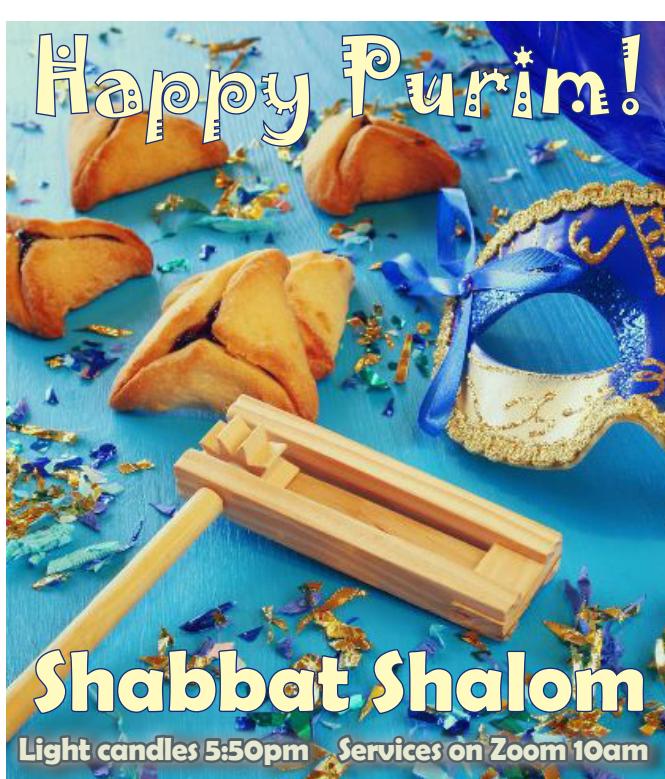




Carnegie Shul Chatter

February 25, 2021



Zoom in for Services

Our abbreviated Shabbos service begins at 10 am and lasts approximately an hour. Click here to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84122278270?pwd=NjRNRNtSNXM4dXA5eHJwl3LJLak9ldz09>

Meeting ID: 841 2227 8270

Passcode: 558503

Find the Birnbaum siddur at: <https://opensiddur.org/compilations/liturgical/siddurim/kol-bo/hasiddur-hashalem-by-paltiel-birnbaum-1949/>

In Each Generation...

Our article on Purim from myjewish-learning.com includes the sentence, “The story of Purim, however, holds out the hope that no matter how bad the circumstances, things will turn out well in the end.” That is certainly a thought that we have discussed countless times over the years in the Chatter.

Our history as Jews is filled with times when things looked almost hopeless for us. We were cornered by Pharaoh at the Red Sea. The Macabees were badly outnumbered and the Temple was sacked. The Spanish inquisition tried to destroy us. Hitler and the Nazis were determined to wipe us out entirely. The Arab nations had overwhelming numbers massed against us in the war for Israeli independence. And this year, not only the Jews, but all of mankind has been faced with the modern day plague of the pandemic.

But time after time we have emerged victorious. No one has been able to destroy us. Not Pharaoh. Not Hamen. Not the Romans. Not the Spaniards. Not the Nazis. Not the Arabs. And not the virus. In fact, In recent weeks, little Israel is being praised for its success in rolling out the coronavirus vaccine.

Continued —

How do we survive all of this?

Yes, we are strong willed and resourceful, but we have not done it alone. We have done it by having Hashem in our corner.

He is not mentioned anywhere in the Megillah, but as myjewishlearning.com tells us, “God is the one who is pulling the strings of redemption behind the scenes.”

With God on our side, we shall always survive.

Tetzaveh in a Nutshell

Exodus 27:20-30:10

Below is this week's Parshah in a Nutshell from chabad.org.



of blue-, purple- and red-dyed wool, linen and gold containing twelve precious stones inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; 7) the me'il—a cloak of blue wool, with gold bells and decorative pomegranates on its hem; 8) the tzitz—a golden plate worn on the forehead, bearing the inscription “Holy to G-d.”

Tetzaveh also includes G-d's detailed instructions for the seven-day initiation of Aaron and his four sons—Nadav, Avihu, Elazar and Itamar—into the priesthood, and for the making of the golden altar, on which the ketoret (incense) was burned.

G-d tells Moses to receive from the children of Israel pure olive oil to feed the “everlasting flame” of the menorah, which Aaron is to kindle each day, “from evening till morning.”

The priestly garments, to be worn by the kohanim (priests) while serving in the Sanctuary, are described. All kohanim wore: 1) the ketonet—a full-length linen tunic; 2) michnasayim—linen breeches; 3) mitznefet or migba'at—a linen turban; 4) avnet—a long sash wound above the waist.

In addition, the kohen gadol (high priest) wore: 5) the efod—an apron-like garment made

We also had this suit made, just in case the Cohen happened to turn out extra-“gadol”, if you know what I mean...



Misbehaving... On Purpose

Is there ever a time that every Jew should get drunk?

Well, according to some sources, the Talmud says that on Purim, the requirement, "goes so far as to instruct that one should get so drunk that they can't tell the difference between the phrases *Arur Haman* ("cursed is Haman") and *Baruch Mordechai* ("blessed is Mordechai")."

Who doesn't love Purim?

It is a boisterous celebration of our victory over the evil Hamen, complete with noisemakers in Shul, plenty of booze, and, of course, hamentashen. There are Purim carnivals, Purim costumes, and Purim shpiels. But, on the more serious side, we need to be quiet enough when the Megillah is being read to hear every single word.

Here are two articles about Purim followed by my two favorite Purim songs.

Purim 101

Purim is a joyous holiday that celebrates the saving of the Jews from a threatened massacre in ancient Persia.

From myjewishlearning.com

Purim, or the Feast of Lots, is a joyous holiday that recounts the saving of the Jews from a threatened massacre during the Persian period (539-330 BCE). The story of Purim is recounted in the Book of Esther, whose eponymous heroine plays the leading role in saving her people. The holiday is traditionally celebrated with wild abandon and with the giving of gifts to friends and the poor.

Purim History



While the origins of Purim appear clear from the Book of Esther, historians have looked in vain for any sort of extra-biblical corroboration of the events of the story. Be that as it may, it is a tale that purports to take place during a time when many Jews were living in Persia. A young Jewish woman, Esther, rises to be Queen of Persia under the tutelage of her guardian Mordechai. All, however, is not right. The Jews have enemies, and a certain Haman, the grand vizier, plots the Jews' destruction. Even though Esther has hidden her Jewish identity from all, Mordechai prevails on her to risk her life by revealing her true identity to the king. She does this and denounces the evil Haman's plot. At the end

of the story, the Jews are able to turn the tables on their enemies, who are then punished in place of the intended victims. This story is one of the most beloved in the Jewish community, because of the hope that it gives a minority living in an oftentimes hostile majority culture.

In Masekhet Megillah (scroll), the Talmudic tractate devoted to Purim observances, Rabbi Akiva declares the Book of Esther to be divinely inspired. Some commentators believe this eventually led to the inclusion of Esther in the Hebrew Bible, despite the omission of God from the book. The Greek versions of Esther contain a number of additions—including God's name—not found in the Hebrew story.

Purim at Home

In distinction to various other holidays, such as Pesach (Passover), Purim is the quintessential community holiday. Nonetheless, there are a number of activities that are centered in the home. One of the favorite activities in preparation for the holiday is the baking of hamantaschen, the triangular filled pastries that are the traditional food at Purim time. In addition, following the commandment to give gifts to friends and the poor, the preparation of so-called mishloah manot baskets is a fun activity to engage in, as is their distribution on the holiday. The centerpiece of Purim's home celebration is the seudah, a festive meal accompanied by alcoholic beverages.



Celebrating Purim in the Community

Purim is a community holiday of joyful celebration. The centerpiece of the communal celebration is the reading of the Scroll of Esther, the Megillah, in the synagogue. This is a raucous affair, with whoops, hollers, and noise being made every time that Haman's name is mentioned, so no one can hear the name of this horrible evildoer. Another tradition is the Purim shpiel, the Purim play, during which fun is poked at community leaders and members. Purim has often been called the Jewish carnival, and dressing in costume and taking part in a Purim carnival heighten the levity of the day, on which one is encouraged to engage in activities that at other times of the year would be somewhat more restricted in scope, such as drinking.

Purim Themes and Theology

The overriding theme of Purim is the saving of the Jews from a mortal threat. Even though God is not mentioned at all in the Book of Esther, from a Jewish perspective, God is the one who is pulling the strings of redemption behind the scenes. The holiday of Purim has become one of the best-loved holidays of the Jewish year. The reasons for this are easy to see. It is a joyous holiday on which everyone just lets go. Most significant, however, is the paradigmatic nature of the story of Purim. It is not difficult to see how a story in which a small



and threatened Jewish community in exile is able to triumph over its foes would prove to be a powerful image for a Diaspora community faced over the centuries with threats from many different sources. The story of Purim, however, holds out the hope that no matter how bad the circumstances, things will turn out well in the end.

What is Purim?

From toriavey.com

Purim, which literally means “lots” and is sometimes known as the Feast of Lots, is the Jewish holiday in which Jews commemorate being saved from persecution in the ancient Persian Empire. According to the Book of Esther in the Torah, the Jewish people of the city of Shushan were threatened by the villain Haman, a prime minister who convinces the King Ahasuerus to kill all the Jews (because the Jewish Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman). Haman casts lots (hence the name of the holiday) to determine the date he would carry out his plan: the 13th of Adar. In the end, the Jews are saved by the heroic Queen Esther, Mordecai’s niece (and adopted daughter), who married Ahasuerus (after he banished his first, rebellious wife Vashti). When Ahasuerus discovers that his wife Esther is Jewish, he decides to reverse Haman’s decree, and instead of the Jews being killed, Haman, his sons, and other enemies are killed instead.

How is Purim celebrated?

Purim is the most raucous holiday on the Jewish calendar (see mandatory alcohol drinking below) and occurs on the 14 day of the month of Adar. Observance of the holiday begins with dressing up in costume: some people choose to dress as characters from the Purim story, and others dress in non-Purim-related costumes. It is a mitzvah (commandment) to listen to the story of Purim chanted from Megillat Esther (“The Scroll of Esther”) and to hear every word. It is customary to make loud noise with a noisemaker called a *ra’ashan* in Hebrew, or *grager* in Yiddish, every time Haman’s name is mentioned, in order to fulfill the obligation of blotting out Haman’s name. Part of the holiday also includes giving gifts or charity to the poor, called *matanot l’evyonim*. A fun tradition on the holiday is to perform a Purim *spiel*, a satirical show either dramatizing the Purim story in a humorous way, or just a funny skit on any theme.



What kinds of foods are eaten on Purim?

Mishloach manot (“sending of portions”) are gifts of food, treats, and goodies that Jewish communities send to friends and family on Purim. It is traditional to have a jovial feast, or

Seudat Purim, in the evening of the holiday. Drinking alcohol is part of the Purim holiday celebration — in fact, the requirement in the Talmud goes so far as to instruct that one should get so drunk that they can't tell the difference between the phrases Arur Haman ("cursed is Haman") and Baruch Mordechai ("blessed is Mordechai"). Traditional foods include Oznei Haman or Hamentaschen ("ears of Haman"), a triangular cookie usually filled with different flavors of jam or a poppy seed filling known as "mohn", which is supposed to represent either Haman's ears or his three-cornered hat. Another triangular shaped food that is customary to eat are kreplach, small dumplings usually filled with meat, mashed potatoes, or other fillings. Other traditional foods are dishes made with beans, a reminder of what Esther ate in the king's palace in order to avoid eating non-kosher foods. Because of this Esther/ legume tradition, Purim is often celebrated with a vegetarian meal.



What is the proper greeting for Purim?

To wish someone a Happy Purim, say "Chag Purim Sameach!"

When is Purim?

On the Hebrew calendar, Purim is celebrated on the 14th of Adar, the day after the Jews emerged victorious against the evil Haman. However, Shushan Purim is celebrated on the 15th of Adar because the fighting there lasted for two days. Some Jews also observe the Fast of Esther, which takes place from dawn until dusk on Purim even and commemorates Esther's three day fast before meeting the King.

Did you know the Jewish calendar has leap years? This ancient calendar follows a 19 year cycle. There are seven leap years within each cycle, each of which contains one extra month (occurring in February-March). During Jewish leap years, the two months are known as Adar I (the "extra" leap month) and Adar II. Purim is celebrated during Adar II, and during Adar I a "mini" holiday is celebrated known as Purim Katan (small Purim).

Purim Songs

In Shu, Shu, Shushan Long Ago

Oh Haman was a high and mighty bluff,
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.
He ordered Mordechai to take his derby off
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.

Chorus

So we sing, so we sing, so we sing and raise a row
For Haman he was swinging, while Mordechai was singing,
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.

But Mordechai sat and laughed in his face
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.
So Haman swore he'd exterminate his race
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.

Chorus

O Esther was a timid little maid
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.
But Mordechai told her she needn't be afraid
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.

Chorus

So she went to the king and she gave him a smile
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.
The king he liked her manner and her style
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.

Chorus

Ahasuerus was a jolly little king
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.
He ordered Haman to take a little swing
In Shu, Shu, Shushan long ago.

Chorus

Oh Today We'll Merry, Merry Be

Oh once there was a wicked, wicked man
And Haman was his name, sir.
He would have murdered all the Jews
Tho they were not to blame, sir.

Chorus

Oh today we'll merry, merry be (3)
And "nash" some Homentashen.

And Esther was the lovely queen of king Ahasuerus,
When Haman said he'd kill us all
Oh, my how he did scare us.

Chorus

But Mordechai her cousin bold,
Said "What a dreadful chutzpah,
If guns were but invented now,
This Haman I would shoot, Sir."

Chorus

When Esther speaking to the king
Of Haman's plot did mention,
"Ha, ha" said he, Oh, no he won't!
I'll spoil his bad intention."

Chorus

The guest of honor he shall be,
This clever Mr. Smarty.
And high above us he shall swing
At a little hanging party.

Chorus

Of all his cruel and unkind ways
This little joke did cure him.
And don't forget we owe him thanks
For this jolly feast of Purim.
Chorus: Oh today we'll merry, merry be (3)
And "nash" some Homentashen.