

A Little Lesson Learned

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דף ז עמוד ב

"I saw you weren't in shul today."

"I wasn't feeling well."

"Why didn't you do a something at your house, 10 people?"

"It was too hard"

"Yeah well you could have just davened at the same time as the shul"

Why is that special? Because davening at the same time as the ציבור, even if you are not in shul, is better than davening whenever.

So can you FaceTime or call into a מצוה?

Mishna Rosh Hashana כ"ז

If you blow the shofar into a cave that makes echoes, and you hear the shofar itself you are yotzeh. But if you only hear the echoes, you are not.

1. Are microphones/speakers the sound itself or an echo?
2. Does the mishna for shofar apply to anything else?

Note: Because of the rule that you have to see the members, you can't count as part of a מנין by phone.

Can you use a microphone/speaker?

You can't use a microphone/speaker b/c it's not a voice. But you are allowed to say אמן because you know what the actual voice is saying. You can't use it to hear things you would need an actual voice for. (Like shofar or מגילה). Some people say that it is a voice, but they only say that because they don't know it works. If they knew technology and halacha, you would agree with me.

Author's note (Rav Shlomo Zalman Orbach): After writing this, I met the חזן איש who didn't agree with me. He said that it was as if it was the actual guy speaking? You can't hear a shofar from a cave because it's an echo, but a digital signal isn't an echo.

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Rav Moshe Feinstein

The reality is, is that it is the guy's voice. You know that it is! Reading the מגילה through a microphone is OK. But it's בדי עבד.

Minchat Elazar

If you're davening over the phone, some people say you can answer. But what if the wires are traveling over disgusting areas? It's fine, it's in the wire. Can you hear shofar specifically over the phone? No, because it is like the echo.

אגרות משה

You can be yotzeh havdalah over the phone, and all other things are like מגילה except for ברכת המזון's like שמע and דאורייתא.