

FUN FACTS ABOUT PURIM

Hamantashen

One tradition is to eat a dessert called 'hamantashen'. This is a cookie that is shaped like a triangle, to represent the wicked Haman's hat. It is filled with different types of jellies such as apricot, prune and poppy seed, chocolate, hazelnut spreads, etc. (Ester 9:19, 22).



Mishloach Manot/Shalach Manos

Another enjoyable tradition during Purim is to exchange gift baskets referred to as 'mishloach minot' (sending of portions) filled with tempting treats such as hamantashen (Ester 9:19, 22).

Matanot L'evyonim

As a special mitzvah (kind deed), our brother Yehudah gives charity (money or food) to 2 people during this time so that those who are in need are able to celebrate this feast. This is referred to as 'matanot l'evyonim' in Hebrew which means giving gifts to the poor (Ester 9:22).



K'riat Megillah

A beautiful tradition that is done in every synagogue during the Festival of Purim is listening to the reading of the Book of Ester referred to as the 'megillah' in Hebrew meaning scrolls. As the story is read, whenever the name of evil Haman is said out loud the audience may shake groggers, (special noisemakers made for this day by children) and boo, hiss and stamp feet so as to drown out the sound of his name. When the name of our hero Mordekai is said, there will be loud cheers.



Masks/costumes

Brother Yehudah has adopted a custom of having children (and even adults) dress up in costumes, to reflect the way Ester 'masked' her identity. This tradition may have started out as a valuable lesson, but later transitioned to looking more like a Jewish Halloween day where children dress up in any type of costume and actually go around and receive candy from the adults. We at MTOI do NOT recommend this approach, but do recognize that having the children dress up in costumes that relate 'specifically' to the characters of the book of Ester can be a great way to enhance the feast.

Fasting

It is also customary to fast on the day before Purim, in order to remember the 3 day fast of Ester before she went in to the king.