

*Excerpted from Living the Halachic Process
by Rabbi Daniel Mann - Eretz Hemdah, with
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When an Israeli Traveler Abroad Begins Asking for Rain

Question: When a resident of Israel is in chutz la'aretz during the period between 7 Marcheshvan and December 5th, does he say V'TEN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA (asking for rain) in the Sh'moneh Esrei?

Answer: The saying of V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA was instituted by the Rabbis based on the precipitation needs of the major Jewish communities of the time. According to our minhag, the entire Diaspora follows the Babylonian practice of praying for rain beginning from the day they calculated to be sixty days into T'kufat Tishrei (the autumn season). The Rosh¹ felt that areas with different rainfall requirements should not follow the Babylonian practice. In those countries that need rain at other periods of the year, one

should be able to add V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA as appropriate. The Shulchan Aruch² agrees with the Rosh in principle but not in practice, out of deference to minhag. He therefore concludes that someone in a locality that, like Israel, needs the rainy season to begin earlier should nonetheless not begin praying for rain. If he did so, however, it is not certain whether he must repeat Shemoneh Esrei like someone who prayed for rain when inappropriate. Thus, he should repeat Shemoneh Esrei with the intention that it count as a t'filat n'dava (voluntary prayer). The Rama³ does not require repeating Shemoneh Esrei.

The Mishna Berura⁴ cites two opinions on whether a ben Eretz Yisrael (one who resides in Israel) visiting abroad should follow the schedule of Israel (7 Marcheshvan) or of the place where he is currently (December 5). The rationale to follow Israel's schedule is more convincing if he will benefit from the rain, which hopefully will fall during this period, either because his family is there⁵ or especially if he plans to return home during that year.⁶

Because of the doubt that surrounds this matter, major poskim⁷ suggest the following, simple solution: It is

¹ *ShutHaRosh* 4:10.

² *Orach Chayim* 117:2 - see *Beit Yosef* ad loc.

³ Ad loc.

⁴ 117:5.

⁵ *Ba'er Heiteiv* 117:4, in the name of the Maharikash.

⁶ Ibid., in the name of the *Pri Chadash*.

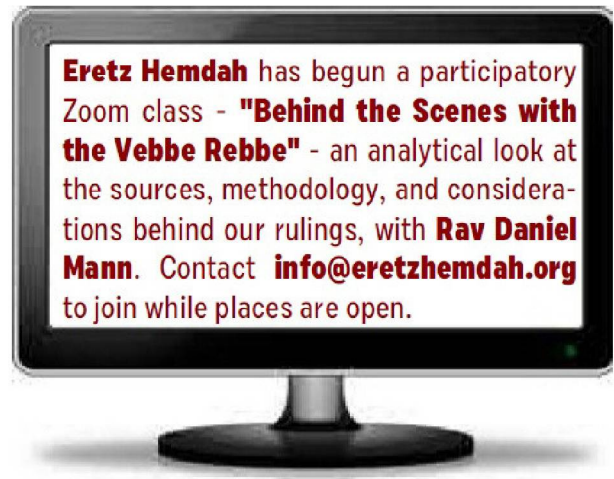
⁷ Rav S.Z. Orbach and Rav Elyashiv, quoted in *Yom Tov Sheni K'Hilchato* 10:2; *Yalkut Yosef*, *Kitzur* 117:15.

permitted to ask for rain in chutz la'aretz during the summer in the b'racha of Shomei'a T'fila, and it is sufficient b'di'eved to do so during the winter (useful for one who forgot to say V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA in its regular place). Thus, if a resident of Israel who is abroad says V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA in Shomei'a T'fila (rather than in its usual b'racha) during this intervening period (between 7 Marcheshvan and December 5th), he is safe according to all opinions.

Rav Feinstein,⁸ on the other hand, implies that these people should recite V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA in its regular place. This is because the Shulchan Aruch really agrees with the aforementioned Rosh and rules against him only because of the minhag. Since there is no clear minhag regarding travelers, a ben Eretz Yisrael can say V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA in its usual place after 7 Marcheshvan in a country where rain is desirable at that time of the year. Nevertheless, the former opinion is the safer one, especially for S'faradim.⁹

One who began saying V'TEIN TAL U'MATAR LIVRACHA in Israel and left with plans to return should continue to insert it in his t'fila,¹⁰ at the very least in Shomei'a T'fila.¹¹ According to most authorities, a ben Eretz Yisrael in chutz

la'aretz at this time may serve as chazan. He should follow his accepted practice in his silent Shemoneh Esrei but should say V'TEIN B'RACHA (as the locals do) during chazarat hashatz.¹²



⁸ *Igrot Moshe, Orach Chayim II:102.*

⁹ See *Birkei Yosef, Orach Chayim 117:5; Kaf HaChayim, Orach Chayim 117:11.*

¹⁰ *Birkei Yosef, Orach Chayim 117:6.*

¹¹ *Yom Tov Shen K'Hilchato 10:4.*

¹² *Ishei Yisrael 23:39.*