



Guidance for Purim 2021

Purim is a time of camaraderie and companionship. In the words of Esther: "Go and gather all the Jews." Unfortunately, this year, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we will not be able to gather and celebrate as we normally would, and not all of us will be able to fulfill the Mitzvot of Purim in the regular or ideal manner. We have compiled below Halachic guidance for the fulfilment of the Purim Mitzvot this year, and we pray that it will not be relevant in future years.

1: Parashat Zachor

On the Shabbat preceding Purim (20th February), we are commanded to read from the Torah the paragraph relating to Haman's ancestor, Amalek, and the obligation not to forget the cowardly manner in which he attacked the Israelites. If one is unable to hear this read at synagogue one should read it at home from a Humash (Deuteronomy, Chapter 25, Verses 17-19). One should also attempt to hear it read from the Torah again on Parshat Ki Tetse (where the passage is drawn on) on Shabbat 21 August 2021.

2: Fast of Esther

The fast of Esther begins at 5:42am on Thursday 25th February and ends at 6:14pm. One who has tested positive for Covid-19 or has any Covid-19 symptoms should not fast.

3: Reading of the Megillah

The Megillah is read both on the evening of Thursday 25th February and day of Friday 26th February. One who is unable to hear the Megillah in synagogue should read the Megillah oneself out of a kosher scroll. One may use a recording or live online reading for assistance and read along using the scroll. When reading the Megillah privately from a kosher scroll one should recite the blessings prior to the reading, but not the blessing following the reading. If one is unable to read the Megillah oneself or does not have a kosher scroll, the next preferable option is to hear the Megillah read via a live broadcast. One should follow along with the text. The S&P will be streaming multiple readings of the Megillah. One may answer Amen to the blessings of the reader but should not recite them oneself.

4: Mishloah Manot

On the day of Purim, 26th February, one should send to a Jew at least one gift consisting of two readily edible food items. One who is unable to leave home to do so, can send the gift through an agent to deliver the package on one's behalf. This arrangement can be made in advance of Purim but the gift should be delivered on Purim day.

5: Matanot La'Ebyonim



בית דין דק"ק ספרדים לונדון והמדינה
Sephardi Beth Din

On the day of Purim one should give two donations to two poor people. The recommended amount is a minimum of £5 per poor person. Donations can be transferred in advance of Purim to the S&P Welfare Board who will ensure that any donations are distributed on Purim day.

Donations can be made here: <https://www.sephardi.org.uk/product/donate/>

6: Purim Meal

One should have a festive meal on the day of Purim. Even if one is in isolation one should still endeavour to perform this Mitzvah.

We pray that the Almighty bring an end to the pandemic and for us to be able to worship together in the near future.

Rabbi Joseph Dweck, Senior Rabbi
Dayan Abraham David, Rosh Beth Din
Dayan Ofer Livnat
Dayan Avraham Dadoun
Rabbi Daniel Kada