

# Prep Up to Purim

Remember, Fast & Give

## Remember

The Shabbos before Purim is known as *Shabbos Zachor*, the Shabbos of Remembrance. We read from a Torah scroll in the synagogue how the Amalekites attacked us out of senseless hatred. The Torah exhorts us to never forget this evil, and to “Eradicate the memory of Amalek.” Since Haman was a descendant of Amalek, we read about it on the Shabbos before Purim. It might even be a *biblical* obligation to hear this portion read, so all Jewish men and women should make an extra effort to be there.

*(This year Shabbos Zachor will be on the 11th of Adar 5783, March 4, 2023. In Chabad Shuls the reading is approximately 11:30am)*

## Fast

We observe *Taanis Esther*, the “Fast of Esther” the day before Purim, Fasting is simple. One who is healthy and over the age of bar or bat mitzvah, doesn't eat or drink from dawn until dark. It is customary to first hear the Megilla read before breaking one's Fast.

*(This year the Fast of Esther will be on Monday, the 13th of Adar 5783, March 6, 2023. In Cleveland, it begins at 5:00 am and ends 6:50 pm.)*

Technical details:

- One who is ill, pregnant or nursing, should consult with a rabbi whether or not to skip this fast. Even if one is exempt from fasting, best to skip the snacks and treats.
- One can wake up before 5:00 am and grab a bite—as long as this was in mind before going to sleep.
- Special prayers of Selichos and Avinu Malkeinu are added in Shacharis and the Aneinu prayer in Mincha. The Torah is read during both Shacharis and Mincha..

## Half-Shekel

On the afternoon of the Fast of Esther, or before the reading of the Megillah, we give three coins in “half” denominations—in the U.S. three half-dollar coins—to charity. They represent the half-shekel that each Jew annually contributed for the Temple.

In many synagogues, plates are set out with special, silver half-dollars, so you can purchase them to use in observance of this custom. The Chabad custom is to give three half-dollars for each family member. One who was not able to do this on the Fast day can still do it on Purim Day.

# Purim

## The Fun Holiday

Here's how Purim, the jolliest, most action-packed day of the Jewish year, is celebrated.

### Listen to the Miracle

Dress in your Shabbos best, head to Shul and listen to the entire Megillah. Hear the public reading twice: once Purim Night and again on Purim Day. Pay attention—it is vital to hear every word. Keep in mind all 4 Purim Mitzvos, when the *Shehecheyahu* blessing is recited before the reading. When Haman's name is mentioned in the reading, children swirl graggers (noisemakers) and adults stomp their feet to eradicate his evil name.

### Give to the Needy

Purim is about caring. Give food or money to at least two needy people during the daylight hours of Purim. If you don't know any needy people, the Rav and Gabai will be collecting money for this purpose. Charity is a mitzvah the whole year round, but on Purim - give to whoever asks.

### Share Some Food

Purim is about friendship and community. Specifically through a messenger, send a package containing at least two different ready-to-eat food items or beverages to at least one Jew during the daylight hours of Purim. Minimally, *Mishloach Manos* foods should require two different *brochos*. Traditionally, men give to men, and women give to women.

### Feast and Rejoice!

Purim is about sharing your joy. During the daylight hours of Purim, gather friends and family for a feast with Challah, wine & meat. Traditionally, the Purim feast must begin before sunset and often lasts well into the evening. The meal should include challah and meat. The day's special: [kreplach!](#) Don't forget the poppyseed Hamantash - to recall the seeds that Queen Esther ate while living in the Persian Palace.

### Thank G-d

Add *V'al Hanissim*, a short section of thanksgiving for the Purim miracle, to both the daily prayers and to the Grace after Meals. One who's meal extends past nighttime should still recite *Al Hanissim* if a *Kzayis* of bread was eaten before *Shkiah*. If you forgot it, forget it, you don't need to repeat the prayer.

### Hide Your Face

On Purim, children traditionally Masquerade—an allusion to the Purim miracle that was disguised in natural events. Make sure your children dress up as good, cheerful characters, people you want them to emulate, such as Mordechai and Esther.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe emphasized that we should see to it that even our children fulfill all the mitzvot of Purim.

For more about Purim, visit Chabad's fun and informative [Purim Site](#).

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