

The Prayer for Rain

There are 3 different prayers for rain.

1. By the Hazan – in the musaph amidah of Shemini Atzeret. (1 time only)
2. 3 times daily by everyone – again starting from the musaph amida of Shemini Atzeret – and we say משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם in place of מוריד הטל
3. From ז' מרחשון which is מוצי שבת נח this year, exactly 2 weeks after מוצי החג we start saying ותן טל ומטר לברכה . This two weeks was to give time for the pilgrims (in Israel) who had visited the Temple, to get back home before the rains started.

Both 2) and 3) are said up to Pesach.

Outside Israel, 3) is 60 days after the Autumn Equinox תקופת תשרי to give Jews in Bavel time to get back to their homes.

The equinox is when the daylight and nighttime hours are equal.

The autumn equinox is actually on September 23 (by the Gregorian calendar) but when the Pope Gregory changed form the old Julian calendar to the new "Gregorian" calendar, our Rabbis did not follow because they didn't want to lose 10 days.

So the autumn equinox is now on October 16th (Gregorian) and adding 60 days takes us to Dec. 4th or 5th .