The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן קכ"ח סעיף ט"ו-י"ח

Halacha Highlight

Descending from the platform

Shulchan Aruch Siman 128 Seif 16
שצריכין להמתין עד שיסימו הצבור לענות אמן
They must wait until the *tzibbur* finishes answering אמן

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ט"ז) cites an opinion who maintains that the *kohanim* should remain on the platform until *tzibbur* finishes answering אמן to the *beracha* of שים שלום recited by the *shaliach tzibbur,* and Rema confirms that this is our custom. The reason the *kohanim* must remain in place is that the *beracha* is not considered completed until after the *beracha* of שים שלום is completed (מ"ב סק"ס). Mishnah Berurah (שם) notes that since nowadays the custom is to say יישר to the *kohanim* after *birkas kohanim,* it is appropriate for the *kohanim* to remain on the platform until the *shaliach tzibbur* finishes the *kaddish* that follows the *amidah*. The rationale behind this is that people may say יישר to the *kohanim* during *kaddish* and miss responding יהא שמיה רבא. This concern of the Mishnah Berurah applies outside of Eretz Yisroel where they only recite *birkas kohanim* in *mussaf* on Yom Tov which is followed by *kaddish*. In Eretz Yisroel where they recite *birkas kohanim* every day on most days they do not recite *kaddish* after *birkas kohanim* there is no concern that saying יישר will cause people to miss answering יהא שמיה רבא so the *kohanim* descend after the *tzibbur* responds אמן to the *beracha* of שים שלום (מ"ב הוצאת דרשו).

The practice of saying יישר to the *kohanim* after *birkas kohanim* is an ancient custom. Mateh Ephraim (סי' תקצ"ב סע' י"א) explains that it is an expression of appreciation by the *tzibbur* for the *beracha* that they received and to strengthen the *kohanim* in their service of Hashem. Aruch HaShulchan (סע' כ"ד) writes that the *kohanim* should respond ברוכים תהיו when the *tzibbur* says יישר. Teshuvas Har Tzvi (ח"א סי' ס"ב), however, writes that *kohanim* should refrain from responding using this phrase. His reason is that they should be sensitive to Rambam's position that a kohen who adds to *birkas kohanim* violates the prohibition against adding to the *mitzvah* even if the addition is said without lifted hands (פסקי תשובות אות מ"ח).

Stories to Share

Speed-Davening?

ש"ע ס' קכ"ח, ט"ו: "ואחר כך מתחיל השליח צבור שים שלום..."

One man who davened extremely quickly led the davening in his shul. One time he got confused. In Israel birkas kohanim is done every day, but on most days there was no kohein present in his shul. This time he failed to notice that two were in attendance that day, and had even ascended the step in front of the aron hakodesh in preparation for birkas kohanim. By the time the congregation could point out the chazzan's error, he had already completed sim shalom. As we find on today's amud, sim shalom should be recited after birchas kohanim. In this instance the congregation was unsure what should be done. Should the kohanim recite the blessing anyway? They certainly were obligated to say it. But how could they recite the blessing when our sages had decreed they bless at a particular point in shemonah esrei? Presumably the chazzan could not repeat the shemonah esrei again, or even sim shalom? Unsure of what to do, they continued without reciting birkas kohanim and after the tefillah went to seek an answer to the question.

When it reached Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, he ruled that the kohanim could not recite birchas kohanim in that minyan. (קובץ תשובות, ח"ג, סי' י"ד) Yet he added an important psak. "They must go to another minyan and say birkas kohanim, however, since they are obligated to recite them."

לקט הלכות לש"ץ, פ"ד, סל"ה

Overview

Siman 128 Seif 15:

After *birkas kohanim* the *shaliach tzibbur* begins שים שלום and at that point the *kohanim* turn towards the *aron kodesh* and recite רבון העולמים וכו'. They should extend the recitation of this *tefila* to coincide the the *shaliach tzibbur*'s completion of שים שלום so that the אמן of the *tzibbur* applies to both. If they can not extend their *tefila* so long they should also recite אדיר במרום וכו' as recorded in *siman* 130.

- On Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur where we add היום תאמצנו they should not begin רבון until after the *piyut* so that they will finish together with the *shaliach tzibbur*. (M.B. 54)
- It is logical that even the *kohanim* should answer אמן. (M.B. 56)

Siman 128 Seif 16:

The *kohanim* may not turn back towards the *aron kodesh* until the *shaliach tzibbur* begins שים שלום and they are not allowed to bend their fingers until they turn their bodies. They should remain on the platform and may not descend until the *shaliach tzibbur* finishes שים שלום. There is an opinion that maintains that the *kohanim* must remain until the *tzibbur* finishes answering אמן (and this is the custom)**.**

- Their hands should remain extended until they turn around. (M.B. 57)
- They must be careful not to speak until they descend from the platform. (M.B. 58)
- Now that the custom is to wish יישר to the *kohanim* after *birkas kohanim* it is proper for the *kohanim* to refrain from descending the platform until after the *shaliach tzibbur* finishes *kaddish*. (M.B. 60)

Siman 128 Seif 17:

When they turn, whether at the beginning or at the end, they should turn towards the right. When they descend the platform they should not touch their shoes that are dirty and if they do they must wash their hands for the *tefilos* that will be said afterwards.

- When descending from the platform they should not turn their backs to the *aron kodesh*; rather they should step back turned slightly towards the *aron kodesh*. (M.B. 61)
- Rema means that one should not touch his shoes since they are assumed to be dirty. (M.B. 62)

Siman 128 Seif 18:

The one who will call the *kohanim* may not call them until the *tzibbur* finishes answering אמן to the *beracha* of *modim*. The *kohanim* may not begin the *beracha* of אשר קדשנו until the one calling the *kohanim* finishes that call. After the *kohanim* recite the *beracha* אשר קדשנו they are not allowed to begin יברכך until the *tzibbur* finishes answering אמן to their *beracha*. The *kohanim* may not begin the next word until the *makre* finishes the word and the *tzibbur* may not answer אמן until the *kohanim* finish the *beracha*. The *kohanim* may not begin רבון העולמים וכו' until the *tzibbur* finishes answering אמן.

- Shulchan Aruch refers to where the *shaliach tzibbur* does not recite א-לוקנו וא-לוקי וכו' but according to our custom that the *shaliach tzibbur* recites א-לוקנו וא-לוקי וכו' this *halacha* is not applicable. (M.B. 63)
- Shulchan Aruch is emphasizing that the *kohanim* must wait for everyone to finish answering אמן. This follows Shulchan Aruch's opinion that the *shaliach tzibbur* does not announce יברכך but according to our custom that he does, the *shaliach tzibbur* may not say יברכך until the majority of the *tzibbur* answers אמן and the *kohanim* may not say יברכך until the *shaliach tzibbur* finishes saying יברכך. (M.B. 65)
- The *shaliach tzibbur* may not begin any word until the *kohanim* finish their recitation of the previous word. (M.B. 68)
- Later authorities point out that this *halacha* cited by Rema has no application since the *kohanim* do not begin רבון העולמים until they have already turned around which is after the *shaliach tzibbur* began שים שלום. (M.B. 70)