

PURIM

The Feast of Lots



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Purim 2015 begins at sunset on **Wednesday, March 4** and ends at nightfall of **Thursday, March 5**

Often called the Jewish Carnival or The Feast of Lots, Purim is a joyous holiday that reflects on the saving of Jews from a threatened massacre during the Persian period (539-330 BCE). The holiday celebrates The Story of Esther - a story that is one of the most beloved in the Jewish community, because of the hope that it gives a minority living in a majority culture that is often a hostile one.

Observances:

The holiday is often celebrated with letting loose and having fun along with the giving of gifts to friends and the poor.



Customs:

Sharing readings from the Book of Esther, whose heroism plays the leading role in saving her Jewish people. A favorite activity in preparation for the holiday is the baking of hamantaschen, triangular pastries filled with poppy seeds, fruit, cheese, or jellies. In addition an in-home celebration, a seudah, is a festive meal served along with alcoholic beverages.

While it is traditional to masquerade as characters from The Story of Esther, many Jewish families celebrate Purim as an alternative to Halloween, with children dressing in non-traditional costumes and masks. There is no right or wrong costume for Purim.

FOOD CUSTOMS

- Hamantaschen
- Salted beans & Chick Peas
- Kreplach (dumplings)
- Braided Challah



Hamantaschen

* Traditions and views often differ from family to family. Source: MyJewishLearning.com