as opposed to the time of Chazal when only the first *aliyah* recited the *berachah* before Torah reading and last person recited the *berachah* after Torah reading.

Poskim write that in a circumstance in which there are many people who are required to receive an *aliyah* or when there is a *simcha* and the *ba'al hasimchah* would like to honor many people with *aliyos,* it is permitted to begin an *aliyah* that does not discuss something good as long as the *aliyah* ends with something good. It is even possible when there is no alternative to be lenient even if an *aliyah* does not conclude with something good (פסקי תשובות אות ד).

Stories to Share

Starting off on the Right Foot

ש"ע קל"ח, א': "ויכוין שיתחיל תמיד בדבר טוב ויסיים בדבר טוב..."

Dealing with the many aliyos necessary for a simchah can be somewhat tedious, both for the one who is reading the Torah and the minyan in which the simchah takes place. Figuring out precisely where to make all the stops is also not without its challenges. As we find on today's amud, it is forbidden to stop or begin at certain negative references. But figuring out what constitutes negative is not always an easy task.

When there was a simchah at the Chazon Ish's minyan, Rav Binyamin Zev Deutsch—the regular baal koreh for the minyan—was in just such a quandary. It was parshas shemos and as he looked over the parshah he began to wonder exactly where he could or could not make a stop. If he stopped at the verse, "נזבחה לאלוקינו", he would have to begin the next aliyah with, "תכבד העבודה על האנשים". Was this considered starting at a place that is bad, which is forbidden?

Naturally, he asked the Chazon Ish for a ruling on the matter. When he heard the question posed by the frazzled baal koreh, the Chazon Ish smiled and quipped, "No problem at all—it all happened a long time ago."

מעשה איש, ח"ז, ע' קל"ט