

Addenda Impedimenta

March 21, 2024

Q When Purim falls on *motza'ei* Shabbos as it does this year, is *Al Hanisim* inserted when reciting *Birkas Hamazon* for *se'udah shlishis* after nightfall?



A Generally, the insertions in *Birkas Hamazon* follow the meal's start. For example, on Shabbos, *Retzei* is inserted when *bentching* after nightfall at *se'udah shlishis*, because bread was eaten at the beginning of the meal while it was still Shabbos (Shulchan Aruch O.C. 188:10).

The same principle applies when Rosh Chodesh falls on *motza'ei* Shabbos: *Retzei* is said and *Ya'aleh Veyavo* is omitted (Mishnah Brurah *ibid.* 33), at least if one finished eating bread before nightfall. If he continued eating at night, the matter is subject to a three-way *machlokes*:

- The Bach applies the principle to this case as well; *Retzei* is inserted and not *Ya'aleh Veyavo*.
- The Taz (*ibid.* 7) says both are inserted, *Retzei* for the bread eaten by day and *Ya'aleh Veyavo* for the bread eaten by night.
- The Magein Avraham (*ibid.* 17) argues that the two insertions contradict one another—as Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh fall on different days—so they cannot both be invoked in the same *Birkas Hamazon*. But how to choose between them? He rules that the meal's conclusion takes precedence over its start, so say *Ya'aleh Veyavo* and not *Retzei*.

There is no universal minhag about which view to follow.

The Mishnah Brurah explains that the Magein Avraham's ruling does not apply to your case of *Al Hanisim* and *Retzei*, because *Al Hanisim* is a lesser obligation than *Retzei*.

Later *poskim* consider whether the Taz's idea applies to *Al Hanisim* and *Retzei*: The Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (44:17) assumes that the Taz's logic is applicable to all insertions, so *Al Hanisim* is said along with *Retzei*. But the Pri Megadim (M.Z. *ibid.* 7) avers that the combination of *Al Hanisim* and *Retzei* is different, and even the Taz would agree that both cannot be said. In practice, only *Retzei* should be inserted, because the majority (Bach, Magein Avraham, and Pri Megadim) say that *Retzei* overrides *Al Hanisim* (Kovetz Halachos, Purim 17:3).