

After the destruction of the First *Beit HaMikdash*, *Am Yisrael* was exiled to *Bavel* (Babylonia) and then dispersed to many lands. Their children learned to speak the languages of the various countries in which they had been born. Lacking knowledge of their national language, Jews were no longer able to pray entirely in Hebrew and this forced them to mix in words from other languages into the prayer service. When Ezra HaSofer saw the decline of Hebrew language proficiency among the Jews of his time, he and his *Beit Din* (court) instituted one unified *Tefillah* (prayer) text in *Lashon haKodesh* (holy language of Hebrew) to be used by everyone. Had Ezra not established a set of fixed Hebrew prayer texts, eventually, no one would know how to pray properly.

Who were the *Chachamim* that formulated the unified prayer texts together with Ezra HaSofer? They were the "*Anshei Knesset HaGedolah*" (the 120 members of the Great Assembly). The *Anshei Knesset HaGedolah* were endowed with Heavenly Inspiration when composing the *Nusach Ha'Tefillah* (fixed prayer formula) and embedded in the text great spiritual and mystical meaning. Accordingly, a Jew is expected to singularly focus on the holy words of the prayer and refrain from thinking about other things.

דִינֵי קִרִיאַת הַמִּגִּיְּה

DAE 18: I AWS DECADDING DEADING OF THE MEGIL I AL

The text of *Megillat Esther* needs to be read sequentially, in the proper order. The *Gemara* states that an individual who reads sections of the *Megillah* out of their proper order has not fulfilled the *mitzvah* of reading the *Megillah*. If a *ba'al koreh* (*Megillah* reader) becomes confused and accidentally skips over reading one word, what should be done? The *Gemara* states: if the *ba'al koreh* continues to read the remaining *p'sukim* and, only after finishing the entire *Megillah*, goes back and rereads the *pasuk* in which a mistake was made, then no one present fulfills their obligation of hearing the *Megillah* — because it is essential to read the *p'sukim* in order! Therefore, immediately after making the mistake in the reading of a particular *pasuk*, the *ba'al koreh* should go back and reread that selection a second time, and only after that, resume reading the rest of the *Megillah*.

Here's another *halacha:* Reuven sat in synagogue and attentively listened to the reading of *Megillat Esther.* But, then, suddenly ... he sneezed. At that moment, he missed a single word chanted by the *ba'al koreh.* What is Reuven required to do? Reuven is required to read the words he missed right away.









Chazal derived a law from a verse in Megillat Esther. As we were taught on a previous daf, Purim is celebrated on 15 Adar in cities that were surrounded by a wall since the time of Yehoshua Bin Nun; while Purim is celebrated on 14 Adar in cities that were not surrounded by a wall back then. In the city of Jerusalem, which has been surrounded by a wall since the time of Yehoshua Bin Nun, Purim is celebrated on 15 Adar. However, in Netanya, which is a city without a wall, Purim is celebrated on 14 Adar.

Shimon lives in Jerusalem and chose to visit Netanya during the week of Purim. On which day should Shimon observe the Purim holiday? Should Shimon celebrate on 15 Adar, since he lives in Jerusalem, or perhaps, on 14 Adar because he is currently spending time in Netanya?

Chazal ruled that Shimon should celebrate Purim in Netanya on 14 Adar. Based on what source did Chazal make their ruling? Megillat Esther (9:19) states: "Jews in the unwalled villages, who live in neighboring cities observe Purim on the 14th of Adar." Since the pasuk says "Jews in an unwalled village", i.e., who live in an unwalled village, why was it necessary to add "who reside in the neighboring cities"? From the second portion of the pasuk, Chazal learned that if an individual was to visit a neighboring village, even if that person lives in a walled city, they are to observe Purim on 14 Adar.



QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

- 1. Why did Ezra and the Anshei Knesset Hagedolah make set wording for the Tefillot?
- 2. If someone makes a mistake in the middle of *Megillah* reading what should they do?
- 3. If someone from a city that celebrates Purim on 14 Adar is visiting a friend in Jerusalem on 15 Adar, on what day should they celebrate Purim? Why?

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