

# Purim Guide



**Derech  
HaMashiach**  
Messianic Community

## What is Purim?

Purim is defined in the Megillah – the book of Esther – where we read the extraordinary miracle story of G-d's protection of the Jewish people. Purim details a biblical story of a genocidal anti-Semite (Haman [Boo] – a descendent of Amalek) who plots to wipe out the Jewish people but whose plan is turned on its head by the intervention of Esther [Yay], a young Jewish woman married to the king of Persia.

## The story of Purim

In the biblical story of Purim, Haman, although inept, egotistical, and deeply anti-Semitic, was appointed as a top official in the ancient Persian empire under King Ahasuerus (aka Xerxes I) who ruled Persia and much of the Middle East from 486-465 BC. After Haman becomes angered by a Jewish man named Mordecai who refuses to bow down to him, Haman devises a plot to exterminate all the Jews.

Haman gives an anti-Semitic speech to the king about how different the Jewish people are and offers the king money in exchange for permission to kill the Jews. The king takes the money and tells Haman he can do whatever he wants with the country. Haman immediately sends out an official order across the country to kill the Jews.

But Mordecai discovers Haman's plans and goes to his cousin, a young and beautiful woman named Esther who was a favourite in the king's harem, and asks for her help. Despite the fact that she could be put to death for seeing the king unsummoned, Esther agrees to visit him. After honouring the king with two feasts, Esther begs him to have mercy on the Jewish people who are being threatened by Haman's genocidal impulses. As a result, the king orders that Haman be hanged on the same gallows Haman had prepared to use for Mordecai, and the Jewish people defeat those trying to follow through on Haman's orders.

## Interesting Facts

- Throughout the story of Esther, G-d is not mentioned once, yet His invisible hand is at work from the second King Ahasuerus seeks another Queen.
- The story of Purim contains the Gospel message that not only will the Jews be saved, but also those from the Nations will draw close to the G-d of Israel and His people, and take on the practice of Judaism, all through the work of the Messiah figure Mordecai and the Ruach HaKodesh, represented by Esther.
- Purim means “lots” in ancient Persian. The holiday was thus named since Haman had thrown lots to determine when he would carry out his diabolical scheme.
- The day before Purim is a day of fasting to commemorate Esther's fast.



# How do we celebrate Purim?

## ***Dates***

Purim is observed on Adar 14 on the Hebrew Calendar, starting at sundown. Purim ends at sundown the next day.

*Notes:* \*Remember that the Jewish day starts at sundown.

\*Use these dates to check how they line up to your calendar each year. It does change!

\*On a Jewish leap year there are two months of Adar – in this instance, Purim is celebrated during the second Adar of the year.

## ***Reading the Megillah (Book of Esther)***

During Purim, it is traditional to listen to the Megillah (Book of Esther) being read in commemoration of G-d rescuing the Jews from Haman's evil plot. Typically, it is read once in the morning and again in the evening. The evening reading is commonly performed as a dramatization (Purim Spiel), where audience participation is highly encouraged. Each time the villain's name (Haman) is mentioned, the crowd should boo or make noise using items like hand clappers. When the hero's names are mentioned (Mordecai and Esther), the audience should cheer!

## ***Fancy Dress/Costumes***

It is common to dress up in costume when attending a Purim celebration. This is to remember that Esther's true identity as a Jew was hidden, and also that G-d's hand in the Purim miracle, was disguised by natural events. At Derech HaMashiach, we usually have a different theme each year for our community *Se'udat Purim* (Purim feast).

## ***Tzedakah (Charity)***

Typically, there are two aspects of charity that are encouraged during Purim. The first is to give to the needy (Matanot LaEvyonim) – whether it be food, money or something else.

Secondly, it is traditionally to send small gifts of food to friends (Mishloach Manot). In communities that live in close quarters with each other, they might send out their children to take food to their friends and neighbours. This always subject to the location and dispersion of your community.



### ***Must Watch Teachings about Purim***

Rabbi Shapira has some informative and encouraging teachings about Purim, that will help to unfold the importance of this Messianic Festival. These include the following:

The Story of Purim Special: "Destined for Greatness" - <https://youtu.be/o994ZYKAcSI>

Smile! it Increases your Face Value - <https://youtu.be/SmkWaDwfbjY>

### ***Se'Udat Purim (Purim Feast)***

Normal to have a feast to celebrate on Purim (Se'udat Purim) – thus making food an important part of this Festival. Some traditional foods include:

- Hamantaschen OR Oznei Haman (in Hebrew) – which translates to Haman's ears or poppy seed filled pockets OR (oznei Haman in Hebrew) = Haman's ears. These can be made with whatever filling you like
- Fazuelos/fijuelas/deblas = Sephardic tradition. Still looks like ear
- Kreplach = Dumplings

In the following pages we have included some recipes to get you started.



## Hamantaschen

*Credit:* Tori Avey (toriavey.com) – see this website for more detailed instructions

*Time:* 3hrs 55min total (3hrs 35min prep, 25min cooking)

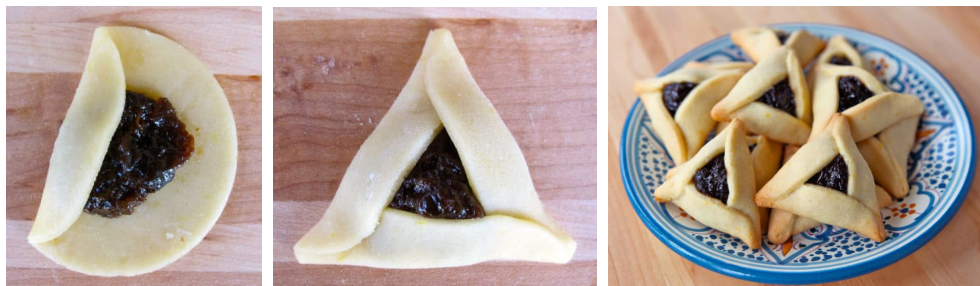
Makes 35 servings

- ¾ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 large egg, room temperature
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp grated orange zest
- 2 ¼ cups flour
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1-5 tsp water (if needed)

*Equipment:* Large mixing bowl, electric mixer, pastry scraper, rolling pin and 3-inch cookie cutter/drinking glass.

### Steps:

1. Place small chunks of butter into large mixing bowl, along with the sugar.
2. Use an electric mixer to cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.
3. Add the egg, vanilla, and orange zest to the bowl, beating again until well mixed.
4. Add flour and salt into the bowl and mix with the electric mixer on low speed until a crumbly dough forms.
5. Knead the dough with hands until smooth, making sure to not overwork it. If too crumbly, add water 1 tsp at a time.
6. Form the dough into a flat disk, wrap with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator to chill for 3hrs or overnight.
7. Have filling prepared.
8. Preheat oven to 180C.
9. Lightly flour a smooth surface and use a rolling pin to roll out the dough until very thin – ¼ inch at the most. You may need to reapply a coating of flour as you go.
10. Use a 3-inch cookie cutter or glass to cut circles out of the dough.
11. Place a tsp of filling (jam, poppyseed, etc) into the centre of each circle.
12. Fold edges as in images below.
13. Place in oven and bake for 10-25min until cooked through and lightly golden.



## Fazuelos

*Credit:* Jamie Geller (jamiiegeller.com) – see this website for more detailed instructions

*Time:* 50min total (30min prep, 20min cooking)

Makes 8 servings

### Dough

- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbs sugar
- 2 tbs canola oil
- 1 tbs water
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour

### Syrup

- 1 cup water
- 2 cup sugar
- 1 tbs honey
- 1 tbs lemon juice

*Equipment:* Large bowl, rolling pin, frying pan, saucepan, and fork.

### Steps:

1. In a large bowl add eggs, baking powder, salt, oil and water. Mix with a fork.
2. Gradually add flour and mix until the dough is consistent throughout. You can use your hands.
3. Use a rolling pin to roll out the dough as thin as you can and cut into 1-inch-wide strips.
4. Bring frying oil to high heat and decrease stove temperature to low heat.
5. Weave dough strip into fork and lower into oil, holding the rest of the dough out of the oil. Twist the fork, folding the dough so a new part is exposed to the oil. Keep twisting until it is crispy all the way around. Remove from oil and place on paper towel.
6. For the syrup, on medium heat add the sugar, water, honey and lemon juice to a saucepan. Simmer for 5min and stir often.
7. Place cooked fazuelos into the syrup until covered.



**Chag Purim Sameach!**

