

NOTES

One may skip when reading in the Prophets – מְדַלְגִין בְּנְבִיאִי: Rashi explains that it is permitted for one to skip passages in the Prophets but not in the Torah because the Torah describes the practical observance of mitzvot. It is possible that the listeners will either become distracted or confused when passages are skipped in the Torah and will not hear the relevant information.

However, if one is reading about a single topic and skips passages in a manner that does not create a recognizable interruption, the listeners will not become confused, and therefore it is permitted. It is also reasoned that the reading from the Prophets does not require the same degree of respect as the reading from the Torah, which teaches mitzvot and not only matters of prophecy and rebuke.

HALAKHA

One may skip sections in the Prophets – מְדַלְגִין בְּנְבִיאִי: One may skip sections when reading the *haftara* from the Prophets, but one may not skip sections when reading from the Torah. This is true if the two portions read from the Torah discuss two different topics, as there is a concern that the congregation will be confused. However, it is permitted to skip sections when both portions pertain to a single topic. When reading from the Prophets, it is permitted to skip even when both portions pertain to a different topic (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Tefilla* 12:8; *Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 144:1).

Such short length that the translator will not conclude – בְּכַדֵּי שְׁלֵא יִפְסֹק הַתּוֹרָגְמָן: One may skip a section during the Torah reading only if the delay caused is of such short length that the translator will still not conclude his translation (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Tefilla* 12:13, citing *Ba'al Halakhot Gedolot*).

“וְיִקְרָא בוּ לְפָנֵי הַרְחֹב אֲשֶׁר לְפָנֵי שַׁעַר הַמַּיִם”, אָמַר רַב חֲסָדָא: בְּעוֹרֹת נְשִׁים.

“And he read there before the broad place that was before the Gate of the Water” (Nehemiah 8:3). According to this opinion, the High Priest would read from the Torah in the Temple courtyard. Rav Hisda says in response: The *baraita* also means that the reading takes place in the women’s courtyard.

“וְקוֹרָא אַחֲרֵי מוֹת וְאֶךָ בְּעִשׂוֹר.” וּרְמִינָהּ: מְדַלְגִין בְּנְבִיאִי וְאִין מְדַלְגִין בַּתּוֹרָה!

It is taught in the mishna that the High Priest receives the Torah scroll and reads the Torah portion beginning with the verse: “After the death” (Leviticus 16:1), and the portion beginning with the verse: “But on the tenth” (Leviticus 23:26). Since these two portions are not adjacent to each other, the High Priest skips the section between the two portions. The Gemara raises a contradiction from a mishna (*Megilla* 24a): One may skip sections when reading the *haftara* in the Prophets,<sup>NH</sup> but one may not skip sections when reading in the Torah.

אָמַר אַבְיִי, לֹא קִשְׂיָא: כָּאֵן בְּכַדֵּי שְׁיִפְסֹק הַתּוֹרָגְמָן, כָּאֵן בְּכַדֵּי שְׁלֵא יִפְסֹק הַתּוֹרָגְמָן.

Abaye said: This is not difficult. There, in the mishna in tractate *Megilla* that teaches that one may not skip, the intention is that one should not skip if the sections are so far apart from one another that the delay caused by doing so will be of such length that the translator who recites the Aramaic translation will conclude his translation before the next section is reached. However, in the case of the mishna here, it is permitted to skip verses because the two passages are in close proximity to one another. The delay caused is of such short length that the translator will still not conclude<sup>H</sup> his translation.

וְהָא עֲלֵה קִתְנֵי: מְדַלְגִין בְּנְבִיאִי וְאִין מְדַלְגִין בַּתּוֹרָה. וְעַד כַּמָּה מְדַלְגִין? עַד כְּדֵי שְׁלֵא יִפְסֹק הַתּוֹרָגְמָן; מִכְּלַל דְּבַתּוֹרָה כָּלֵל כָּלֵל לֹא!

The Gemara challenges this resolution: But isn’t it taught about this mishna in a *baraita*: One may skip sections when reading in the Prophets, but one may not skip sections when reading in the Torah. And how much may one skip from one passage to another in the Prophets? One may skip when the section skipped is of such short length that when the furling of the scroll is completed the translator will still not have concluded his translation. By inference, when reading in the Torah one may not skip at all.

אֵלָּא אָמַר אַבְיִי, לֹא קִשְׂיָא: כָּאֵן בְּעֵנִין אַחַד, כָּאֵן בְּשְׁנֵי עֲנִינִין;

Rather, Abaye said another explanation: This is not difficult. In the mishna here, it is permitted to skip because both passages pertain to a single topic. There, in the mishna in tractate *Megilla* that teaches that one may not skip, the *halakha* is referring to a case where the passages pertain to two different topics.

וְהִתְנַּא: מְדַלְגִין בַּתּוֹרָה בְּעֵנִין אַחַד, וּבְנְבִיאִי – בְּשְׁנֵי עֲנִינִין, וְכָאֵן וְכָאֵן בְּכַדֵּי שְׁלֵא יִפְסֹק הַתּוֹרָגְמָן.

And this is as it is taught in a *baraita*: One may skip sections when reading in the Torah when both sections pertain to a single topic, and in the Prophets one may skip from one section to another even if they pertain to two different topics. And both here and there, one may skip only when the section skipped is of such short length that when the furling of the scroll is completed the translator will still not have concluded his translation.

And one may not skip from one book of the Prophets to another book of the Prophets,<sup>H</sup> even if both pertain to the same topic. **But among the books of the Twelve Prophets<sup>N</sup> one may skip, provided that one does not skip from the end of the book to its beginning.<sup>H</sup>** Rather, if one wishes to read from several of the Twelve Prophets, he must read the passages in the order that they are written.

**§** It is taught in the mishna: **And he furls the Torah scroll, and places it on his bosom, and says:** More than what I have read before you is written here. The Gemara comments: **And why must he say all of this?** It is **so as to not cast aspersions on the Torah scroll**, because people might think the portion that he read by heart is not written there.

It is stated in the mishna that **he reads by heart** the portion beginning with: **“And on the tenth,”** from the book of Numbers (29:7–11). The Gemara asks: **But let him furl the Torah scroll<sup>N</sup>** to that portion and read it from the text. **Rav Huna bar Yehuda says that Rav Sheshet says:** This is not done because **one may not furl<sup>N</sup> a Torah scroll in public,<sup>H</sup>** out of respect for the congregation.

The Gemara asks: **But why not let them bring another Torah scroll** that has previously been furlled to that portion and read from it? **Rav Huna bar Yehuda says:** People might then mistakenly think that the second scroll was brought **due to a flaw** that was found in the first scroll.<sup>H</sup> **Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish says:** Another scroll is not brought **because** then the High Priest will need to recite an additional blessing over it, and **one may not recite a blessing that is unnecessary.**

The Gemara questions Rav Huna bar Yehuda’s answer: **But are we really concerned** that people will think that there is a **flaw** in the first scroll? **But didn’t Rabbi Yitzhak Nappaḥa say:** When the **New Moon of Tevet**, which always occurs during Hanukkah, occurs on **Shabbat**, **one brings three Torah scrolls. And he reads from one scroll the topic of the day**, i.e., the weekly portion; and from **one scroll the portion of the New Moon; and from one scroll the portion of Hanukkah.** It is apparent from the statement of Rabbi Yitzhak Nappaḥa that many Torah scrolls may be used, and there is no concern that people will mistakenly think that one or more has a flaw.

The Gemara answers: When **three men read from three scrolls**, there is **no** concern that people will think that one of the scrolls has a **flaw**, since people assume that it is befitting for each individual to read from his own scroll. However, when **one man reads from two different Torah scrolls**, there is a concern that people will think that the first scroll has a **flaw**, and they will not realize that this was done only to avoid forcing the community to wait while the scroll is furlled.

## NOTES

**ובנביא של –** But among the books of the Twelve Prophets – **שנים עשר**: Although each book is of a different prophet, they are considered a single book in the Jewish canon. For this reason, it is permitted to skip from one to the other.

**וליקרייה לספר –** But let him furl the Torah scroll – **וליקרייה לספר**: The following question is raised in *Tosefot HaRosh* and *Tosefot Yom Tov* on tractate *Yoma*: Previously, the Gemara had stated that one may not skip a section during the Torah reading. How can it now suggest furling the scroll and skipping to a distant section? In *Tosefot HaRosh*, it is explained that if the reader skips from one topic to another, even without a pause, it can create confusion among the listeners. However, if the listeners see that someone is rolling the Torah scroll, they understand that he is moving

to another topic. They will remain attentive and not become distracted. For this reason, were it permitted to furl the Torah scroll in public, it would also be permitted to skip from one topic to another.

**אין גוללין וכו' –** One may not furl, etc. – **אין גוללין וכו'**: The *geonim* rule in accordance with the Jerusalem Talmud that if it is necessary to read two different topics, the scroll must be furlled forward to the next passage. This can occur, for example, if the concluding verses read from the Torah pertain to the season, e.g., a festival, and are not part of the weekly portion, and there is no other Torah scroll available. However, it is preferable to do so privately and not in the presence of the congregation.

**אין מדלגין מנביא לנביא –** One may not skip from one book of the Prophets to another book of the Prophets – **אין מדלגין מנביא לנביא**: When reading from the Prophets, one may not skip from one book of Prophets to another, unless one is reading from the book of the Twelve Prophets. However, the *Mishna Berura* notes that contemporary halakhic authorities rule that since the custom in most congregations is to read without a translator, and since the readings from the Prophets are printed in their own book, nowadays it is permitted to skip from one book of Prophets to another during the reading (Rambam *Sefer Ahava*, *Hilkhot Tefilla* 12:13; *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Orah Ḥayyim* 144:1).

**ובלבד שלא ידלג מסוף הספר לתחילתו –** In a situation where it is permitted to skip sections during the reading, this is permitted only so long as the passages are read in the proper order. It is prohibited to start at the end of a book and then return to the beginning. Nowadays, there is a dispute with regard to whether or not this prohibition is relevant. Some authorities rule that it is prohibited to skip from the end of a book to its beginning under any circumstances (*Magen Avraham*), while the *Peri Megadim* permits it when reading about a single topic within a single book of the Prophets (Rambam *Sefer Ahava*, *Hilkhot Tefilla* 12:13; *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Orah Ḥayyim* 144:1).

**אין גוללין ספר –** One may not furl a Torah scroll in public – **אין גוללין ספר**: It is prohibited to furl a Torah scroll in public out of respect for the congregation, so that the congregation will not have to wait while it takes place. However, if there is only a single Torah scroll and it is necessary to read two different passages, the reading takes precedence and it is permitted to furl the scroll (Rambam *Sefer Ahava*, *Hilkhot Tefilla* 12:23; *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Orah Ḥayyim* 144:3).

**משום –** Due to a flaw that was found in the first scroll – **משום**: It is prohibited to call up the same person to read from two different Torah scrolls, because it can cause people to mistakenly believe that a flaw was found in the first scroll. Therefore, it is prohibited to call up the same person to read the last portion in one Torah scroll and then to read the concluding verses that are read from a different Torah scroll. If someone was called up to read any portion other than the last one from the first Torah scroll, according to the *Magen Avraham* it is permitted to call him up to read the concluding verses that are read from the Torah from a different scroll. The *Bah* and others prohibit this. However, on *Simḥat Torah*, for several reasons it is permitted to call up a person to restart the Torah reading cycle from Genesis even if he was already called up to read from Deuteronomy (*Eliya Rabba*). It is permitted to call up three different people to read from three different scrolls, and there is no concern that people will mistakenly believe that a flaw was found in one of the scrolls (Rambam *Sefer Ahava*, *Hilkhot Tefilla* 12:23 and *Sefer Avoda*, *Hilkhot Avodat Yom HaKippurim* 3:10; *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Orah Ḥayyim* 144:4).

The rest of the prayer: A supplication – השָׁאֵר תְּפִלָּה – תְּהַנֵּה: It seems from Rashi's commentary in tractate *Yoma* (70a) and other commentaries that this is the actual wording of the blessing that the priest recites. However, the Rambam holds that this is not the wording itself but rather it is describing the elements of the prayer of the High Priest, i.e., he recites a prayer of supplication, a song, and a request to the best of his abilities. Accordingly, the only part of this prayer that has a set formula is the closing blessing.

The portion of the Torah read by the king – פְּרֻשֶׁת הַמֶּלֶךְ: This refers to the assembly, a special mitzva for the king to read portions of the Torah before the nation. Although the Torah itself does not explicitly state that this ceremony is a mitzva that the king must perform (see Rashi), some say that this detail is deduced from the verses of the mitzva, as Moses commanded Joshua to observe this mitzva (Deuteronomy 31:7–13), speaking in the singular: “You shall read this Torah before all Israel in their hearing” (Deuteronomy 31:11). It therefore appears to be a mitzva for Joshua, who was to be the king of the Jewish people. It can therefore be extrapolated that this is a mitzva for all the kings who come afterward (see *Tosefot Yom Tov*).

It is explained in *Sefer Yere'im* that there is proof for this from the fact that King Josiah read the Torah for the nation. Others explain that it was the Sages who instituted that this mitzva is incumbent upon the king to fulfill. When there is no king, the mitzva is not negated. Rather, the nation must gather together to hear the Torah read by the greatest Sage of the generation (*Tiferet Yisrael*).

Neither the Mishna nor the Gemara cites a source for the *halakha* that the mitzva is to read these passages in Hebrew. However, in the Rambam and *Tosefot HaRosh*, it is explained that it is derived from the words: “You shall read this Torah” (Deuteronomy 31:11), that the Torah must be read as it is written, in Hebrew.

“וּמְבַרְךְ עֲלֶיהָ שְׂמֵנָה בְּרֻכּוֹת” כּוּ. תִּנּוּ רַבְנֵי: [מְבַרְכִין] עַל הַתּוֹרָה בְּדֶרֶךְ שְׂמֵבְרָכִין בְּבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת, וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַהוֹדָאָה וְעַל מַחִילַת עֵוֹן בְּתִיקָנוֹ, עַל הַמִּקְדָּשׁ בְּפִנֵּי עֲצֻמוֹ, וְעַל הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּפִנֵּי עֲצֻמוֹ, עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּפִנֵּי עֲצֻמוֹ, וְעַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם בְּפִנֵּי עֲצֻמוֹ.

“וְהַשָּׂאֵר תְּפִלָּה”. תִּנּוּ רַבְנֵי: הַשָּׂאֵר תְּפִלָּה תְּהַנֵּה רִנָּה וּבִקְשָׁה שְׂעֻמָּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל צְרִיכִין לְיִוָּשֵׁעַ, וְחֻוֹתֶם בְּ”שׂוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה”. מִכָּאֵן וְאֵילָךְ, כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מִבְּיַא כֶּסֶף תּוֹרָה מִתּוֹךְ בֵּיתוֹ וְקוֹרֵא בּוֹ, וְכָל כֶּךָ לְמָה? בְּדֵי הַלְרָאוֹת חֻוֹתוֹ לְרַבִּים.

מִתְנִי פְּרֻשֶׁת הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּיצֵד? מוֹצְאֵי יוֹם טוֹב הָרָאוֹן שֶׁל חַג בְּשִׁמְיֵי בְּמוֹצְאֵי שַׁבִּיעִית, עוֹשִׂין לוֹ בִּימָה שֶׁל עֵץ בַּעֲוָה וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב עָלֶיהָ, שְׂנֵאָמַר: “מִקֵּץ שִׁבְעַ שָׁנִים בְּמַעַד” וּגו’.

תּוֹן הַכְּנֶסֶת נוֹטֵל כֶּסֶף תּוֹרָה וְנוֹתֵנָה לְרֹאשׁ הַכְּנֶסֶת, וְרֹאשׁ הַכְּנֶסֶת נוֹתֵנָה לְסֹגֵן, וְהַסֹּגֵן נוֹתֵנָה לְכֹהֵן גָּדוֹל, וְכֹהֵן גָּדוֹל נוֹתֵנָה לְמֶלֶךְ, וְהַמֶּלֶךְ עוֹמֵד וּמְקַבֵּל וְקוֹרֵא יוֹשֵׁב.

It is taught in the mishna: **And after the reading the High Priest recites eight blessings. The Sages taught that these are the eight blessings: He recites a blessing concerning the Torah in the usual way one recites a blessing in the synagogue, and he recites the three blessings concerning the Temple service, and concerning thanksgiving, and concerning forgiveness for iniquity, and all are recited in accordance with their established forms in the Amidah prayer. He recites the blessing concerning the Temple in and of itself, the blessing concerning the priests in and of itself, the blessing concerning the Jewish people in and of itself, and the blessing concerning Jerusalem in and of itself.**

With regard to the end of the mishna, which states: **And the rest of the prayer, the Sages taught: The text of the rest of the prayer is as follows: A supplication,<sup>n</sup> a song, and a request that Your people, Israel, are in need of redemption. And he concludes the blessing with: Blessed are You, Lord, the One Who hears prayer. From this point forward, each and every person present brings a Torah scroll from his home and reads from it. And why do all these people bring their personal Torah scrolls? Everyone brings his own in order to show its beautiful appearance to the public, as a way of showing fondness for the mitzva.**

**MISHNA** How is the portion of the Torah that is read by the king<sup>n</sup> recited<sup>n</sup> at the assembly, when all the Jewish people would assemble? **At the conclusion of the first day of the festival of Sukkot, on the eighth, after the conclusion of the Sabbatical Year, they make a wooden platform for the king<sup>n</sup> in the Temple courtyard, and he sits on it, as it is stated: “At the end of every seven years, in the Festival of the Sabbatical Year” (Deuteronomy 31:10).**

**The synagogue attendant takes a Torah scroll and gives it to the head of the synagogue that stands on the Temple Mount. And the head of the synagogue gives it to the deputy High Priest, and the deputy High Priest gives it to the High Priest, and the High Priest gives it to the king. And the king stands, and receives the Torah scroll, and reads from it while sitting.**

## HALAKHA

How is the portion of the Torah that is read by the king recited – פְּרֻשֶׁת הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּיצֵד: The Rambam writes: At the conclusion of the first day of *Sukkot* and at the beginning of the intermediate days, during the first year of the new Sabbatical cycle, the king reads from the Torah before the nation in the women's courtyard of the Temple. The king is permitted to read while sitting, but if he reads standing up, it is praiseworthy. He reads from the beginning of the book of Deuteronomy until after the portion of: “Hear, O Israel” (Deuteronomy 6:4–9). He then skips and reads the portion of: “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken” (Deuteronomy 11:13–21). He then reads from: “You shall tithe” (Deuteronomy 14:22), until the end of the portion of the blessings and curses (Deuteronomy 28). The *Lehem Mishne* comments that the Rambam's version of the mishna apparently did not mention the passage concerning the appointment of a king (Rambam *Sefer Korbanot, Hilkhot Hagiga* 3:3).

They make a wooden platform for the king – לוֹ בִּימָה שֶׁל עֵץ: For the king's public reading from the Torah, a wooden platform

is constructed and placed in the middle of the women's courtyard. The king sits atop it with the entire nation gathered around him. The synagogue attendant takes a Torah scroll and gives it to the head of the synagogue, the head of the synagogue gives it to the deputy High Priest, the deputy High Priest gives it to the High Priest, and the High Priest then gives it to the king. The king recites the standard blessing before reading from the Torah, and after the reading he furls it and recites the blessing recited after reading from the Torah. He then adds seven blessings: A blessing concerning the Temple service; a blessing of thanksgiving; the blessing: You have chosen us, until: Who sanctifies Israel and the Festivals, which is recited in the Festival prayer service; a prayer over the Temple that closes with: Who dwells in Zion; a prayer for the Jewish people that concludes with: Who chooses Israel; and a prayer for the priests that concludes with: Who sanctifies the priests. Finally, the king recites words of prayer and plea, and ends with: Lord, redeem Your people, Israel, for Your people are in need of redemption. Blessed are You, Lord, Who hears prayer (Rambam *Sefer Korbanot, Hilkhot Hagiga* 3:4).

**King Agrippa – אַגְרִיפָּס הַמֶּלֶךְ:** This refers to King Agrippa I, Julius Agrippa, who was the grandson of Herod (10 BCE–44 CE). Agrippa's father was Aristobulus, the son of Herod from his Hasmonean wife, Miriam, the daughter of Hyrcanus II. His mother was Berenice, the daughter of Herod's sister. He grew up in Rome in the house of the emperor, and there he befriended the emperor's family. He was a close friend of Gaius, who, upon being designated emperor, appointed Agrippa governor over a portion of Herod's kingdom. Agrippa later became one of the driving forces behind Claudius's appointment as emperor, who in turn installed him as ruler over the rest of Herod's kingdom, including the land of Judea. Upon arriving in Eretz Yisrael as king, Agrippa developed a relationship with the Sages of the Jewish people and publicly displayed his deep connection to them through observing the mitzvot scrupulously. The Sages praised him for this. Agrippa attempted to fortify Jerusalem by building an additional wall, which included some of the city's suburbs within the city's limits.

Since the Sages regarded Herod and his household as Canaanite slaves, Agrippa's status as a member of the Jewish people was questionable. Consequently, the Sages viewed the people's words, stating that he was their brother, as mere flattery (see 41b). Agrippa himself was also considered a dubious character. He was raised and educated in Rome among friends who were wanton in every regard, and as king he continued Herod's initiatives of encouraging Greek culture, at least in the gentile cities under his reign.



Coin bearing the profile of Agrippa I

King Agrippa<sup>o</sup> arose, and received the Torah scroll, and read from it while standing, and the Sages praised him for this. And when Agrippa arrived at the verse in the portion read by the king that states: “You may not appoint a foreigner over you” (Deuteronomy 17:15), tears flowed from his eyes, because he was a descendant of the house of Herod and was not of Jewish origin. The entire nation said to him: Fear not, Agrippa. You are our brother, you are our brother.

And the king reads from the beginning of Deuteronomy, from the verse that states: “And these are the words” (Deuteronomy 1:1), until the words: “Hear, O Israel” (Deuteronomy 6:4). And he then reads the sections beginning with: “Hear, O Israel” (Deuteronomy 6:4–9), “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken” (Deuteronomy 11:13–21), “You shall tithe” (Deuteronomy 14:22–29),<sup>N</sup> “When you have made an end of the tithing” (Deuteronomy 26:12–15), and the passage concerning the appointment of a king (Deuteronomy 17:14–20),<sup>N</sup> and the blessings and curses (Deuteronomy 28), until he finishes the entire portion.

The same blessings that the High Priest recites on Yom Kippur, the king recites at this ceremony, but he delivers a blessing concerning the Festivals in place of the blessing concerning forgiveness for iniquity.

**GEMARA** The mishna states that the assembly takes place on the eighth. The Gemara asks: Does it enter your mind that the assembly takes place on the eighth day of the festival of *Sukkot*? The mishna clearly states that the ceremony takes place at the conclusion of the first day of the Festival. Rather, say that it takes place during the eighth year of the Sabbatical cycle.

The verse describes in detail when the assembly takes place: “At the end of every seven years, in the Festival of the Sabbatical Year, in the festival of *Sukkot*, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 31:10–11). The Gemara asks: And why do I need all these details?

The Gemara answers: All of these details are necessary, as, if the Merciful One had written only “at the end<sup>N</sup> of every seven years” (Deuteronomy 31:10), I would have said that we count from now, i.e., from when this was said, and that the tally of years begins from the fortieth year in the wilderness, even though by this calculation the assembly would not occur in the Sabbatical Year. Therefore, the Merciful One writes: “The Sabbatical Year.”

And if the Merciful One had written only the phrase: At the end of every seven years of the “Sabbatical Year,” I would have said that it takes place at the end of the Sabbatical Year. Therefore, the Merciful One writes: “In the Festival,”<sup>N</sup> and the first Festival following the Sabbatical Year is in the month of Tishrei.

## NOTES

**You shall tithe – עֵשֶׂר תַּעֲשֶׂי:** Rashi and the Meiri explain that since the assembly takes place during the harvest season and everyone is obligated to separate tithes from the year's harvest, the king must remind the nation of this. It is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud that since the assembly takes place immediately after the Sabbatical Year, during which there are no tithes, the king must remind the people that they are now once more obligated to separate tithes.

**And the passage concerning a king – וּפְרִשְׁתָּ הַמֶּלֶךְ:** According to most commentaries, the king reads the portions that discuss the tithes first and does not read the passage concerning the appointment of a king between them, despite the fact that this breaks the order of the verses, as they discuss a single topic. He then goes back and reads the passage concerning a king. The Rambam, however, rules differently. The early commentaries

address the difficulty of how it is permitted for the king to skip from one passage to another in the Torah and then go backward in the Torah scroll and read about a different topic. Rashi explains that since there is no translator present, it does not cause an interruption. Some later commentaries understand this to mean that since the people are not individually obligated to hear the reading, as the purpose of the mitzva is to publicize the Torah in general, skipping passages is not problematic (see *Eshel Avraham*). It is explained in the Meiri that the honor of the king is given precedence over that of the congregation, and since the king is honored by the reading, he is therefore permitted to roll the scroll forward and backward to read from it (see *Tosefot Yom Tov*).

**If the Merciful One had written only: At the end [mikkeitz] – אִי כִּתְבֵיב רַחֲמָנָא מִקְּץ:** The question arises: Why doesn't the Torah

simply state: At the end [mikkeitz] of the Sabbatical Year, and eliminate any doubt that perhaps the verse is referring to a different tally of years? It is explained in *Tosafot HaRosh* that the word *mikkeitz* does not always refer to the very end of the period in question; it can also include the time period itself. Therefore, the Torah writes both “at the end [mikkeitz] of every seven years” and “in the Festival of the Sabbatical Year.”

**In the Festival – בְּמִנְעַד:** *Tosafot* suggest that the phrase “in the Festival” indicates that the assembly takes place sometime in the middle of the Festival and not at the beginning. According to this opinion, that is why the assembly does not take place on the first day of *Sukkot*. The Rambam's Commentary on the Mishna offers a similar interpretation.

וְאִי כָּתַב "בְּמַעַד", הוּא אֲמִינָא מְרִישׁ שְׁתָּא.  
כָּתַב רַחֲמָנָא "בְּחַג הַסְּכּוֹת";

And if the Torah had written only: "At the end of every seven years in the Festival of the Sabbatical Year," I would have said that it takes place on the festival of Rosh Hashanah, which is on the first day of Tishrei. Therefore, the Merciful One also writes: "In the festival of Sukkot."

וְאִי כָּתַב רַחֲמָנָא "בְּחַג הַסְּכּוֹת", הוּא אֲמִינָא  
אֲפִילוּ יוֹם טוֹב אַחֲרוֹן. כָּתַב רַחֲמָנָא "בְּבוֹא  
כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל";

And if the Merciful One had written only: "In the festival of Sukkot," I would have said that it could refer even to the last day of the Festival. Therefore, the Merciful One also writes: "When all Israel comes" (Deuteronomy 31:11),

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HALAKHA

The entire process is for the honor of the king – כּוֹלָה מְשׁוּם כְּבוֹדוֹ דְּמַלְכָּךְ. One may not show honor for a student in the presence of his teacher. However, if the teacher is honored through the honor that others give his students, then one may do so (Rambam Sefer Korbanot, Hilkhot Hagiga 3:4).

In the women's courtyard – בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים: The portion of the king is read in the women's courtyard in the Temple, and the king is permitted to sit while he reads from the Torah if he so desires (Rambam Sefer Korbanot, Hilkhot Hagiga 3:4).

A Nasi who relinquished the honor due him – מְלֶכֶךְ עוֹמֵד וּמִקְבֵּל וְקוֹרֵא יוֹשֵׁב; אֲגְרִיפָס הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹמֵד וְקִיבֵל וְקָרָא עוֹמֵד". עוֹמֵד, מִכְּלָל דְּיוֹשֵׁב? וְהָאֵמַר מַר: אִין יוֹשִׁיבָה בְּעִזְרָה אֶלְא לְמַלְכֵי בֵּית דָּוִד בְּלִבָּד, שְׁנֵאמַר: וְיִבְא הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְיֹשֵׁב לְפָנָי ה' וְיֹאמַר" וגו'! כְּדָאֵמַר רַב חֲסִדָּא: בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים, הָכָא נִמְי בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים.

A king who relinquished the honor due him – מְלֶכֶךְ עוֹמֵד וּמִקְבֵּל וְקוֹרֵא יוֹשֵׁב; אֲגְרִיפָס הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹמֵד וְקִיבֵל וְקָרָא עוֹמֵד". עוֹמֵד, מִכְּלָל דְּיוֹשֵׁב? וְהָאֵמַר מַר: אִין יוֹשִׁיבָה בְּעִזְרָה אֶלְא לְמַלְכֵי בֵּית דָּוִד בְּלִבָּד, שְׁנֵאמַר: וְיִבְא הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְיֹשֵׁב לְפָנָי ה' וְיֹאמַר" וגו'! כְּדָאֵמַר רַב חֲסִדָּא: בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים, הָכָא נִמְי בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים.

A king who relinquished the honor due him – מְלֶכֶךְ עוֹמֵד וּמִקְבֵּל וְקוֹרֵא יוֹשֵׁב; אֲגְרִיפָס הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹמֵד וְקִיבֵל וְקָרָא עוֹמֵד". עוֹמֵד, מִכְּלָל דְּיוֹשֵׁב? וְהָאֵמַר מַר: אִין יוֹשִׁיבָה בְּעִזְרָה אֶלְא לְמַלְכֵי בֵּית דָּוִד בְּלִבָּד, שְׁנֵאמַר: וְיִבְא הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְיֹשֵׁב לְפָנָי ה' וְיֹאמַר" וגו'! כְּדָאֵמַר רַב חֲסִדָּא: בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים, הָכָא נִמְי בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים.

מֵאֲתַחֲלָתָא דְּמוֹעֵד.

implying that the assembly takes place at the beginning of the Festival, when the entire Jewish people comes to Jerusalem.

וְיַחֲזִין הַכְּנֶסֶת נוֹטֵל סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה וְנוֹתְנָהּ לְרֵאשׁ הַכְּנֶסֶת". שְׁמַעְתָּ מִיָּנָה: חוֹלְקִין כְּבוֹד לְתַלְמִיד בְּמִקּוּם הָרַב! אֵמַר אֲבִי: כּוֹלָה מְשׁוּם כְּבוֹדוֹ דְּמַלְכָּךְ.

It is taught in the mishna: And the synagogue attendant takes a Torah scroll and gives it to the head of the synagogue, until it is eventually passed to the king. The Gemara suggests: You can learn from the fact that all of these dignitaries receive the Torah scroll before the king that honor may be given to a student in the presence of the teacher. Abaye said: A proof may not be adduced from here, as the entire process is for the honor of the king,<sup>h</sup> to show that he is removed from ordinary people by many ranks.

וְהַמֶּלֶךְ עוֹמֵד וּמִקְבֵּל וְקוֹרֵא יוֹשֵׁב; אֲגְרִיפָס הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹמֵד וְקִיבֵל וְקָרָא עוֹמֵד". עוֹמֵד, מִכְּלָל דְּיוֹשֵׁב? וְהָאֵמַר מַר: אִין יוֹשִׁיבָה בְּעִזְרָה אֶלְא לְמַלְכֵי בֵּית דָּוִד בְּלִבָּד, שְׁנֵאמַר: וְיִבְא הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְיֹשֵׁב לְפָנָי ה' וְיֹאמַר" וגו'! כְּדָאֵמַר רַב חֲסִדָּא: בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים, הָכָא נִמְי בְּעִזְרַת נָשִׁים.

It is taught in the mishna: And the king stands, and receives the Torah scroll, and reads from it while sitting. King Agrippa arose, and received the Torah scroll, and read from it while standing. The Gemara asks: By inference, until that point he had been sitting. But didn't the Master say (Tosefta, Sanhedrin 4:4) that sitting in the Temple courtyard is permitted only for kings from the house of David, as it is stated: "Then King David went in, and sat before the Lord; and he said: Who am I?" (II Samuel 7:18). The Gemara answers: As Rav Hisda said in a similar context: This took place not in the Israelite courtyard, where the prohibition against sitting applies, but in the women's courtyard. Here too, the assembly was in the women's courtyard.<sup>h</sup>

וְיַחֲזִין הַכְּנֶסֶת נוֹטֵל סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה וְנוֹתְנָהּ לְרֵאשׁ הַכְּנֶסֶת". שְׁמַעְתָּ מִיָּנָה: חוֹלְקִין כְּבוֹד לְתַלְמִיד בְּמִקּוּם הָרַב! אֵמַר אֲבִי: כּוֹלָה מְשׁוּם כְּבוֹדוֹ דְּמַלְכָּךְ.

It is stated in the mishna that King Agrippa read from the Torah while standing, and the Sages praised him for this. The Gemara asks: From the fact that they praised him, can it be concluded that he acted appropriately? Didn't Rav Ashi say: Even according to the one who says with regard to a Nasi who relinquished the honor due him,<sup>h</sup> his honor is relinquished, i.e., he may do so, with regard to a king who relinquished the honor due him,<sup>h</sup> his honor is not relinquished, as it is stated: "You shall place a king over you" (Deuteronomy 17:15). This is interpreted to mean that his awe shall be upon you. The Torah establishes that awe is an essential component of kingship, and it is not the prerogative of the king to relinquish it.

מִצְוָה שְׂאֵנִי.

The Gemara answers: Since he relinquished his honor for the sake of a mitzva, this situation is different and does not dishonor him.

וְיַחֲזִין הַכְּנֶסֶת נוֹטֵל סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה וְנוֹתְנָהּ לְרֵאשׁ הַכְּנֶסֶת". שְׁמַעְתָּ מִיָּנָה: חוֹלְקִין כְּבוֹד לְתַלְמִיד בְּמִקּוּם הָרַב! אֵמַר אֲבִי: כּוֹלָה מְשׁוּם כְּבוֹדוֹ דְּמַלְכָּךְ.

The mishna continues: And when Agrippa arrived at the verse: "You may not appoint a foreigner over you" (Deuteronomy 17:15), tears flowed from his eyes because he was a descendant of the house of Herod and was not of Jewish origin. The entire nation said to him: You are our brother. It is taught in the name of Rabbi Natan: At that moment the enemies of the Jewish people, a euphemism for the Jewish people, were sentenced to destruction for flattering Agrippa.

And a person cannot say to another, etc. – ואין אדם יוכל לומר לחבירו וכו'. One explanation of this statement is that since people wanted to flatter one another, no one would say: My deeds are greater than yours, lest the other person be insulted (Maharatz Hayyut). Others explain that since everyone was flattering each other, they would even flatter a lowly person and tell him that his deeds were good. Therefore, even those lowly people would not accept that others act in a more meritorious manner than they do (see *Meromei Sadeh*).

It is permitted to flatter wicked people, etc. – מותר להחניף לרשעים וכו'. The *ge'onim* write that it is permitted to flatter the wicked only when such behavior is unavoidable. The Jewish people were punished for flattering Agrippa because it was not necessary for them to do so. The Meiri explains that one may do so only provided that it does not involve a desecration of God's name. It is explained in *Be'er Sheva* that it is permitted to flatter a wicked person, but it is prohibited to praise a person for his wicked deeds, unless it can prevent a life-threatening situation (see *Nedarim* 22a). In *Sha'arei Teshuva*, Rabbeinu Yona rules stringently in this matter and prohibits flattering the wicked even in a dangerous situation.

Falls into Gehenna – נופל בגיהנם: The reasoning behind this statement is that since flattery corrupts people's judgment, it causes more wickedness in the world, and the flatterer is punished for causing this (*Iyyun Ya'akov*).

He falls into his grandchild's hands – נופל ביד: This is alluded to in the verse itself, as the official who arrested Jeremiah is not referred to by his name and his father's name alone, which is the usual custom in the Bible; rather, he is referred to by the name of his grandfather, Hananiah, as well, demonstrating that there is a connection between Jeremiah's arrest and what had happened with Hananiah, the official's grandfather.

Rabbi Shimon ben Halafta says: From the day that the power of flattery prevailed, the judgment has become corrupted, and people's deeds have become corrupted, and a person cannot say to another:<sup>N</sup> My deeds are greater than your deeds, as everyone flatters one another and people no longer know the truth.

Rabbi Yehuda of the West, Eretz Yisrael, and some say Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi, taught: It is permitted to flatter wicked people<sup>N</sup> in this world, as it is stated concerning the future: "The vile person shall no longer be called generous, nor shall the churl be said to be noble" (Isaiah 32:5). By inference, this indicates that in this world it is permitted to flatter them.

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said that this can be proven from here. Jacob said to Esau: "I have seen your face, as one sees the face of angels, and you were pleased with me" (Genesis 33:10). Jacob flattered him by comparing seeing him to seeing a divine vision.

The Gemara notes: And Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish, in interpreting Jacob's statement, disagrees with Rabbi Levi, as Rabbi Levi says: With regard to the interaction between Jacob and Esau, to what is this matter comparable? To a person who invited another to his home and the guest realized that he wants to kill him. The guest said to him: The flavor of this dish that I taste is like a dish that I tasted in the king's house. The host then said to himself: The king must know him. Therefore, he was afraid and did not kill him. Similarly, when Jacob told Esau that his face is like the face of an angel, he intended to let him know that he had seen angels, in order to instill fear in him so that Esau would not seek to harm him.

Rabbi Elazar says: Any person who has flattery in him brings wrath to the world, as it is stated: "But those with flattery in their hearts bring about wrath" (Job 36:13). And moreover, his prayer is not heard, as it is stated in that same verse: "They do not cry for help when He binds them."

The Gemara cites a mnemonic device for the statements of Rabbi Elazar: Wrath, fetus, Gehenna, in his hands, menstruating woman, exiled.

And Rabbi Elazar says: Any person who has flattery in him, even fetuses in their mothers' wombs curse him, as it is stated: "He who says to the wicked: You are righteous, peoples shall curse him [*yikkevuhu*], nations [*lummim*] shall execrate him" (Proverbs 24:24); and *kov*, the linguistic root of the word *yikkevuhu*, means only a curse, as it is stated: Balaam explained that he did not curse the Jewish people, as he said: "How can I curse [*ekkov*] whom God has not cursed [*kabbo*]?" (Numbers 23:8). And *le'om* is homiletically interpreted to mean only fetuses, as it is stated with regard to Jacob and Esau, when they were still in Rebecca's womb: "And one people [*le'om*] shall be stronger than the other people [*le'om*]" (Genesis 25:23).

And Rabbi Elazar says: Any person who has flattery in him falls into Gehenna,<sup>N</sup> as it is stated: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20). What is written afterward? "Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours straw, and as the chaff is consumed by the flame" (Isaiah 5:24), meaning that the people described in the earlier verse will end up burning like straw in the fires of Gehenna.

And Rabbi Elazar says: Anyone who flatters another ultimately falls into his hands. And if he does not fall into his hands, he falls into his children's hands. And if he does not fall into his children's hands, he falls into his grandchild's hands,<sup>N</sup> as it is stated: "Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah... Amen, the Lord should do so, the Lord should perform your words" (Jeremiah 28:5–6). This was a form of flattery, as Jeremiah did not explicitly say that Hananiah was a false prophet. And it is written:

אמר רבי שמעון בן חלפתא: מיום שגבר אגרופה של חנופה, נתעוותו הדינים ונתקלקלו המעשים, ואין אדם יוכל לומר לחבירו "מעשי גדולים ממעשיך".

דרש רבי יהודה בר מערבא, ואיתימא רבי שמעון בן פזי: מותר להחניף לרשעים בעולם הזה, שנאמר: "לא יקרא עוד לנבל נדיב ולכילי לא יאמר שוע", מכיל דבעולם הזה שרי.

רבי שמעון בן לקיש אמר, מהכא: "כראת פני אלהים ותראני".

ופליגא דרבי לוי, דאמר רבי לוי: משל של יעקב ועשו, למה הדבר דומה? לאדם שזימן את חבירו והכיר בו שמבקש להורגו, אמר לו: טעם תבשיל זה שאני טועם כתבשיל שטעמתי בבית המלך. אמר: ידע ליה מלכא. מיסתמי ולא קטיל ליה.

אמר רבי אלעזר: כל אדם שיש בו חנופה – מביא אף לעולם, שנאמר: "וחנפיו לב ישימו אף", ולא עוד, אלא שאין תפלתו נשמעת, שנאמר: "לא ישועו כי אסרם".

(סימן: א"ף עובר גיהנם בידו ניד"ה גולה).

ואמר רבי אלעזר: כל אדם שיש בו חנופה – אפילו עוברין שבמעו אמן מקללין אותו, שנאמר: "אמר לרשע צדיק אתה יקבהו עמים וזעמוהו לאמים". ואין קוב אלא קללה, שנאמר: "לא קבה אל", ואין לאום אלא עוברין, שנאמר: "ולאם מלאם יאמץ".

ואמר רבי אלעזר: כל אדם שיש בו חנופה נופל בגיהנם, שנאמר: "הוי האומרים לרע טוב ולטוב רע" וגו'. מה קתיב אחריו? "לכן כאכל קש לשון אש וחשש להבה ורפה" וגו'.

ואמר רבי אלעזר: כל המתחנף לחבירו – סוף נופל בידו. ואם אינו נופל בידו – נופל ביד בנו. ואם אינו נופל ביד בנו – נופל ביד בן בנו, שנאמר: "ויאמר ירמיה הנביא [לחנניה] אמן בן יעשה ה', יקם ה' את דבריך", וכתוב: