



PURIM GUIDE 5781 / 2021



Friends,

Please see the guide below which will help us observe Purim during this very challenging year of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Purim is a time of great joy as we celebrate the Jewish People's victory over Haman. But this year, we will have to figure out a way to celebrate Purim and fulfill all its mitzvot in compliance with Covid safety guidelines. We pray that this is the last such guide that ever has to be written! As always, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to the rabbis at clergy@bethsholom.org

Thanks and Purim Samech!
Rabbi Antine & Rabbi Cooper

The Shabbat before Purim is called Shabbat Zachor. We have a special Torah Reading which recounts the Mitzvah of wiping out the memory of Amalek (Haman was a descendent of Amalek). This Mitzvah (to hear the parshah of Amalek) is considered by many halachic authorities to be a Biblical Mitzvah. Here are the ways to fulfill the mitzvah of remembering Amalek this year. They are listed in order of Halachic priority but please take the option that you are comfortable with given your level of risk to exposure and your general practice with how much exposure you have had to groups of people:

FIRST OPTION: On Shabbat morning, Parshat Zachor will be read in all Beth Sholom minyanim. There will be SIX total readings of Zachor:

- One reading **INSIDE** during the **9:00 AM** minyan (at approximately 9:30 AM)
- One reading **INSIDE** after the **9:00 AM** minyan (at approximately 10:15 AM)
- One reading **INSIDE** during the **9:00 AM** Sephardic minyan (at approximately 9:30 AM)
- One reading **OUTSIDE** after the **10:00 AM** minyan (at approximately 10:30 AM)

SECOND OPTION: Readings will allow you to hear it in person without having to be together with a minyan for the entire service.

- One reading in the ATRIUM ENTRANCE at **11:00 AM**
- One reading 15 minutes before mincha in the ATRIUM ENTRANCE at **5:20 PM** (Mincha at 5:35 PM)

THIRD OPTION: If one is uncomfortable coming to an in-person reading they should read the Parshat Zachor section from a chumash at home (Devarim, chapter 25 verses 17-9 - Page 1066 in Artscroll Chumash)

FOURTH OPTION: One can have in mind the obligation to remember Amalek during the Torah reading on Purim morning. We will have minyanim on Purim morning at 6:30 am and 9 am with both inside and outside options (this is somewhat dependent on weather so please check your email, the days before Purim for final locations). These minyanim will also be broadcast on the Brodie Zoom Room (www.bethsholom.org/zoom) and one may fulfill their mitzvah over zoom if one is at all worried to attend in person because of Covid reasons or any other health related reasons.

Taanit Esther (Thursday, February 25)

Fast begins - 5:28 am

Fast ends - 6:37 PM

One should ideally not break their fast until after the Megillah is read. If they are not feeling well then a little snack could be consumed before the reading of the megillah. Taanit Esther is considered a minor fast and anyone who begins to feel unwell on this day should eat and drink.

2/25- Ta'anit Esther

5:28 Fast begins

6:45 Shacharit

5:35: Mincha/Maariv

6:10: Zoom Costume party for families

6:35: Megillah reading

6:37 Fast Ends

2/26- Purim Day

6:30 AM - Minyan with megillah reading in Atrium

9:00 AM - Second minyan

9:30 AM - Megillah

12:00 PM- 1:00 PM Virtual Purim Seudah - bethsholom.org/zoom

5:40 PM - Candle Lighting

5:45 PM - Mincha/Maariv

ALL MEGILAH READINGS WILL TAKE PLACE ON ZOOM AS WELL

NOTE on locations for megillah reading:

We will read megillah both indoors and outdoors (weather dependent). The exact locations of all megillah readings are still to be determined based on weather forecast, so please check our emails in the days right before purim for the final schedule.



Mahatzit Hashekel – Half-Shekel

It is customary in the month of Adar to give a “half-shekel” as a remembrance of the head-tax in Temple times which was collected in order to have new funds for communal sacrifices for the new Temple fiscal-year which began the following month in Nisan. The customary time to collect this money is prior to Mincha on the day before Purim or on Purim morning. At shul, you will find a bundle of three half-dollars which represent the half shekels. On a regular year, we lift up the bundle of three half dollars. This year, in order to avoid many people touching the same coins, just drop \$1.50 (or more!) into the basket and have in mind that you are acquiring the bundle and then giving it to tzedaka. Those unable to attend shul in person can participate in this custom from home. Set aside three half-dollars to charity while saying “Zecher l'machazit ha-shekel – to remember the mitzvah of giving half a shekel.”



Reading the Megillah

All Jewish adults, men and women, are obligated to read or hear Megillat Esther at night and again in the daytime. We will have indoor and outdoor readings (if weather permits) on **Thursday night at 6:35 pm**. The morning readings will be at approximately 7:00 am (as part of 6:30 am minyan) and at 9:30 am (as part of the 9 am minyan). We will have readings led by men (for men and women) and readings led by women (for women only) and we also have a sephardic reading.



Those who are unable to hear the Megillah in person may fulfill their obligation by listening over zoom. The reading which will be led by men (for men and women) will be in the Brodie Zoom Room (www.bethsholom.org/zoom) and the women's reading will be at www.bethsholom.org/zoom2. If you own your own megillah scroll and do not know how to read megillah for yourself, you can chant along with a recording of megillat Esther and fulfill your obligation in that way.

Mishloach Manot – Sending (food) Parcels

We know that many people go all out on this mitzvah on a regular year. For this year, we want to encourage you to think especially of people who might benefit from the Purim cheer. Keep in mind that many people are not eating things that are made in people's homes. We also think that this year especially, nobody should feel any pressure to do anything more than the minimal mitzvah as many are nervous about leaving their homes. Mishloach Manot can be left at the door and can be achieved with “contactless” delivery (keep in mind that one can fulfill the mitzvah with just two food items to one person).



Matanot Laevyonim – Gifts to the Poor

This year we are partnering with Yad Yehuda to provide Purim Tzedaka to local people in need. This will enable those in our community who are struggling to enjoy Purim this year and have a wonderful seudah! Here is the link to donate: www.yadyehuda.org/matanot-levyonim



Se'udah – Festive Meal

The Purim Seudah is often enjoyed with friends and family. This year, the seudah will obviously have to be limited to accommodate Covid restrictions. Since it is Erev Shabbat, the seudah should ideally begin before midday (12:22 PM) but if this is not possible then one may have the seudah even in the afternoon but should try to stop in time to have a hearty appetite for the shabbat meal.

