



Meron Nemirov Jerusalem Chapter Director **Based Baseless Hatred**

You've been invited! While it might be surprising that you've been invited to a party by your enemy, you're thrilled. Maybe he's extending an olive branch? Maybe he's trying to just include everyone in the neighborhood. You walk into the party and suddenly you're called. Not in excitement or invitation but rather in anger. "Get out!" you're told. How do you feel? You got all dressed up and now you're being embarrassed in public! It's an awful feeling. So you try and do your best to resolve the situation. Can I stay if I pay for my plate? For half the party? For everyone? The only response you get is NO! What do you feel? What do you do after that?

This is the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza, usually used as the example for the *Sinat Chinam*, *Baseless Hatred*, that brought about the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash and the expulsion of the Jewish People. Ask yourself this, were the feelings of Bar Kamtza justified? I too would have been furious at how I was treated! Now switch roles; you're the host making a simcha, and your enemy walks through the door to ruin my day, shouldn't you be upset?

Rabbi David Fohrman suggests that maybe our "Baseless hatred" is when we let anger

go unchecked. The host could have considered the possibility that his servant messed up.. Bar Kamtza rightfully got angry, yet he also let his anger stray and grow against the community and its leaders. How is it reasonable to bring destruction against the whole Jewish community because one person embarrassed you?

Maybe the way to return from our exile spurred on by disproportionate hatred is to treat each other with love and kindness of an equally disproportionate response. May we merit to see it speedily in our days.



Ometz Shmidman 10th Grade, Alon Shvut **Eating During a Fast**

How can we eat and celebrate during the day that the Temple was destroyed? Just because the ninth of Av falls out on a day of rest this year, we should ignore everything else? Are we that selfish?

Yom tov rishon of Passover is the same day of the week as Tisha b'av. The day we were released from imprisonment and the day that we received freedom is

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the same day of the week as the day were enslaved and imprisoned – coincidence? I think not! During the holocaust Rabbi Avraham Yosef started saying ברכות השחר, when he got to the bracha “שלא עשני עבד” he screams to G-D, “how can we say such a thing? We’re currently enslaved!” In the sefar called Shut Maamakin (ח”ג, סימן ו) the question is answered. It says that the bracha isn’t talking about the physical body but our nefesh! People will never be able to enslave our nefesh and we will forever stay בני חורין even in our darkest days. If G-D didn’t release us from the Egyptians, our nefesh would still be enslaved. Being set free isn’t just getting away from slavery but advancing to a higher level with our nefesh. Therefore while we cry for the destruction of our Temple we are still free. Shabbat is our day of rest, our day where we truly feel free. No need to worry about social media or work, a day of rest where we are kings. We’re on such a high level on that day that yes, it even lets us overlook everything else that happens on that day. ■

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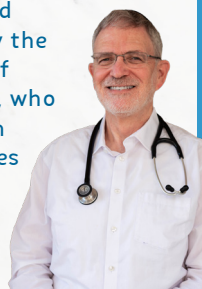
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