

# Sacred Time: Did You Eat from the Tree? – Adar 5

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## **“Did You Eat from the Tree?” – Adar 5**

Every Jew who is proud to be Jewish generates a unique *hitpa'arut* or pride on high as well. Every motion that we make moves all of the upper worlds. The Baal Shem Tov taught that Hashem loves each and every Jew far more than a parent loves an only child. The *Zohar* says if we realized how much Hashem loves us, we would be so overwhelmed that we would faint on the spot.

Reb Nosson explains that Haman-Amalek denies there is anything special about the Jewish people. That's why Haman was so

thrilled that his *pur* lottery determined that his plan to eradicate the Jewish people would go into effect in Adar. As our sages explain, Adar was when Moshe Rabbeinu passed away (*Mesechet Megillah*.) Moshe was the one who revealed the uniqueness of the Jewish people by bringing down the Torah which is the purpose of creation. Through the Torah, Moshe found merit in the Jewish people even after we sinned with the Golden Calf.

Haman's main strength was due to the Jewish people's fall in eating at the feast that Achashverosh made to celebrate that, according to his calculations, the *Beit Hamikdash* would never be rebuilt. Our sages say that Haman's name appears in the verse, "*Hamin ha'eitz...*"—"Did you eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil?" (*Mesechet Chulin*) Even today the power of Haman / Amalek derives from our eating improperly—and that doesn't only mean non-kosher food. As at the feast of Achashverosh, it can mean strictly kosher food that is eaten to excess or without a positive attitude and connection to G-d.

One purpose of the fast of Esther is to repair what and how we have eaten throughout the previous year. This prepares us for the mitzvah to eat on Purim and ensures that we will eat with holiness in a manner that enhances our conscious awareness of our Creator.

*Master of the World, You know my heart, You know me inside and out. You know that I have no idea how to eat with holiness. It is clear to You that I have no idea how to eat as much as I really need, free of illicit desire. Please protect me from improper eating and drinking. And please teach me how to fast properly when this is required of me.*

(*Likutei Tefillot*, I:60)