The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, Aug 15, 2026 ■ ב' אלול, תשפ"ו
סימן קכ"ג סעיף ג'-ו'

Overview

Siman 123 Seif 3:

When stepping back one steps back with his left foot first. The size of each step is at least the distance of a "heal-toe" step. *L'chatchila*, one should not take steps that are larger than this.

- One first steps back with his left foot to indicate that stepping back is difficult. The correct method for stepping back is to take a small step back with one's left foot, then a larger step back with one's right foot and then bring forward one's left foot to be even with his right foot. (M.B. 13)
- Magen Avrohom writes that a smaller step is not considered a step and there is a disagreement whether one may take a smaller step if the place is cramped. (M.B. 14)
- The wording of Rema is not precise since he disagrees with Shulchan Aruch as to whether one may take larger steps. (M.B. 15)

Siman 123 Seif 4:

One who takes more than three steps is acting haughtily.

Siman 123 Seif 5:

Even the *shaliach tzibbur* must take three steps when he finishes his silent *shemone esrei* and when he recites *chazaras hashatz* he does not have to take three steps back. (If the *shaliach tzibbur* does not recite the silent *shemone esrei* he should take three steps back after *chazaras hashatz*.)

- The *shaliach tzibbur* relies on the steps back he will take after *kaddish* that is recited after ובא לציון. Later authorities write that the *shaliach tzibbur* should not talk about matters that do not relate to *davening* until after that *kaddish*. (M.B. 18)
- If the *shaliach tzibbur* wants to take three steps back it is unnecessary to *protest*. (M.B. 19)

Siman 123 Seif 6:

When the *shaliach tzibbur* recites *chazaras hashatz* he should say ה' שפתי תפתח (but he does not say יהיו לרצון).

- Shelah writes that the *shaliach tzibbur* should say יהיו לרצון and Gra *agrees* with his position. (M.B. 21)

Halacha Highlight

The *shaliach tzibbur* taking three steps back

Mishnah Berurah Siman 123 Seif Koton 18

דסומך על הפסיעות של הקדיש שאחר ובא לציון

He relies on the steps at the end of *kaddish* that follows ובא לציון

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ה') writes that the *shaliach tzibbur* is not required to take three steps back when he finishes *chazaras hashatz*. The reason is that he may rely on the three steps back that he will take following the *kaddish* that is said after ובא לציון. Being that the *kaddish* after ובא לציון is the completion of *chazaras hashatz,* Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"ח) cites later authorities who note that the *shaliach tzibbur* should not talk about matters that do not relate to *davening* between *chazaras hashatz* and the *kaddish* that follows ובא לציון. Rav Chaim Kanievski (אשי ישראל שאלה ק"צ) maintains that the *shaliach tzibbur* may not even learn during this time. Making up missing sections of *davening* or reading Tehillim may not even be permitted. All that is permitted is for one to contemplate Torah thoughts during this time. Kaf HaChaim (ס"ק כ"ז) maintains that the *shaliach tzibbur* is permitted to make a מי שברך since it is considered to be *davening* related.

Teshuvas Be'er Moshe (שו"ת באר משה ח"ג סי' י"ז) rules that even if the *shaliach tzibbur* takes three steps back after *chazaras hashatz* and recites עושה שלום במרומיו he is not permitted to speak before the *kaddish* after ובא לציון. In the event that there will be another *shaliach tzibbur* who will begin with *ashrei* and complete the remainder of *davening* he may not speak from after *chazaras hashatz* until after that *kaddish* (פסקי תשובות אות ה'). One must also be mindful of the fact that the *shaliach tzibbur* may not even speak between his silent *shemone esrei* and *chazaras hashatz*. Furthermore, it is not only the *shaliach tzibbur* who must not talk until after *davening* but even the *tzibbur* must refrain from speaking unnecessarily until after *tachanun*. However, if someone wants to make up missing parts of *davening*, read Tehillim or learn before the *shaliach tz*ibbur begins *chazaras hashatz* he may do so rather than stand there idly (פסקי תשובות שם).

Stories to Share

Falling into Pride

ש"ע ס' קכ"ג, ד': "הוי יהרא..."

On today's amud we find that some actions demonstrate hubris.

Rav Rafael of Bershad explained that when a person slips up or makes an error in davening or is embarrassed, he should not allow himself to be vexed by this in the slightest. "This is just like a person who is sick and requires a bitter medicine to heal him. Although he would prefer to avoid taking the medication altogether, if he is sick he will take it and thank the doctor for administering it.

"Similarly, Hashem arranges for a person to err when he falls into arrogance. In order to rectify this, a person is made to stumble and this naturally makes him feel very small. Although such failings are a direct result of Hashem's mercy upon us, we are better off searching for a simpler antidote to our hubris so that we will not need to endure such embarrassing moments. If a person yearns to attain humility with his entire heart, Hashem will help him attain it.

"But when we fail we must never give in to feelings of depression which distance us from Hashem. Rav Pinchas of Koretz once encouraged me on just this point with the words, 'Just don't be afraid.' I always understood this to mean that a person should never allow anything to depress or frighten him. Instead one should thank Hashem for the difficulty, saying, 'Master of the world. You have sent this trouble so I should attain humility and be healed spiritually, and for that I thank you from the bottom of my heart! Please protect me from stumbling in this manner in the future. Instead, protect me from the defilement of arrogance by awakening a desire within me to attain a truly humble spirit, so there is no longer any need to cause me to stumble and fall in the future.'"

אמרי פנחס, שער ענוה, אות י"ט

When someone asked Rav Rafael for advice to help him conquer his ego, Rav Rafael answered, "Hashem created a person so that he would spend his entire life searching for ways to be saved from pride!"

אמרי פנחס, שער הענוה, אות כ"ג