

Purim (Feast of Lots)



Happy PURIM! - Esther used by God to expose Haman, painting by Ernest Normand

"These days of Purim should never cease to be celebrated by the Jews, nor should the memory of them die out among their descendants."
(*Esther 9:28*)

Happy Purim Catalyst!

Today is the joyous holiday **Purim (Feast of Lots)!**

It is one of the most **fun-filled and action-packed days on the Jewish calendar** when people dress in costumes, often based on characters from the Book of Esther.

Enjoying festive meals, exchanging **mishloach manot** (Purim gift baskets) and giving **matanot l'evyonim** (gifts to the poor) are essential elements of the day.



A Jewish girl dressed for Purim helps her mother form Purim cookies.

The grand event on Purim is listening to the *Megillat Esther* (Scroll of Esther).

In synagogues all around the world, **the entire scroll is publicly read at least twice**—once last night and once during the day today.

The heroine of the story is Esther, the beautiful Jewish girl who became queen of Persia some 2,400 years ago.

The villain of the story, the evil Haman, had plotted the destruction of the Jewish People.

He had no idea, however, that the king's beloved queen was actually a Jewish woman, for her identity was hidden.



An ultra-Orthodox man reads from the scroll of Esther.

When Esther's adopted father Mordecai (who was her cousin), discovers Haman's plot, he encourages Esther to go to the king to plead for the lives of her people, saying:

"If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place ... **who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?**" (*Esther 4:14*)

Realizing that she may be killed for entering the king's inner chamber without being summoned, **she enters anyway after three days of fasting and prayer.**

She courageously intervenes to save her people from certain annihilation.



It is a Biblical tradition to send Purim baskets to family, friends, and neighbors, as well as give gifts to the poor.

Purim is a holiday that commemorates the salvation and deliverance of the Jewish People. **And its final fulfillment will be with the second coming of Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus the Messiah)!**

In fact, the Midrash (ancient Jewish commentary) states that Purim will continue to be celebrated even **after the final redemption.**