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

Overview

Siman 128 Seif 26:

While the *kohanim* are reciting the *beracha* the *tzibbur* should not recite any *pasuk*; rather they should be silent and concentrate on the *beracha*. Nowadays, that the *kohanim* sing a lot the custom is to recite *pesukim* as was discussed above in *siman* 57 regarding *borchu* but it is still preferable for *pesukim* to not be recited.

- Later authorities agree that *pesukim* should not be recited. (M.B. 103)

Siman 128 Seif 27:

A kohen may not add onto the *berachos* more than the three *pesukim* of *birkas kohanim* and if he adds to the *pesukim* he violates the prohibition of בל תוסיף.

- According to the Gemara's conclusion even if one finished the *berachos* he will violate this prohibition and certainly if he adds a *beracha* in the middle. The prohibition is violated only when one adds to the *beracha* but if one recites *birkas kohanim* numerous times he does not violate בל תוסיף. (M.B. 104)

Siman 128 Seif 28:

If a kohen "lifted his hands" and then goes to another *Bais HaKnesses* and discovers the *tzibbur* as they are about to recite *birkas kohanim* he may "lift his hands" another time.

- If one is *davening shemone esrei* and is the only kohen in *shul* he must interrupt to ascend the platform to recite *birkas kohanim* and after *birkas kohanim* he descends from the platform and resumes *shemone esrei*. If there are other *kohanim* he should not interrupt unless he was instructed to ascend. When someone will interrupt during *shemone esrei* he must "uproot" his feet slightly when the *shaliach tzibbur* says רצה and if he does not uproot his feet he may not ascend the platform. Elya Rabba questions this ruling that the kohen must interrupt *shemone esrei* even when one was instructed to ascend unless one is saying שים שלום and even then one must be certain that he will not lose track of where he left off. (M.B. 106)

Siman 128 Seif 29:

If a kohen has not yet *davened* and finds the *tzibbur davening* he may "lift his hands" and *davening* is not essential to the recitation of *birkas kohanim*.

- If one sees that he will miss the time for *davening* he should *daven* in the courtyard of the *Bais HaKnesses*. If, however, he was already instructed to ascend he must do so since *birkas kohanim* is a Biblical *mitzvah* that overrides the Rabbinic obligation to *daven*. (M.B. 107)
- If one did not yet read *shema* he should exit to the courtyard of the *Bais HaKnesses*. If he was instructed to ascend he should read the first *pasuk* of *shema* and then he should ascend the platform to recite *birkas kohanim*. (M.B. 107)

Halacha Highlight

Interrupting *shemone esrei* to recite *birkas kohanim*

Mishnah Berurah Siman 25 Seif Koton 106
כהן המתפלל שמונה עשרה וגו'
A kohen who is *davening shemone esrei* etc.

Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק קי"ו) discusses whether a kohen who is in the middle of *shemone esrei* may ascend the platform for *birkas kohanim*. There are three prerequisites that must be met in order to permit a kohen to interrupt *shemone esrei* to recite *birkas kohanim*. The first prerequisite is that it is only permitted if he is the only kohen in the *Bais Haknesses*. The rationale is that *halacha* does not want *birkas kohanim* to be skipped altogether. Secondly, in the event that the kohen will recite *birkas kohanim* during *shemone esrei* he must "uproot" his feet when the *shaliach tzibbur* recites רצה. The final prerequisite is that the kohen must also be in the middle of the *beracha* of *hoda'ah*. In this case the kohen does not walk to wash his hands in advance of *birkas kohanim*; rather he relies on the washing of hands that he performed in the morning before *davening*. In the event that one anticipates that he will have to recite *birkas kohanim* while saying *shemone esrei* it is preferred for him to wash his hands in advance of *birkas krias shema* and he should begin saying *shemone esrei* near the eastern wall so that he should not have to walk far to ascend the platform to recite *birkas kohanim* (פסקי תשובות אות ס"ד).

If a kohen is reading *krias shema* or *birchos krias shema* he should make an effort to interrupt *bein haperakim* - between paragraphs to recite *birkas kohanim*. Even if he needs to speed up in order to reach *bein haperakim* he should do so. During *birchos krias shema* one may recite *birkas kohanim* even if there are other *kohanim* who are present. However, the kohen is not obligated to recite *birkas kohanim* if there are other *kohanim* present and assuming that he will be able to recite *birkas kohanim* elsewhere he may walk out before the *shaliach tzibbur* reaches רצה.

Stories to Share

The Value of Silence

ש"ע ס' קכ"ח, כ"ו: "אלא ישתקו ויכוונו לברכה..."

We find on today's daf that sometimes it is preferable to refrain even from saying pesukim.

When the Imrei Emes of Ger, zt"l, returned from his first voyage to Eretz Yisroel, the Rav of Kalish, zt"l, tried to elicit some details about his journey. The Imrei Emes, however, did not seem to be willing to engage in conversation.

"Nu?" prodded the Kalisher Rav. "How does the rebbe feel after his visit to the holy land? Don't chazal say that even the air of Eretz Yisroel makes one wise?"

The Imrei Emes nodded. "Yes, it's true," he answered. "And chazal also said: the protective fence for wisdom is…silence!"

This can also mean that silence is sometimes the best defense, because with it, one can avoid an argument altogether.

A delegation of sefardic rabbis once came to visit the Maharil Diskin, zt"l, the illustrious Rav of Brisk.

As soon as they arrived, the group of sages began to weave a number of intricate arguments about certain Torah subjects, while the Maharil simply sat quietly and did not participate.

Eventually they decided to take their leave. As they left, the members of the delegation shook their heads in dismay and lamented to one another, "What a pity—to see such a great scholar who has gotten old and forgotten his learning!"

What the group didn't realize was that the gaon of Brisk was just as much a master of silence as he was a master of Torah!