

# Purim



Purim (Adar 14)

The word Purim means “lots” and refers to a lottery that was to choose the date for the massacre of the Jews in Persia, 2500 years ago. It is one of the most joyous and fun holidays on the Jewish calendar because the Jews were saved from this fate.

The story of Purim is told in the Book of Esther. Esther was a Jewish woman living in Persia who was chosen by the King to become queen. In her court there was a villain, Haman, who plotted to destroy the Jewish people and convinced the king to follow his plan. Esther spoke to the king on behalf of her people and told him of the plot. Haman was hung on the gallows and the people were saved.

The main commandment for observing Purim is to hear the reading of the Book of Esther, commonly known as a Megillah, which means scroll. It is customary to boo and rattle noisemakers whenever the name of Haman is mentioned in the service. We are also commanded to eat, drink, and be merry and to send out gifts of food or charity. It is customary to eat triangular fruit-filled cookies, called hamentaschen, which represent Haman’s three-cornered hat, and to hold carnivals.

At Shalom Village, residents enjoy making and eating hamentaschen. We go to the synagogue for a service which includes hearing the Book of Esther. Staff and residents dress up in costume and there is a parade.