
Interruptions in Shema

ברכות דף י"ג. – י"ד. ושלחן ערוך סימן ס"ו סעיפים א'-ה' [עפ"י פסקי מ"ב]

רבינו יונה על הרי"ף מסכת ברכות דף ז עמוד ב

יש מי שאומר שאע"פ שפוסק מפני היראה ומשיב מפני הכבוד אפ"ה אינו פוסק לקדיש ולקדושה דכיון שעוסק בשבחו של מקום אין לו לפסוק בעבור שבח אחר. ורוב הפוסקים הסכימו שיפסיק אפ"י באמצע הפרק **זלא גרע ממה שמפסיק מפני היראה ומשיב מפני הכבוד** ולזה נוטה דעת הרב מורי נר"ו ומביא ראיה מדחזינן דפליגי בגמרא (ד' כא ב) אם מפסיק בתפלה לקדיש ולקדושה אם לא ואע"פ שהלכה כמ"ד שאינו מפסיק אפ"ה כיון דבתפלה לד"ה אפ"י המלך שואל בשלומו לא ישיבנו אפילו נחש כרוך על עקבו לא יפסיק היו חולקין אם מפסיק לקדיש או לא מכלל דבק"ש וברכותיה דד"ה מפסיק מפני היראה ומשיב מפני הכבוד פשיט להו לכולהו דמפסיק הלכך לקדיש (ולקדושה) מפסיק אפ"י באמצע הפרק ולברכו נמי כיון שהיא הפסקה מועטת לענות ברוך ד' המבורך מותר **דאין בו כדי שאילת תלמיד לרב דתוך כדי דבור כדבור דמי** ואפילו למודים נמי מפסיק אבל נראה למורי הרב דבמודים די בשישחה בלבד שאם יאמר יוצרנו יוצר בראשית כו' ה"ל הפסקה גדולה.

בית הבחירה למאירי מסכת ברכות דף יג עמוד ב

ויש שאין מתירים בכך אף לפרקים שלא הותר לדעתם הפסק אלא בכדי שאלת שלום שהוא שיעור תוך כדי דבור ויש חולקים להפסיק אף ביתר מכאן **מפני היראה** וכו'.

מגן אברהם סימן סו ס"ק ה

מפסיק - דאם פוסק לשאול מפני כבוד בשר ודם ק"ו מפני כבוד הקב"ה ומה"ט נ"ל דאם שמע קול רעמים יפסיק ויברך.

What is בין הפרקים?

This refers to the break between two 'paragraphs'. It includes:

1. Between the end of the first ברכה and the start of the second. [Note: See משנה ברורה, at the beginning of סימן רל"ו, that after ברכו, even before commencing the first ברכה, it already has the status of 'in the middle of the paragraph'.]
2. Between the end of the second ברכה and the start of שמע.
3. Between 'ובשעריך' and 'והיי אם שמוע'.
4. Between 'ויאמר ד' אל משה לאמר' and 'כימי השמים על הארץ'.

In מעריב, as well as the above, the ביאור הלכה adds that between 'גאל ישראל' and 'השכיבנו', it has the status of 'בין הפרקים'. Likewise, after the conclusion of 'השכיבנו', even whilst reciting 'ברוך ד' לעולם', it is treated as, 'בין הפרקים'. The ביאור הלכה is unsure whether, in the evening, whilst in the midst of the third paragraph of שמע, it can be viewed as 'בין הפרקים', since the מצוה of ציצית does not apply at night.

What can one say בין הפרקים?

Strictly speaking, as long as one does not purposely go over to say hello [which is a problem before davening], one may greet one whom he must honour, whether it is due to his being elderly, a תלמיד who is at least an equal to himself, or a rich man. He may also return greetings to *anyone*,

even a gentile. In fact, as suggested by the רשב"א, one would even be allowed to initiate greetings to one holding בין הפרקים, even though he knows that the one davening will be forced to answer.

However, this הלכה only applies to greeting one who will be offended if you don't notice him. Since, nowadays, it is common practice not to speak during davening, one may not speak, even in matters of תורה and even in פסוקי דזמרה. However, if he did so, even in the middle of קריאת שמע, he simply returns to the פסוק in which he interrupted and continues from there. Some say that he can even continue from the word at which he stopped, assuming that it was the end of an ענין.

We pasken that, obviously, there is no issue with answering to דברים שבקדושה. For example:

1. One may answer אמן יהא שמיי רבה, but, as opposed to the מגן אברהם, one should not conclude דאמירן. The only other אמן in קדיש, to which he should respond, is the one that follows בעלמא. All others are only מנהג and he should not say.
2. As for קדושה, he can say קדוש קדוש וכי [until כבודו - see חיי אדם and כלל כי סעיף ד' in חיי אדם] and [until ממקומו - see חיי אדם and חיי אדם] only. As ruled by the מגן אברהם and Vilna Gaon, one should not say ימלך and most definitely, adds the משנה ברורה, שבת נקדש or the other parts of קדושה added on ברורה.
3. When he hears ברכו, even in קריאת התורה, he should answer ועד המבורך לעולם ועד. As to whether he should answer אמן to the ברכה of the person called to the תורה, משנה ברורה sides with the lenient opinion; namely, he may answer.
4. In חזרת השי"ץ, one should just bow and utter the words 'מודים אנחנו לך' and nothing more.
5. As for אמן, all agree that he can answer אמן to the ברכות of הקל הקדוש and שומע תפלה of חזרת השי"ץ, since they are the end of a sequence of ברכות. Likewise, he can answer אמן to the שי"ץ, when he finishes the ברכה that he himself has just finished. As for all other אמנים, חיי אדם writes that one should not say them. The פרי מגדים and עקיבא איגר disagree.
6. If one hears thunder, some say that one can make the ברכה. As for one who has gone to be excused, however, he should wait until after the שמונה עשרה to say אשר יצר.
7. If בין הפרקים only become available and טלית, he can put them on; according to the שלחן ערוך, with a ברכה, but there are those, quoted by the רמ"א, who say that it should be without a ברכה. The מנהג is, as stated by the רמ"א, to put the תפילין on with a ברכה, but the טלית without a blessing. After שמונה עשרה, he should move it around a little and make the ברכה.
8. Ideally, the גבאי should not call such a person to the תורה. If he is the only כהן or לוי present, he should leave the shul, prior to the time when he would be called up, so that they can then call a ישראל in his place. If he did not go out and he is the only one there, the משנה ברורה rules that one can call him up, since there is debate as to whether calling a ישראל in his place would result in a 'פגם', a shame to the honour of the כהן. However, he should not read along with the קריאה and most definitely, he should not ask for a מי שברך. If the גבאי makes the מי שברך and asks for his name, he may answer. Likewise, if he is the only one who can lein, he should do so, but still, ideally should not be called as one of the עולים, which would result in a further הפסק. In both of the above, when he returns to his place, he continues from where he left off.

In which ways is 'באמצע הפרק' more stringent?

Strictly speaking, in cases where the situation allows for it, one would be allowed to initiate greetings to one whom he must fear, such as parents, his רב מובהק from whom he has gained the bulk of his תורה [even if now, he is actually greater than his teacher], a גדול הדור [as opposed to the ruling of the ערוך שלחן ערוך who includes even if he is just greater than himself in wisdom], or a powerful man, even if a gentile. It goes without saying that a king, even Jewish, or someone who could inform on him, is included in this. In fact, the הגאון הרב שלמה ביאור הלכה writes in the name of הגאון הרב שלמה זצוק"ל, קלוגר, that one could interrupt even to save a loss of money.

If one has been greeted, even if it is not from someone that he must fear, he may return the greetings; that is, as long he is included in the above list of one that he must honour. The ביאור הלכה cites a dispute as to whether he may utter a full greeting, or just a single word, like שלי. Moreover, the ביאור הלכה consents to the suggestion of the מחצית השקל, that here, לכתחילה one should not initiate the greetings to someone who is holding הפרק באמצע הפרק, such that he will have to answer. Once again, in all cases, if it is unnecessary to interrupt, as is the case in what is the accepted norm in modern day society, it would be forbidden to do so.

As for the דברים שבקדושה, the דינים are much the same as for בין הפרקים. The differences are:

1. The משנה ברורה seems to lean towards not answering אמן on the ברכה of one called to the תורה.
2. He should not answer אמן to any ברכות, other than those of הקל הקדוש and שומע תפלה.
3. On thunder, although the מגן אברהם says that one should make the ברכה, many argue.
4. If he gets תפילין in the middle of the ברכות שמע, קריאת שמע, he should wait until the end of the ברכה and then put them on with a ברכה. If he receives תפילין in the middle of שמע, קריאת שמע, however, the פרי מגדים rules that he should put them on immediately, with a ברכה, for every word of קריאת שמע has a מצוה to be read with תפילין. [Some פוסקים rule, based on the משנה ברורה in סקמ"ז, that he should only make the ברכה of להניח.] As for the טלית, since he will be unable to make a ברכה, there is no need to wait and, especially if one is embarrassed to sit without a טלית, he may put it on even באמצע הפרק, except for in the middle of the first paragraph of קריאת שמע. [There would seem to be a contradiction in the משנה ברורה סקט"ז. See הלוי ח"ג סי' ט"ו.]
5. As for the person who is called to the תורה, he should try to finish the 'פרק' that he is holding in, or at least to reach the end of an ענין. However, if necessary, the מנהג for אשכנזים is to go up and proceed as above with בין הפרקים. On the other hand, the משנה ברורה would appear to lean towards the מחמירים, in that, לכתחילה, the גבאי should not call him up, even if there is no other כהן present. If there is no one else there to be the בעל קריאה, once again, if possible, he should try to reach the end of the 'פרק'.

Does this apply even in the middle of a פסוק?

The שלחן ערוך rules that if necessary, one may interrupt even in the middle of a פסוק. However, the משנה ברורה, quoted by the מגן אברהם, cites a stringent view, that one should not do so, unless he is holding at the end of an ענין. If he did interrupt, he should go back to the beginning of the פסוק. The משנה ברורה and ביאור הלכה rules that in the case of answering to קדיש or קדושה, one can do so, even in the middle of an ענין; he should then return to the beginning of the פסוק.

Does this apply even in the middle of the first פסוק of שמע?

No. The *פסוק בית יוסף* rules that between the start of the first פסוק and the end of *שם וגוי*, one should not interrupt for anything whatsoever. [See the *ביאור הלכה*, however, who is not so sure about between שמע and *שם וגוי* and possibly even in the middle of *שם וגוי*.] The Vilna Gaon qualifies that it has the same דין as one who is in the middle of *שמונה עשרה*. The *משנה ברורה* writes that if he was reading after the third hour of the day, since it is merely reading פסוקים, perhaps he would be able to interrupt even in the first פסוק.

As we shall discuss further *בעזה שייט*, one may not even *pause*, between אלקיכם and אמת, at the end of שמע; all the more so, that he may not say anything whatsoever. Although the *שלחן ערוך* indicates, and so is the opinion of the Vilna Gaon, that once one has said אמת, he is now considered to be *באמצע הפרקי*, ideally one should try to fulfil those who hold that אמת and *ויציב* go together and one should therefore not interrupt between them.

What if a person was reading שמע without the ברכות?

תפילין דרבינו תם writes that if reading שמע for a second time, whilst putting on *תפילין דרבינו תם*, one should not interrupt unnecessarily. However, he can initiate greetings in the middle of a פרק, even to someone he must accord honour. The *ביאור הלכה* deduces that this is only because he is not reading to be *חייב* the *יוצא*. However, if one was reading in order to fulfil his obligation, even if it is without the ברכות, such as one who is worried that the latest time will pass before he reaches there in davening, then all the above דינים apply. Even between the paragraphs, despite the fact that there are no ברכות to bind them together, it would seem that they have the דין of *בין הפרקים*.

For what can one interrupt פסוקי דזמרה?

Although this is not our subject right now, the *באר היטיב* does mention that one can answer *אמן* to anything. However, *ברוך הוא וברוך שמו* he should not say.

What is the הלכה with interrupting all other ברכות?

The *כסף משנה* writes that with all 'short ברכות', one may not interrupt even for *יהא שמיי רבה* or *אמן*, for in doing so, he will be severing the ending of the ברכה from the שם ומלכות at the beginning. The *ביאור הלכה* adds that, obviously, so too, in a 'long ברכה', one he has said the concluding *ברוך אתה ד'*, the same הלכה will apply. The *חיי אדם* is unsure as to whether a person would have to start over, if he *did* interrupt.

With all the above הלכות, does the language make any difference?

No. As seen in *תוספות* and so is recorded in the *מגן אברהם*, where it is forbidden to interrupt, even לשון הקודש and even just one word, adds the *פרי מגדים*, is *אסור*. The *משנה ברורה* adds that where it is permitted to speak, even a foreign language would be permitted; such as to say 'good morning'.