

RABBI ZEV'S REFLECTIONS

Purim is here!!

Purim is the holiday that commemorates the saving of the Jewish people from annihilation at the hands of Haman, as told in the Book of Esther. According to the Hebrew calendar, Purim is celebrated



annually on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Adar which begins on March 2nd, with our Celebration here at Temple.

According to the Book of Esther, (in a nut shell), Haman

was the royal vizier to the Persian king Ahasuerus. His plans were foiled by Mordecai, from the tribe of Benjamin, who previously warned the king about an assassination attempt, and Esther, Mordecai's cousin and adopted daughter who had become queen of Persia after her marriage to Ahasuerus. The day of deliverance became a day of feasting and rejoicing among Jews. Although traditionally viewed as a historical document, modern scholarship generally regards the Book of Esther as a historical novel with legendary elements, not a reliable account of Purim's origins.

According to Megillah Esther, "they should make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor". Purim is traditionally celebrated by:

- Exchanging gifts of food and drink, known as mishloach manot
- Donating charity to the poor

- Eating a celebratory meal with alcoholic beverages (In the Babylonian Talmud it is said that "One is obligated to drink on Purim until one doesn't know the difference between 'cursed be Haman' and 'blessed be Mordechai.'") and those who cannot or choose not to drink on Purim are under no obligation to do so
- Public recitation of megillat Esther, or "the Megillah", and of course... the shpiel

Other customs include wearing masks and costumes, public celebrations and parades, eating hamantashen, and drinking wine.

I hope to see everyone in costumes as we eat, drink and be merry celebrating this year!

On another note...The trip to Israel is here and we are leaving on the 8th...If you have any prayers for the wall, or tzedakah to give in Israel, please make sure you get it to me by the 6th. While I am away, Larry Wallace will be leading services (thank you!)

In case of emergency and you need to reach me, my cell phone will be on, and I will also be able to receive texts and emails.

Chag Purim Sameach!

L' Shalom

Rabbi Zev Sonnenstein