

TIMES

- Purim is preceded by the Fast of Esther, which this year (5779 – 2019) begins at dawn (**4:24**) on Wednesday 20/03 and continues until nightfall (**18:54**). It is forbidden to eat and drink on this day (one may, however, wash, and wear leather shoes).
- In unwalled cities (i.e. Edgware), Purim is celebrated on the 14th of Adar, from night to night.

Krias Hamegillah

READING OF THE SCROLL OF ESTHER

- The Scroll of Esther (*Megillas Esther*) is read publicly in the evening and on the morning of Purim (check our timetable).
- It must be read from a scroll written in accordance with *Halachah*.
- The reader and the audience must have intent to fulfill the *mitzvah* of reading and to fulfill the obligation of the blessings before and after.
- It is customary to make noise when the name of Haman is mentioned.
- It is forbidden to speak from the time of the blessings before the reading, until the end of the blessings after the reading.
- Ideally the scroll should be read in the presence of a *minyan*.

Tefillah

PRAYER

- The prayer '*al hanissim*' is added in the Silent Prayer (*Shmoneh Esrei*) and in *Birkas HaMozon*.
- If one forgot '*al hanissim*' one does not repeat the prayer.
- During the morning service (*Shacharis*), the Torah is read.
- The prayer of repentance, *tachanun*, is not recited, neither is the prayer *lamenatzeach*.



Mishloach Manos - GIFTS TO FRIENDS

- One is obligated to give at least one gift to one fellow Jew. The more the better.
- The gift must consist of at least two items of food, ready to eat.
- It is preferable (but not mandatory) to send the gift via a third party.
- **One does NOT fulfill this *mitzvah* by making a donation to a charity on behalf of a card recipient.**

Matonos Le'evyonim - GIFTS TO THE POOR

- Both men and women are obligated to give a gift of money, sufficient for one meal (suggested minimum amount £ 5.00 per person), to at least two poor people. If one wishes to increase either *Mishloach Manos* or *Matonos Le'evyonim* **one should increase the latter and not the former.**
- Ahavas Yisrael will have envelopes available in which money can be put it before being given to the Dayan.
- Funds must be available on the day of Purim. (No post-dated checks. Charity vouchers may be used)
- It is preferable to take care of this obligation early in the day and to that effect envelopes may be given to Dayan Vanzetta right after *Shacharis* on Thursday, 21st March.
- The gift may be given to a third party in order to distribute on the day of Purim, therefore, Dayan Vanzetta will organize the distribution of collected funds throughout the day.

Seudas Purim - THE FESTIVE MEAL

- It is obligatory to partake of a festive meal on the **DAY** of Purim.
- It is customary to eat food with seeds - e.g., Hamentashen with poppy seed filling.
- One should drink more wine than one is accustomed to but, **according to Dayan Vanzetta, one does NOT need to get drunk.**
- One may drink other alcoholic beverages.
- It is correct to invite guests, especially the needy.
- The conversation should be focused on words of Torah.



Minhagim - CUSTOMS

- Many have a custom to dress up in costumes. Men should not dress up as ladies and vice-versa.
- It is customary to give charity to all who ask.
- Some produce amusing Purim plays and this year Ahavas Yisrael will host a magic show.
- Some also present amusing Divrei Torah, which are allowed as long as there's no mockery involved or the transgression of any *halochos*.
- It is customary to visit the homes of one's Rabbis and teachers.
- One should start studying the laws of Passover on Purim.
- It is correct not to engage in business or work on Purim.
- At the afternoon service before Purim (on Wednesday, 23rd March, this year) it is customary to give three 50p coins to charity in memory of the three "half-shekels" given to the Temple. A tray will be available in our Shul to collect the three 50p coins given by each person.
- Coins should be given for every male member of one's family (unless they themselves will be fulfilling the *mitzvah*), i.e. a father with two sons should give 3 x 50p coins on his behalf, 3 x 50p coins on behalf of son #1 and a further 3 x 50p coins on behalf on son #2.