



Mention of Rosh Chodesh in *Al Hamichya* after Dark

לעילוי נשמת
 יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

Question: I had a meal at the end of Rosh Chodesh that required an *Al Hamichya* and had to leave before finishing for *Ma'ariv*. When I returned and finished the meal, should I have mentioned Rosh Chodesh in *Al Hamichya*?

Answer: There are several points of *machloket/safek* that impact this topic.

The concept of mentioning *me'ein hameora* (= *mehm* – about the special day) in a *beracha acharona* (classically, in *Birkat Hamazon*) after the day is over because one started the meal during the day is the subject of a *machloket Rishonim* (see Beit Yosef, Orach Chayim 188). The Shulchan Aruch has an apparent contradiction on the matter (see OC 188:10; OC 271:6), and the strongest explanation is that out of doubt, it is appropriate to say *mehm* based on either the beginning of the meal or the time of the *bentching* (Magen Avraham 271:14). How bad it is to mention something from a wrong day

is complicated (see *Ginat V'radim* OC, I:28, *Mishna Berura* 108:38).

There are two explanations of why to follow the beginning of the eating on Shabbat. One is that when one ate on Shabbat, he became obligated in *mehm*, and that obligation does not cease (see *Mishna Berura* 188:32). Another is that even though Shabbat is over, it is still a time that could be Shabbat if he had laudably extended it further (Magen Avraham 188:18 in the name of the Shelah). The second idea, related to extending the day, does not apply to Rosh Chodesh. The first idea does apply, but the comparison is imperfect because the obligation of *mehm* on Rosh Chodesh is weaker, as there is no obligation to eat and therefore one who skips *Ya'a'leh V'yavo*, does not have to repeat *Birkat Hamazon* (Shulchan Aruch, OC 188:7). Nevertheless, the Shulchan Aruch (*ibid.* 10) rules that one who started a meal during Rosh Chodesh mentions *mehm* when *bentching* at night.

Does this concept also apply to *Al Hamichya*? *Mehm* is less important in *Al Hamichya*, as we rule that if one forgot it, even on Shabbat and *Yom Tov*, he need not repeat *Al Hamichya* (*Mishna Berura* 208:58). There are few reasons why not. For one, it is not unanimous that one ever has to do *mehm* in *Al Hamichya* (Sha'ar Hatziyun 208:60). Also,



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this type of non-bread eating does not typically fulfill required eating (ibid.). Finally, *mehm* might have been instituted only as a preferable recitation (ibid.). Therefore, the case for there being a need to say it after the day is weaker. Shevet Hakehavi (V:42) argues that only important eating on a special day enables *mehm* to extend to the night and therefore eating that gets only *Al Hamichya* does not warrant it. There is room to disagree, as one way or the other, there was an obligation or expectation to recite *mehm* in this *beracha acharona*. As mentioned above, erring on the side of saying is not a major problem, as we say *mehm* when there is a *safeik*, and in *Al Hamichya* it contains only a few “innocuous words,” which are not a *beracha* (see Ginat Veradim ibid.) and do not even include Hashem's Name.

In your specific case, there was a reason to specifically not have added *mehm* (even if it had been a bread meal) – the fact that you already *davened Ma'ariv*, officially ushering in the new day. The Magen Avraham (188:17) says that fundamentally after eating makes one obligated in *Birkat Hamazon* with *mehm*,

whenever you *bentch*, the special day should be mentioned. But once ushering in the new day with *Ma'ariv*, it looks like a contradiction if one makes a recitation that is a throwback to the previous day. Contradictions are problematic, not just unnecessary. There is significant logic to say that this only applies to day changes that have significant halachic consequence, like when Shabbat enters or ends, and not to the end of the day of Rosh Chodesh (see *Machatzit Hashekel* to 188:17). On the other hand, *davening Ma'ariv* any day has some halachic significance regarding ending *halachot* of the previous day (see Rama, *Yoreh Deah* 196:1). In any case, the Mishna Berura (188:34) clearly states that *Ma'ariv* of the evening after Rosh Chodesh precludes saying *mehm* of Rosh Chodesh. ■

Having a dispute?



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