

בית הוראה דיעטראיט
BAIS HORAAH OF DETROIT
HALACHA HOTLINE

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF **HaRav Shmuel Irons** שליט"א VAAD HALACHA **Rav Aharon Yoel Sorscher** • **Rav Yissachar Wolf** • **Rav Boruch Miller**

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ISSUE #32 – Megilah FAQs

Commonly Received Questions and their Answers

Below are some common questions and answers based on psakim from the rabbonim of the Bais Horaah. Please note: in the event one believes they have heard a different opinion in the past, one's family posek should always be consulted. Mareh mekomos for any specific answers below are available by email request to ask@bhdetroit.org.

- **Must one hear every word of the Megilah?**
 - Yes. According to most opinions, if even **one word** is missed, one has not fulfilled the mitzvah.
- **What should I do if I missed a word?**
 - Read the **missed word** and continue reading until you pass the place where the baal koreh is up to, ensuring it is audible to yourself but **not disruptive to others**. You may catch up even in the **middle of a pasuk**. A printed Megilah such as a standard chumash is sufficient for this purpose.
- **If one's mind wandered during the Megilah reading, are they yotzei?**
 - As long as **every** word was heard, the mitzvah is fulfilled **even** if the mind wandered. However, if one became preoccupied with another task it is questionable if they are yotzei. For this reason, it is extremely important to **follow along with one's finger** and listen carefully to **each** word.
- **If one realizes after Megilah that they did not hear a word, what should be done?**
 - If one is **certain** that they missed hearing a word, a Halachic Authority should be consulted. The Halacha Hotline will be available throughout Purim via text or phone call at 248-923-1613.
- **Who is obligated to hear the Megilah?**
 - The mitzvah of Megilah is unique in that even though it is time-bound, **women are obligated**. Children who are mature enough to listen **quietly** should be encouraged to do so and to follow the entire reading, not only when Haman's name is mentioned.
- **If the nighttime Megilah reading is past a child's bedtime, what should be done?**
 - Even a child who is in the above category does **not** need to stay up past their bedtime for the nighttime reading. However, they should be encouraged to attend the **daytime** reading.
- **Should hearing aids be removed for the Megilah reading?**
 - If one can hear clearly without hearing aids by standing near the baal koreh, it is **preferable** to remove them. One who cannot hear **without** hearing aids may keep them on.
- **Can one fulfill the mitzvah of Megilah over Zoom or by phone?**
 - No. According to most poskim, one does not fulfill the mitzvah this way.
- **What should a homebound person do if they cannot attend a Megilah reading?**
 - One who cannot attend due to illness or frailty should have someone read for them from a kosher Megilah. The words must be read correctly, but it is **acceptable** if the reader doesn't know the trop. The reader **may** get help from the listener or someone else present.
 - Another option is to listen to a recording and carefully **read along** from a kosher Megilah loud enough that the reader can **hear**.
- **Should one sit or stand during the Megilah reading?**
 - One may sit or stand while **listening**, whichever allows for better concentration. It is appropriate to stand for the **brachos** before and after the Megilah. The baal koreh should stand when reading for a **tzibbur**, but may sit when reading for a group of **women**.
- **If one had to leave in the middle of the Megilah reading, what should be done?**
 - One who left in middle should consult a Halachic Authority regarding how much must still be heard and whether new brachos are needed.
- **Should one follow along from a kosher Megilah?**
 - To enhance concentration, many read along quietly with the baal koreh from a kosher Megilah. While commendable, care must be taken not to **interfere** with others' ability to hear the baal koreh. One should not read along for the entire Megilah from a Chumash. However, a Chumash is sufficient for making up missed words.

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- **What should one have in mind during the Shehechyanu at the morning reading?**
 - In kehilos that recite Shehechyanu at the morning reading, one should have in mind the mitzvos that are performed specifically during the day: Megilah, mishloach manos, matanos l'evyonim, and seudas Purim.
- **Who recites the brachos at a women's-only Megilah reading?**
 - The accepted minhag is for **one** woman to recite the brachos on behalf of everyone. Alternatively, each woman can recite the brachos for **themselves**.
 - The first bracha is modified: instead of "al mikra Megilah," a woman says "**lishmoa** mikra Megilah." The remaining brachos are recited as usual.
 - The bracha of Harav Es Riveinu, which is normally recited after the Megilah, is **not** said at a women's-only reading.
- **When is the earliest time one may read the Megilah?**
 - One should hear the Megilah as early as possible. It may be read at night from **tzeis hakochavim** until **alos hashachar** and during the day from **haneitz hachama** until **shkiyah**. If an earlier reading is necessary, a Halachic Authority should be consulted.
- **May one eat or drink before hearing the Megilah?**
 - One should **not** eat or drink after the fast until hearing the Megilah. If needed to improve **concentration**, one may take a drink, and if **necessary**, may also have a small snack.
 - One who plans to hear the Megilah later may take a drink if needed, and may have a snack or even a meal if a reliable reminder is put in place, such as setting an alarm or asking someone else for a reminder.
- **Is it preferable for a woman to hear the Megilah in shul, or is a private reading just as good?**
 - It is **preferable** to hear the Megilah in shul. However, if a private reading allows for better **timing** or greater **concentration**, she **should** attend the private reading.
- **If one realizes the baal koreh missed a word, what should be done?**
 - Although **speaking** during the Megilah is generally not permitted, if a word was missed one should **immediately** inform the baal koreh so it can be corrected on the spot, thereby avoiding the need to repeat later.
- **I walked in right after the brachos were made. What should be done?**
 - If you are able to attend a **later** Megilah reading, that is preferable. If not, you should recite the brachos yourself and then catch up to the baal koreh as outlined above. If no other option is available, one may listen to the Megilah without the brachos and will have fulfilled the basic obligation.
- **If one is following in his personal kosher Megilah, should he fold it like the baal koreh?**
 - There are different minhagim regarding this practice. One should follow whichever approach allows for greater **focus** and **concentration**.
- **If the baal koreh is in aveilus, does he make the brachos?**
 - Yes. The common minhag is for him to recite the brachos as usual.
- **During shiva, does an aveil attend the Megilah reading?**
 - At night, he should have his own minyan at **home** for the Megilah reading. However, if Purim falls **on Motzai Shabbos**, he should remain in shul until after Megilah reading. In the morning, he should go to shul as normal.

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