VIRTUAL HALACHA PROGRAM

Guidelines for Rain on the first nights of Sukkot

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Rain on the first night of Sukkot:

1) Ashkenazim:
    A) If one has young children, guests or others with them who would find it difficult to wait:
        i. One should recite kiddush and hamotzi (eat at least a kezayit of challah) in the Sukkah without a beracha of leshev b'sukkah. There is no need to wait at all.
        ii. Afterwards one should go inside, eat more bread, continue the rest of their meal and say birkat hamazon inside (Mishna Berura 639:35).
    B) If one's entire household (including children) is happy to wait:
        i. Wait 1-2 hours to see if it stops raining to begin one's meal (Mishna Berura 639:35). The weather forecast is not a determinant.
        ii. If it does not stop raining – follow same steps as above.
2) Sephardim (Yabia Omer OH 9:61)
    A) one may eat inside the house immediately after shul without any waiting for the raining to stop
    B) One does not sit or eat in the sukkah while it is raining and one does not make a leshev b'sukkah
3) If it stops raining in the middle of one's meal,
    A) one should go outside to the sukkah say a leshev b'sukkah and have a kezayit of challah (no new hamotzi).
    B) If the sukkah is still very wet and/or the rain is dripping from the schach, one does not gain anything from going to the sukkah and one would not make a beracha.
4) If one wakes up in the middle of the night and it stopped raining:
    A) one does not have to go back outside to the sukkah (Mishna Berura 639:36).
    B) There are those who say one must go outside to their sukkah and say a hamaotzi and beracha of leshev basukkah (Rav Moshe Soloveitchik quoted in Hararei Kedem Sukkah page 115).

Rain on the second night of Sukkot (Yom Tov Sheini) outside of Israel only

1) Ashkenazim: same Halacha as first night but there is more room to be lenient about waiting (Rav Nebenzahl)
2) Sephardim: same as first night.

Rain during Yom Tov day or any other night of Sukkot:

1) kiddush, hamotzi, birkat hamazon should be said inside without a beracha of leshev b'sukkah.
2) There is no need to wait.