

Please Note: This Newsletter has Holy writings and should be disposed of in Geniza only.

PURIM 5786

(Tuesday 3rd March 2026)

On the 14th of Adar, Friday 14th March, we celebrate Purim. We celebrate Purim, derived from the word 'Pur' which means lots. It recalls the lots Haman cast to find the most favourable date to destroy the Jews and how G-d reversed this tragedy and turned this day into one of salvation. Nothing happens to us by chance and even the 'lots' are dictated by G-d.

Our Rabbis tell us that Haman's decree against the Jews came as a punishment for taking part in the feast King Achashverosh made for his subjects in Shushan the capital. Mordechai had warned them not to attend because although they were not required to eat or drink any non kosher food or wine, the atmosphere and impressive surroundings and fraternising might prove irresistible to some and cause them to compromise. They would also have to witness Achashverosh dishonouring the temple vessels. But they did not heed Mordecai's warning countering that by attending they would enhance their standing in the eyes of the King as faithful subjects and deserve his protection. There were those who even called Mordecai old fashioned and out of date. They became impressed by the wealth and greatness of the King and felt secure in their exile weakening their resolve to end the 'galut' and return to the Holy land to rebuild the Temple.

We can imagine how surprised and confounded they were when that same King gave his approval to Haman to carry out his cruel decree to destroy their men, women and children as it says in the Megillah, '*Ve Ha-er Shushan Navocha*'. Only then did they realise how they were mistaken and the 'old Rabbi' knew what he was talking about. On Mordecai's advice, they repented, mourned and fasted, thus the decree was annulled.

According to our Rabbis, the Festivities they attended started on the 3rd of Tishri, so the 7th day was on Yom Kippur. This was the only day they did not attend and on this day the seeds of salvation were sown. The King became light headed with drink and commanded that Queen Vashti appear before him dressed only with her crown. She refused and the way was paved for Esther to become Queen and help bring about the salvation.

As world events take place and great changes are made we see the Hand of G-d lead and protect the Jewish people through their trials and tribulations. Presidents and Prime Ministers are not those who will decide and protect us, it is G-d. Let us take heart and pray sincerely to Him for our final redemption. AMEN

MI SHENICHNAS ADAR MARBIM BESIMCHA – 18th FEBRUARY 2026

Some Laws Concerning the month of ADAR and PURIM according to our Custom.

ADAR

- 1) Adar is a time for happiness. If someone has a court case with a non-Jew, this is an appropriate month to have it.

PARSHAT ZACHOR

- 2) The Shabbat before Purim, (28th February 2026) is called Shabbat Zachor. All men are obligated from the Torah to hear the Parshah about Amalek found at the end of Parshat Ki Tetze (Devarim 25 17:19), as it says in the Torah, "*Remember what Amalek did to you*" "*Zachor et Asher asah lecha amalek*". ***Even though women are not obliged to hear this being read in the Synagogue, they will be rewarded if they do so and should make every effort to attend.***

TA'ANIT ESTHER

Ta'anit Esther this year will begin at 5:06am on Monday 2nd March and terminates at 6.23pm. One is not allowed to eat before hearing the megillah in the evening unless he is old or weak and faint after the fast, then he can eat a small amount and drink but should try not to have a seuda..

MACHAZIT HASHEKEL

- 3) It is customary to donate charity before or on Ta'anit Esther and to mention it as a remembrance of the Shekalim which were donated to pay for the offerings in the Temple. It can be given after this as well. The correct amount is about £12 to cover the value of a half Shekel of silver (about 10g of silver) for each person. This Machazit Hashekel should be handed in at shul or can be donated via paypal at <https://paypal.me/OYHshabbaton> The minhag is to give for women and children as well even though they are not liable according to halacha.

MEGILLAT ESTHER

- 4) Both men and women are obliged to hear the reading of the Megillah at night and again during the day. It is a mistake to think that it is enough to hear the one reading only at night. Children must also be trained in the Mitzvah. But one should make sure that young children brought to the synagogue do not disrupt the services.
- 5) The person who reads the Megillah for women after he himself has already heard it, does not make a Beracha on their behalf and nor do the women themselves. But, if he or another man has not heard the reading of the Megillah, then the Beracha before and even the Beracha after the reading should be said even if there is no minyan according to the Ben ish Hai.
- 6) The Megilla is unrolled completely and folded like a letter before it is read. This only applies to the reader and not the congregation.
- 7) The one who reads the Megillah must have in mind to include all those who listen and the listeners should intend to fulfil their obligation. They must pay complete attention and must not miss out one word. If one of the congregation dozes off during the reading of the Megillah, he has to hear it again from where he missed. Every congregant should have a Megillah to follow even if it is only printed, so that if he missed hearing a word, or some words, he can read it from the printed book itself and catch up to where the Chazan is, thus he fulfils his obligation.
- 8) The congregants do not need to stand while the Megillah is read but it is customary to stand up while hearing the Beracha before and after the reading.
- 9) We only need to make the Beracha Sheheheyanu on the Megillah at night and we have in mind to include all the Mitzvot of the following day, i.e. the 2nd reading of the Megillah, the Matanot Le Evyonim the Shelach Manot and the Seuda. But if for some reason the Beracha Sheheheyanu was not said at night, it can be said for the reading of the morning.
- 10) At the end of the reading of the Megillah, we all say Arur Haman, Baruch Mordechai, Arura Zeresh, Berucha Esther, Arurim Kol Harehaim, Beruchim Kol Yisrael, Ve Gam Harbona Zachor Letov as it is written in the Siddur.

MISHLOACH MANOT

- 11) Both men and women are obliged in the Mitzvah of Shelach Manot, i.e. to send no less than two kinds of food which can be eaten without further preparation to one person (two kinds should be in separate containers or packed separately). Shelach Manot must be sent to an adult but Matanot La-evyonim may be given to a katan (under bar mitzvah) if he is a poor person in need.
- 12) A mourner, within the year for his parents and within a month for other family, should not be sent Shelach Manot (gifts) for Purim but he is obliged to send Shelach Manot to one person and to give Matanot to the poor. Shelach Manot can be sent to the mourners' wife and children.

MATANOT LA-EVYONIM FOR THE POOR

- 13) Matanot La-evyonim must be given by both men and women. The obligation is to give 2 people at least £2 each, this must be distributed on the same day. The Yeshiva will facilitate this and plates will be placed on the Teva for this purpose. Since there has been a great rise in the price of food one should consider giving more for matanot la-evyonim.
- 14) Donations can also be made before Purim by handing it in at synagogue or donated online but should be marked as Matanot La-evyonim to be sure that they are distributed on Purim day in accordance with the mitzva.
- 15) **For donations online the address is via <https://paypal.me/OYHshabbaton>. Such donations should be made before 10:30am on Purim day so that they can be distributed at the correct time.**

SEUDAT PURIM

- 16) It is a Mitzvah to make a special Seuda on the day of Purim and to drink wine.
- 17) Al Hanissim is recited in the Prayers and in Berchat Hamazon on Purim but not on Shushan Purim, the following day. But if we miss saying it we do not go back. On both days, we omit the Anah and Tachanunim.
- 18) One should dress with Shabbat clothing or other fine clothes on Purim.

PARASHAT ZACHOR will be read on Shabbat Tetzaveh on 28th February 2026. This is an obligation from the Torah to hear this Parasha.

BETH KENESSETH TIMINGS FOR PURIM 5786

Monday 2nd March 2026

Ta'anit begins
Shacharit
Mincha (Birchat Cohanim)
Arvit
Ta'anit ends
Megilla
2nd Megilla reading at Dayan David's home

Fast of Esther

5:06 am
7:00 am
5:10 pm
6:10 pm
6:23 pm
6:25pm
8.30pm

Tuesday 3rd 2026

Shacharit
2nd Megilla with NRPS
3rd Megilla (Women only at Dayan David's home)

Purim

7.30am (Megilla 8.10am)
9.30am
12.05pm

Mincha
Arbit

3:30pm
7.30pm

*Matzot
Mitzva*

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