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*Al & Sonny Gindi Building*  
83 Hathaway Avenue, Deal, NJ 07723

**Purim**  
Adar 5781  
February 2021

*Edmond J. Safra Synagogue*  
*Mourad & Sarine Kattan Building*  
75 Hathaway Avenue, Deal, NJ 07723



## Never by Chance

*These* days will be remembered and kept in each generation, in every family, land and city. These days of Purim will never be abandoned by the Jews, nor shall their memory die out among their children."

Every year **Megilat Esther** must be read aloud in public. All adult Jewish men and women are obligated to hear every single word to fulfill the misvah. Why? Don't the other Jewish holidays have miracles far greater and wondrous? And why is Purim uniquely celebrated specifically through reading the Megillah?

The message to every Jew throughout the centuries even in the darkest times is: "Do not be afraid. Even if it feels as if I am so far away, hidden and concealed. I will never abandon you, My dear children."

The miracles of Hanukah and Passover, the shelter of Sukkot all speak openly about the hand of G-d in our lives. Divine intervention saved the nation of Israel. We sing about the revealed miracles. There is no denying the obvious. How could one not believe? A scroll is not necessary.

But what happens when there is miracle after miracle yet no one seems to see the explosion of G-d's mighty hand in this world? When G-d's voice is masked by nature seeming to take its natural course?

Purim's miracles were intentionally hidden. Esther happened to be chosen. She happened to be Jewish. Achashverosh happened to be taken by her. We had one of our own in the palace and wow, were we lucky! Mordechai happened to hear the plot to kill the king. Haman happened to erect the gallows upon which he was eventually hanged. There is no luck or coincidence here. It's all meant to be, directed behind the scenes by G-d's guiding hand.

The name of G-d is nowhere to be found explicitly in the Book of Esther. It is only alluded to, hidden, waiting to be found. G-d purposefully concealed His name to teach us that there are times that great miracles are camouflaged, waiting to be discovered.

We all go through times that we believe that we are alone, on our own. Sometimes they are moments of great success. We think it's all about being at the right place in the right time, or our

very own abilities.

We are ignorant or indifferent to G-d's mighty hand in our lives. Propelling us forward, showering us with blessing. It is up to us to truly see and recognize the Source of life in our days.

Then there are those moments of darkness. We are bewildered. Where is G-d? I feel so abandoned. How am I ever going to get out of this? Why is G-d hiding?

Our people thought the same when the holy Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. We were sent into exile. Dispersed as the smoke and fire rose over our glorious Temple. Fear spread from one to another. Can it be that G-d has abandoned us forever?

**Megilat Esther** teaches us that even in the darkness of exile, even in the looming shadows, we must never fear. G-d is watching over us. Perhaps His hand seems hidden. Perhaps the healing seems to be taking forever. Beneath the heavy clouds is the hand of G-d, tenderly watching over us.

*A Joyous Purim to All!*  
*Rabbi Isaac Farhi*

# Purim & Yom Ha-ki-purim

*One* of the greatest of Jewish mystics, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, points out that the Biblical term for the Day of Atonement, **Yom Ha-ki-purim**, can also be read as **Yom KePurim**, meaning "a day like Purim". On the surface this seems illogical -- there are no two days that appear less similar than the solemn fast of Yom Kippur and the boisterous, joyful celebrations of Purim! Moreover, the implication of this statement is that Purim is the greater of the two days. Yom Kippur is compared to Purim, as if Yom Kippur were but a lesser example of the Purim archetype.

A deeper look at the purpose of these two holidays will help us understand their relationship to each other. There are two ways to become close to Hashem: the path of awe and fear, and the path of love and joy. Both are necessary and play important roles in

Judaism. Generally, the various prohibitions in the Torah reflect the relationship of awe and reticence, while the positive obligations reflect the relationship of love and reaching out to G-d.

Yom Kippur, with its prohibitions against eating, drinking and other physical pleasures, represents the path of awe and fear of G-d. An individual stops his life, completely ignores the physical side of his being and focuses only on the spiritual. One can achieve clarity of perception on Yom Kippur by subduing the interference and static of the physical world.

Purim, on the other hand, provides a path to Hashem through love and joy. Purim teaches us that one can achieve an even higher level of connection to G-d and clarity of perception through the feelings of love than through feelings of fear and awe. Thus, Yom Kippur is like Purim, but not quite Purim, because the love of Hashem is more powerful than the fear of Hashem.



*With thanks to Hashem our week-night learning program is in full swing! The classes are interactive, uplifting and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone present.*

*Please join us on Monday & Wednesday evenings at 8:00pm  
Class & refreshments.*

*We would like to thank*

*Rabbi Isaac Farhi, Rabbi Solomon Haber, Rabbi Sammy Sitt for leading an amazing program.  
Special thanks to all our generous sponsors.*

*Please contact the Synagogue office to sponsor a night of learning - 732-552-6030*



## Laws and Customs of Purim

1

Men and women are obligated to hear the Megillah reading, both in the evening and in the daytime.

2

If one did not read or hear every single word of the Megillah, he has not fulfilled his obligation. If one misses a word during the reading, he may read the word from the book he is using.

3

One is required to give Mahasit Hashekel for all members of his family. The latest time to fulfill this misvah is immediately before the evening Megillah reading.

4

"Al Hanisim" is added to the Amidah and Bircat Hamazon on Purim. If one forgets to recite it, he does not repeat the prayer.

5

On the day of Purim, both men and women are obligated to give charity gifts to at least two poor people. Be as generous as possible. For minimum requirements, consult the Rabbi.

6

Both men and women are obligated to send to a friend a portion of at least two different types of prepared food. This misvah must be done on the day of Purim.

7

It is a misvah to make an elaborate feast in honor of Purim on the day of Purim. This year Purim falls out on Friday, we must be mindful of the day and begin the Purim Seudah early in the day.

(around noon)

### *The Month of Adar*

The month of Adar is the last month in the Jewish calendar when counting from Nissan. The Rabbis have told us "just as we limit our joy in the month of Ab, likewise we increase our joy when we enter the month of Adar." This has always been considered a lucky month for our people. The Mazal for the month of Adar is fish. For this is the time that the fish multiply, which is the symbol of beracha (blessing). The evil eye has no power on the fish that are hidden under the water. During the flood in the days of Noah they survived.

The Jews were compared to the fish in the water; the Torah is compared to the water. Just as fish multiply during this month, so to the Jews multiplied their knowledge of Torah during this month. Moshe Rabenu was born in Adar, and he brought us the Torah from Hashem. The Jewish people returned and accepted upon themselves the Torah and Misvot in the days of Mordechai and Esther.

## *The Fast of Esther*

On the day before Purim, the 13th day of Adar, Haman planned to kill the Jews.

Queen Esther and her maidens fasted and did teshuva three days before her attempt to convince the king to cancel this evil decree. The Jewish people have observed the practice of fasting whenever they were faced with war and calamity. The idea of fasting re-inforces our understanding that man does not prevail by his own physical or military strength alone, but rather we must turn to Hashem in his mercy to overcome our problems. In remembrance of Esther's fast, we too fast and ask Hashem to help in overcoming the "Amaleks" of today who seek to destroy the Jewish People.

Zecher L' Mahaseet Hashekel

In remembrance of the Half Shekel that was given in the time of the Bet Hamikdash, as an atonement or a Kaparah. According to Hagaon Harav Obadia Yosef Zt"l, it is proper to give the equivalent of ten grams of silver for 13 year olds and older.

## *Additions to our Prayers*

In the Amidah and in Birkat Hamazon we add Al Hanissim. If one forgets to

say it He does not have to repeat the prayer.

No Hallel is said on Purim. Tahanun is not said.

From the Torah we read "Vayabo Amalek" (the end of Perashat Beshalach) The Torah is read before the Megilah.

## *Children's Prayers*

After Haman had made the gallows, he went to Mordechai and found him teaching Torah to twelve thousand children who gathered around him.

"Tomorrow," said Haman, "I shall kill these children first and then I will hang Mordechai."

Though their mothers brought them food the children refused to eat. They wept and wept until their cries reached the heavens. Hashem heard their weeping and He said, "What is the great cry I hear as of kids and lambs."

"The cry is not from kids and lambs" said the ministering angle "it comes from the little Jewish children who have fasted for three days and tomorrow are to be killed as if indeed they were kids and lambs."

Then Hashem took the decree that He sealed against Israel and tore it

up. This teaches us how special and important are the prayers of little children. Hashem hears their prayers offered with sincerity and sends them his bountiful blessings.

## *Purim Meshulash*

This year in Jerusalem Purim falls out on Shabbat, the megilla is not read in its proper time. This can happen only in Jerusalem, when the fifteenth of Adar falls out on Shabbat. The Midrash explained that the megilla is not read on Shabbat because of a rabbinic decree, lest a person come to carry the megilla four cubits in the public domain. The megilla is not read on Shabbat, so that the poor should not lose the charity that they ordinarily receive at the time of the megilla reading. The residents of unwalled cities celebrate Purim as usual on the fourteenth of Adar. The general custom is to celebrate the Purim meal in the morning (there are some who continue the meal into Shabbat) The residents of walled cities divide up the misvot of Purim over three days: Friday, Shabbat & Sunday.

**This newsletter is dedicated**

**By Rabbi Isaac Farhi & Family in loving memory of**

**David ben Bolisa Farhi A"H**

**By Isaac & Lisa Oved & family in loving memory of**

**Sylvia Henick A"H- Sarah Baila bat Julia A"H**



## PURIM & MOSHE RABENU

*Haman* will forever be remembered as the first person in history who would plot to kill all of the Jews - men, women and children, from young to old. In the month of Nissan, Haman cast "purim," lots, as part of his effort to choose the most auspicious time to carry out the mission. The lottery pointed to a date in the month of Adar, a full eleven months later. Rather than being disappointed over the delay, our rabbis tell us that Haman was overjoyed. His lottery fell in the very month in which Moshe Rabenu, the greatest leader of the Jewish people, had died. Moshe died on the seventh of Adar. Haman saw this as a sign that he would succeed. But Haman was oblivious to one very relevant fact: Moshe hadn't only died on the seventh of Adar; it was also the day of his birth. Our rabbis explain that Moshe's birth was sufficient to atone and counteract for his death.

Why would the month of Moshe's death matter to Haman? Further, it appears that there was truth to Haman's premonition. The month of Moshe's death should have been a bad time for the Jewish people. And most puzzling, how does Moshe's birth in Adar counter his death in Adar?

There is a deeper meaning to the significance of Moshe's birth and death in Adar. A closer look reveals a key principle that remains as true today as it did in Persia some 2,500 years ago.

Moshe was far more than a charismatic leader who led the Jewish people from servitude to freedom. We received the Torah through Moshe to the point that it is even called *Torat Moshe* – the Torah of Moses.

Moshe embodied all of the Jewish people. The Medrash relates that Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi, the sage who compiled the Mishna, once delivered a lecture during which the students began to doze. To wake them up, he challenged them with a question: There was a single

woman in Egypt who had 600,000 children in a single birth. And who was she? Yocheved, Moshe's mother. The number 600,000 is associated with the number of the entire Jewish nation and Moshe was that child – the person who included every Jew. Moshe represents our link to G-d's revelation at Sinai. Then, we stood as a unified nation like a single person with one heart.

### Attacking When We Are Vulnerable

Haman knew this well. He understood how our national unity and strength was linked to our bond with the Torah of Moshe. Haman was a descendant of Amalek, the first nation to ever wage war against the Jews. They attacked us in the desert after we left Egypt with the goal of weakening our link to Torah. The battle took in Refidim and our rabbis reveal that the name of the place alludes to *rafu yedeihem min haTorah*, the Jewish people's softening their grip on Torah.

Haman understood that we are vulnerable when we lose our connection to Moshe and our unified bond to the Torah. The calculated formulation of Haman's successful petition to Ahashveirosh for permission to annihilate us shows just how well he appreciated this.

Our rabbis reveal the subtle implications in Haman's accusatory words. Haman suggested that we were a scattered and divided nation, having lost the unified state of a nation which was like one person of a single heart that we had attained at Sinai. He suggested that we had fallen asleep in that we no longer performed the statues of the King – i.e. the King of Kings.

Haman's efforts succeeded and he received permission to kill us. That decree attests to the fact that there was painful truth in Haman's words. But the bond between G-d and the Jewish people is unbreakable – no matter what happens.

We just hadn't yet experienced just how it would work in the dark context of exile. How would be saved?

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This is the secret of Moshe's birth and death – a secret

which Haman did not know. We had indeed lost one level of connection to the unbroken chain that linked us to Mount Sinai.

While Moshe lived, Torah was accessible directly through him. The clarity of his level of prophecy was unmatched by any Jewish prophet. Moshe could resolve every uncertainty and answer every question. When Moshe died, although prophecy would continue to exist for hundreds of years, Moses' singular clarity was lost. On account of that loss, there arose a need for us to delve within ourselves, rather than relying solely on prophetic revelation, we understood that Torah study would require introspection and effort that would enable us to arrive at Torah by looking deeper into our own understanding.

Our discovery of this new connection was born only through Moshe's death.

Although none of our prophets ever reached Moses' level, in the years that followed, prophecy remained in the world and it was still possible for us to connect to Torah through some level of Divine revelation. The destruction of the first Temple, however, marked the sunset of the prophetic era.

The story of Purim took place exactly at the crossroads of this transformation in Torah.

In exile, we would need to connect to Torah through a different means rather than through one which abounded with prophecy and the open miracles that characterized the second Temple.

We discovered that although Moshe was no longer with us in the physical sense, his Torah remained very much alive with us. We realized that our bond with G-d had never been broken. Instead, it simply manifested in a different way.

### **What Haman Didn't Know**

Haman appreciated that after the Temple was destroyed the Jewish people had entered into a

dark era. It was a national state akin to Moshe's death and when his lots fell on the Adar, the month of Moshe's death, Haman saw that as a sign that his view was confirmed.

What Haman did not know was that Moshe's death itself brought about the birth of a new era in Torah and Jewish history. In fact, the very threat of genocide through Haman's decree fostered a new national birth. The commentaries on the Book of Esther emphasizes how on Purim, we reaccepted Torah in a different way. In so doing, we affirmed our everlasting bond with G-d, regardless if we experience revealed miracles.

Moshe's death produced a new birth in Torah during which we discovered a new way to maintain our connection with revelation at Sinai. In the same way, the looming prospect of our own death on Purim incredibly brought about our own rebirth. When we were saved, we realized that even though the Temple had been destroyed, we could still maintain our bond with Torah. It was then that we reaccepted Torah and from the depth of exile were reborn into a new dimension of national existence.

Haman saw only Moshe's death; he perceived only the end of a golden era in our history. He was blind to our national rebirth, one that Haman himself helped bring about.

This perspective remains with us through the present day. We haven't yet witnessed the return of revealed miracles or prophecy. And while the guise of our enemies shifts frequently, we still find ourselves under constant threat. We need to appreciate nonetheless that the story of our survival is always miraculous. The Torah of Moshe's rebirth lasts forever and against all odds, in our classrooms, and households across the globe, we continue to flourish and reveal new depths in our eternal law.

# IN DISGUISE

For one day let's take off the masks that hide our faces, that keep us blocked off from our souls, that create false distance between us.

**1.** Mask of Self-Containment. We don't want to be needy. We don't want to be dependent. And sometimes we don't even want to connect with others because we are afraid of being hurt. So we wear masks of self-containment; we tell ourselves that we are fine on our own.

G-d created us with a deep, spiritual yearning to connect to each other. We do need each other, and none of us can live happily and successfully without our families, our friends and our community. Send ***mishloach manot***, packages that show that you care. Send them to people that you haven't yet connected to or even to people that have hurt you in the past. Let's take off our defensive masks and try putting on faces that are unafraid of connection and vulnerability.

**2.** Mask of Busyness. Every day we are busy – work, carpool, errands, email, phones constantly beeping, the clock ticking. We are distracted by the mask of our busyness because life is hectic and it's hard to focus.

On Purim let's put away our phones and schedule the errands for another day. Focus on being. On transcending the limits of our ordinary days. On getting past the mundane distractions by sitting down to a festive Purim meal with family and friends. Eat delicious food. Have deep conversations. Try on open, focused faces that can see the blessings and the beauty of the people and the abundance surrounding us.

**3.** Mask of Materialism. Sometimes we get mired down in the materialism of our lives. We wear masks of identifying with just the surfaces, just the objects in our lives. And this narrows our vision and blocks our path. We don't need to deny ourselves the physical pleasures of this world. On Purim use every

single one to get beyond the surface.

Recognize that G-d gives us many pleasures to connect to Him, and to create kindness and gratitude in our lives. Recognize that we have a channel to uplift our souls by making blessings on the food we eat. Try on faces glowing with the joy of living with our souls.

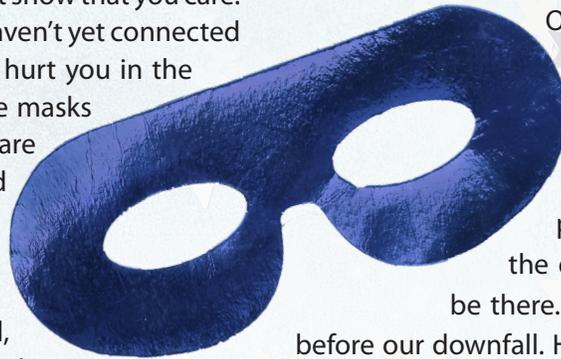
**4.** Mask of Doubt. Sometimes life is full of so much uncertainty and so many challenges. So many parts of our lives don't seem to make any sense. We walk around wearing masks of doubt. We say we believe in G-d, but we walk around seeing randomness and disconnection in our lives.

On Purim, listen to ***Megilat***

***Esther***. Learn it and see the depth and see how G-d planned every single, tiny detail. How He placed each person in the exact place in the exact time that he needed to

be there. How He set up our salvation before our downfall. How He hid beneath the story line but revealed His kindness and love for us in the end. Let's take off our masks of doubt and try on faces alive with faith and belief in the exquisite interconnectedness between every person and event in our lives.

For one day, let's work on seeing how everything that seemed random was in fact carefully chosen for us. How something that seemed so painful at one time brought us to a place we never could have reached without it. Let's pretend for one day that we are reading the stories of our lives out loud, and that we are not ashamed to face ourselves, to hear our secrets, to take off the masks that block us from everything that is real.





## Purim Schedule

### Thursday, February 25 - Ta'anit Esther

Fast begins	<b>5:28 am</b>
Shaharit	<b>7:00 am</b>
Minhah with tefillin	<b>5:15 pm</b>
Arbit & Megillah Reading	<b>6:00 pm</b>
Fast ends	<b>6:13 pm</b>

### Friday, February 26 - Purim Day

Shaharit	<b>7:00 am</b>
Megillah (Approx)	<b>7:35 am</b>
Late Megillah reading	<b>10:00 am</b>
Minha, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit	<b>5:20 pm</b>
Candle Lighting	<b>5:24 pm</b>

### Shabbat, February 27 - Shushan Purim

Shahrit	<b>8:30 a.m.</b>
Rabbi's Class	<b>4:15 p.m.</b>
Minha followed by Seuda Shelisheet	<b>5:05 p.m.</b>
Arbit	<b>6:05 p.m.</b>
Shabbat Ends	<b>6:24 pm</b>



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*Please call in your dedications for Kiddush, breakfast for the week, seuda shelisheet,  
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