

גליון הלכתי - מושולחן הפוסקים

Gilyon #27

חשון תשפ"ה

מאת הר"ג ר' משה ראזענבוים

רב ומו"ץ לשכת הפוסקים

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מרכז גבוה להוראה ודיניות לשכת הפוסקים מוסדו של רשכבה"ג מן שר התורה הגר"ח קניבסקי זצ"ל

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ותן טל ומטר - Laws of Asking for rain

The Mishna in Taanis states that Raban Gamliel holds that we begin reciting ותן טל ומטר on the 7th of Cheshvan, which is 15 days after Succos. This timing is to ensure that those residing farthest from the Beis Hamikdash have sufficient time to return home before it begins to rain after Sukkos when they return from being עולה רגל, which would make their travels difficult.

However, a question arises: If we are so concerned about those traveling to Yerushalayim for Yom Tov not being inconvenienced by the rain, wouldn't it make sense to stop reciting this bakasha (request) two weeks before Pesach to avoid discomfort for those traveling to the Beis Hamikdash?

To answer this question, we need to delve into another. There is a disagreement among the Rishonim regarding which of the ten tests (nisyonos) of Avraham Avinu was the hardest. Some maintain that the test of Sarah's passing was the most difficult. This raises a question: How can the passing of Sarah be considered more challenging than the test of the Akeidah, when the future of Klal Yisrael was at stake?

We can understand both questions through a small yet insightful thought. When someone is on their way to perform a mitzvah, their heart is filled with a passionate desire to fulfill the mitzvah, and they often feel that nothing can stand in their way. However, the real challenge comes after the mitzvah is completed; the adrenaline fades, and the person returns to their normal state.

This was the test for Avraham Avinu: Would he regret, even for a moment, all that he had accomplished? It is easier to feel regret after the fact when the fervor for the mitzvah has diminished than it is to feel that way beforehand when the desire to do good is strong. This challenge is more difficult than even the Akeidah.

With this perspective, we can understand why Chazal did not institute the practice of stopping the recitation of the request for rain before Pesach. At that time, people are coming to perform the mitzvah, and the desire to do good, along with the blessing of rain, takes precedence over any concerns about discomfort.

In contrast, when we consider those leaving Yerushalayim and departing from the mitzvah, it is much easier for an individual to regret their good deeds. Therefore, we wait two weeks to allow everyone to return home without causing discomfort.

The important lesson here is that the true test of one's commitment to mitzvos often lies in what happens after the deed is done. The initial zeal and fervor to perform a mitzvah can be powerful but maintaining that sense of fulfillment and purpose afterward can be even more challenging. It reminds us to cultivate a mindset of continuing to appreciate the mitzvos we perform and not to dwell on any regrets or doubts once we have completed them.

❧ Where and When to Recite ❧

1. We recite ותן טל ומטר during the winter in the ברכת השנים (ברך עלינו).
2. Since this is a request made to Hashem, it is essential to understand and have in mind what one is asking for, rather than merely uttering the words without comprehension.
3. This request is part of the actual Tefillah. Therefore, if one forgets to recite it or [in some scenarios] is uncertain whether they have recited it, they must daven shmoneh esrei again.
4. In Eretz Yisrael, we begin reciting ותן טל ומטר from the night of the 7th of Cheshvan until after Mincha on Erev Pesach. After this period, we recite ותן ברכה. The reason Eretz Yisrael starts reciting it first is because it is located at a higher elevation than all other countries and requires rain earlier.
5. Outside of Eretz Yisrael, we begin reciting ותן טל ומטר on the night that is 60 days from the beginning of the tekufa of Tishrei, which falls on December 4th at night (when February has 28 days).
6. Even if one davens Maariv early (before sunset or nightfall), [on the night which begin saying ותן טל ומטר], they still must recite ותן טל ומטר during shmoneh esrei.
7. The Gabai may announce a reminder to recite it before shmoneh esrei, and this is not considered a הפסק.

❧ If One Forgets ❧

8. If one forgets to recite ותן טל ומטר, it is considered an integral part of the davening. Therefore, if it is forgotten, one must daven again.
9. If a person remembers during the middle of the bracha of ברך עלינו, they may mention ותן טל ומטר at that point within the bracha.
10. If one remembers before reciting ברוך אתה ה' ברוך אתה, they should return to the words of כשנים הטובות and recite it there.
11. If one forgets to recite it after completing the bracha, but remembers before the bracha of שמע קולי, they should recite it

just before saying כי אתה שומע תפילת כל פה. Even if one has completed the bracha of שמע קולי but hasn't yet begun רצה, they should recite it as its own tefilla before continuing to רצה.

12. If someone remembers during the bracha of רצה, before completing shmoneh esrei, they should go back to the bracha of ברכך עלינו (Birkat HaShanim).
13. If a person has already completed shmoneh esrei, they must daven the entire shmoneh esrei again. However, there is a disagreement among the Poskim regarding whether one who has finished shmoneh esrei but hasn't taken the three steps back needs to daven again.
14. The completion of shmoneh esrei, for the purposes of these halachos, is defined as follows:
 - When one begins to take the three steps back.
 - When one starts reciting bakashos (supplications) after saying יהי לרצון.
 - If one pauses to answer קדיש during ברכו or קדושה, קדיש אלוקי נצור.
15. If someone realizes that they can go back to ברכך עלינו or recite it during שמע קולי, but mistakenly began Shmoneh esrei again from the start, they should stop and continue from the bracha of ברכך עלינו when they realize.
16. If someone mentions ואתן טל לברכה without also saying ומטר, it is considered as if they have forgotten to mention it entirely and must follow the halachos mentioned above. However, if they recited ומטר לברכה, it is regarded as having been recited properly.
17. If someone forgets to mention it on the night of the 7th of Cheshvan, the halachos differ from those who forget ויבא on Rosh Chodesh, and must follow the halachos as mentioned above.

✧ One Who is Unsure ✧

18. Within thirty days, if someone is uncertain about having recited it correctly, it is assumed that it was not recited correctly and is treated as if it was forgotten. However, after thirty days, we assume it was said correctly, and one must not daven again. Additionally, for someone who is a regular שליח ציבור (קבוע), after eighteen days, it is assumed that it was recited correctly.
19. If one recited the words ואת כלמיני תבואתה לטובה ואתן טל ומטר לברכה 90 times, we assume that from that point onward, they recite it correctly.
20. Even within thirty days, if one was certain they intended to recite beforehand but later becomes uncertain whether they actually mentioned it, we may assume that it was mentioned correctly. However, if one becomes uncertain immediately after completing davening, within thirty days, they should daven again.

✧ Remembering After a While ✧

21. If someone forgot to mention ואתן טל ומטר and remembers after the zman tefilla (time for prayer) has passed, they should daven the

next tefilla twice as a תשלומין. This also applies to someone who is uncertain if they mentioned it, within 30 days, as mentioned above.

22. If someone forgets to mention it during Mincha on Erev Shabbos and remembers on Shabbos itself, some opinions suggest that they should not daven twice on Shabbos.
23. If someone forgot during Mincha on Erev Rosh Chodesh and the zman tefilla has passed, they should daven two tefillos at night and mention ויבא יעלה in both.

✧ While Traveling ✧

24. A person who resides outside Eretz Yisrael and is in Eretz Yisrael on the 7th of Cheshvan, intending to remain there for the winter (or at least until after they begin mentioning ואתן טל ומטר outside Eretz Yisrael), should start reciting it on the 7th of Cheshvan.
25. If they only plan to stay for a few days, while in Eretz Yisrael they should recite ואתן טל ומטר, and when they return home, they should revert to reciting ואתן ברכה.
26. If someone travels to Eretz Yisrael after the 7th of Cheshvan but before ואתן טל ומטר is recited outside of Eretz Yisrael, some hold that they should recite ואתן טל ומטר for the duration of their stay, while others argue that they should recite ואתן ברכה and include ואתן טל ומטר in the bracha of שמע קולי. This latter approach is the practice of many.
27. A person outside Eretz Yisrael who recited ואתן טל ומטר after the 7th of Cheshvan but before December 5th does not need to daven again.
28. A resident of Eretz Yisrael who travels outside Eretz Yisrael before they begin reciting ואתן טל ומטר there, should recite ואתן ברכה throughout their travels.
29. If they leave Eretz Yisrael after the 7th of Cheshvan and do not intend to stay away for a long time, they should continue reciting ואתן טל ומטר and not switch to ואתן ברכה.

✧ Serving as Chazan ✧

30. A resident of Eretz Yisrael who travels after the 7th of Cheshvan (before they begin reciting ואתן טל ומטר outside of Eretz Yisrael) should preferably not serve as the chazan while outside of Eretz Yisrael. However, he may do so if it is required or if there is a specific obligation.
31. If he does serve as the chazan, during the quiet shmoneh esrei, he should include ואתן טל ומטר. In the chazaras hashatz, however, he should recite ואתן ברכה. Some argue that even in the quiet shmoneh esrei, he should recite ואתן ברכה.
32. When traveling on an airplane with both residents of Eretz Yisrael and residents of outside Eretz Yisrael, it is preferable for the chazan to be from the majority group of the minyan.

Uncertainties That Arise During Davening

33. If one is in the middle of shmoneh esrei and is uncertain about how to proceed in a specific scenario, they should review the relevant halacha on the spot if possible.
34. If reviewing the halacha on the spot is not an option, one may walk to retrieve a sefer to consult the halacha. However, it is important not to remain away for the duration of shmoneh esrei, as this would require them to daven over again.
35. If it is not possible to retrieve a sefer, they may ask someone verbally about the halacha. If there is an option to inquire in writing, that may be preferable to asking verbally.
36. If none of the above options are attainable, they may call a rabbi (preferably not in public) to ask about the halacha.

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