

# The Shofar

The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong GPO Box 6083, HK Tel. 463-8156 Fax 456-3450 Feb. 1991



## UJC to Celebrate Purim with Family Service, BBQ Buffet on Friday, March 1 in Tai Tam

Book now for dinner, use form below

Purim will be something special this year for UJC members and their friends. The celebration will include a reading from the Megilla at the Shabbat service (bring your children and tell them to boo and jeer when Haman's name is mentioned), a delicious BBQ buffet under the stars, hamantaschen prepared according to a traditional recipe provided by Janet Golden, and a costume parade with prizes for every child. Please join us for this important, festive occasion.

Place: American Country Club, 28 Tai Tam Road, Tai Tam  
FAMILY SERVICE: 6:30 p.m., Bay Room. Conducted by Robert Meyer & Jonathan Kriegel  
BBQ BUFFET: 7:30 p.m., Oasis Poolside Terrace (main dining room in case of bad weather)

## Hebrew classes to start February 27

"Five Easy Lessons" teaches basic reading, language skills

A chance a number of UJC members have been waiting for — to learn some basic Hebrew — comes on stream later this month. The UJC Adult Education Committee has announced a series of five one-and-a-half hour classes for beginners open to the entire community.

According to coordinator Robert Meyer, "we guarantee that the student will come away with a fundamental reading ability good enough to pronounce and follow important prayers in the service and gain some basic comprehension of Hebrew vocabulary." The course will be taught by Mr. Yacon Moselle, a native Israeli.

Those wishing to enroll should call Susanna or Mrs. Anderson at 463-8156. Details follow:

### Five Easy Lessons

Time: 5:45 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.  
Dates: February 27, March 6, March 13, March 20, March 27.  
Place: The Jewish Club, Melbourne Plaza, 4/f, Queen Rd. C.  
The March 27 lesson will be at the home of Bob and Grace Green, Flat 4A, 1 Robinson Rd.  
Course fee: \$500 per person. (includes coffee/tea and cookies)  
Please send check to UJC.

## Seder Reminder

Space is limited, so to guarantee a seat at the UJC seder on March 29, please get your bookings into Kathy Goeld (see address opposite) without delay. Based on present planning, the seder will be held at The American Club, 48/f, Exchange Square Two and begin at 6 p.m. To obtain a booking form, call The UJC.

### UJC Purim Party



Adults  
\$190.

Children (4-10)  
\$100.

Toddlers (1-4)  
\$50.

### Tonight's Menu

Minute Steak  
Hamburgers  
All Beef Hot Dogs  
Chicken Satay  
Singapore Noodles  
Fried Rice  
Salad Bar  
French Fries  
Corn on the Cob  
Fruit Salad  
Cakes, Pies  
Soft Ice Cream Bar  
Coffee and tea  
HAMANTASCHEN

TO BOOK FOR DINNER, PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND MAIL BY  
FEBRUARY 23 TO: Kathy Goeld, #2191 Tower 17, HK Parkview, 88 Tai  
Tam Reservoir Road, Tai Tam.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ adult(s), \_\_\_\_\_ children (4-10),  
and \_\_\_\_\_ toddler(s) (1-4) made out to The United Jewish Congregation of Hong  
Kong. (See prices above). For late bookings, call Susanna or Mrs. Anderson at 463-  
8156.

## Torah search sleuth has scrolls in sight

**Rabbi Sam steers clear of hot Torahs with disappearing ink, reports good progress**

Thanks to the generosity of UJC members Harold Sandler and Andy Pleatman and the investigative skills of Rabbi Sam Joseph, prospects are good that our congregation will have its own Torah in time for the 1991 High Holidays.

Rabbi Joseph called from his office at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati earlier this month to say that he has narrowed the search to two scribes in New York City who have several Torahs to choose from. He plans to spend a day in the City on this mission sometime later this month or early next.

"It's been a real education for me," he said. First of all, it turns out that there are a number of stolen Torahs on the market. "If it's not a new Torah, I will insist on absolutely clear authentication of previous ownership."

Another problem arises with the ink. As the Rabbi explained, the ink is not absorbed by Torah parchment. It actually lies on the surface. And the formula used for making the ink is the same as that used 2,000 years ago. If care is not taken in the preparation of the ink, it becomes subject to a fungus which results in it eventually drying up and flaking away.

With these precautions in mind, Rabbi Joseph is confident of obtaining a suitable Torah and looks forward to that proud day for The UJC when, perhaps the day preceding Rosh Hashanah, a ceremony is held welcoming this most meaningful and valuable acquisition.

Anticipating the trip to New York, Rabbi Joseph raised one final question: "I wonder if Torah scribes accept American Express?"

### JWA Schedules Fashion Show, Speaker

The Jewish Women's Association will hold a fashion show on March 12 at the Marriott Hotel to benefit charities in Israel and the HK Community Chest. Fashions by Diane Freis and Gottex will be featured. Tickets are \$325. Please call Anne Godfrey at 873-0464 for more information.

On February 26 at The Jewish Club, the JWA will host an after-lunch speaker from "Child Abuse." Seats are \$95 for members, \$115 for non-members. Please call Phyllis (523-1399) or Anne to book.

## Sign up now for Jews by Choice program

**Rabbinical visit in prospect for April**

To tie in with The UJC's adult education history and language courses which begin this month, a new initiative is underway to bring together those members of the community interested in converting to Judaism. As Rabbi Sam Joseph observed when he was here during

the High Holidays last year, an outreach program for non-Jewish spouses and friends of UJC members is our congregation's greatest need given its composition.

In this respect, The UJC reflects similar developments in other Jewish communities. The December 14, 1990 issue of *The Jewish Forward*, for example, reports from New York of "the skyrocketing proportion of American Jews who are marrying non-Jews [who] will be lost to Judaism, along with their offspring, if the community does not reach out to them."

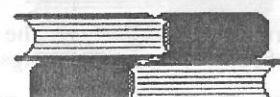
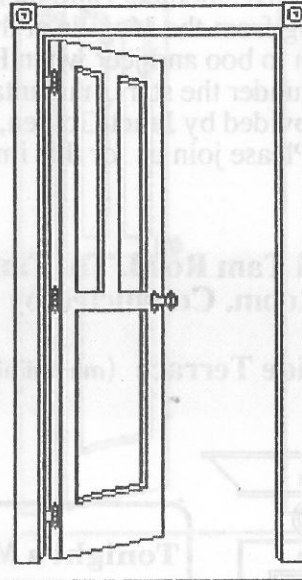
To assess the needs and plan a program, The UJC needs an indication of interest. The program being considered would include consultations with visiting rabbis on a one-on-one basis, special classes, and informal discussion groups focusing on the issues surrounding conversion.

The UJC has recently learned that American Rabbi Ed Rosenthal of the Beth Shalom congregation in New Zealand may be available for a visit from April 18 to 28. Based on the interest shown, The UJC will pursue this possibility in the coming days and weeks. If you'd like to participate in the Jews by Choice program please call Martha Josephson at 894-8567 or 865-0118 so we can get an idea about numbers and needs.

*The Jewish Forward* article refers to "recent studies that show high patterns of Jewish loyalty among intermarried couples in which the non-Jewish spouse converts to Judaism, in sharp contrast with couples that remain 'mixed married.'"

"Several studies in recent months have shown intermarriage rates approaching nearly half of all Jews entering wedlock in the last five years — up from just 6% in the 1960's. Some studies show as many as 29% of all Jewish households in America now include a non-Jewish spouse. One such report, released this fall by Brandeis University, found that basic Jewish practices like attending a Passover seder and giving children a Jewish education are less than half as common among mixed-married couples as among conversionary marriages or in marriages in which both partners were born Jews."

■ Martha Josephson, Bob Green





## UJC launches Spring Membership Offensive, makes special provisions for less well-off

Membership officer Mark Michelson has sent a letter to over 200 members of the Jewish community urging them to become UJC members. These are residents who have either attended UJC services or who have been referred to The UJC. In connection with the drive, it was agreed at the last General Committee meeting to offer reduced membership fees to those who find it difficult to pay the dues in full because of other financial obligations. To benefit from these alternative arrangements, just call Mark (number opposite).



### Membership Application

Please print or type in  
BLOCK LETTERS

M \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. \_\_\_\_\_  
Surname \_\_\_\_\_

First name \_\_\_\_\_

Citizenship \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Work tel. (m) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Work tel. (f) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation/profession (m) \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation/profession (f) \_\_\_\_\_

Company/firm (m) \_\_\_\_\_

Company/firm (f) \_\_\_\_\_

Children (name, age, sex) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I/we wish to apply for (please ✓ appropriate category) ☐ IM ☐ FM  
☐ AM ☐ NR ☐ AS ☐ HM membership and am/are qualified under the  
Rules of The UJC. I/we enclose HK\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (annual dues)  
payable to The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(one family member may sign on behalf of other members)

**Important: Please complete information on reverse and  
mail this application form with your check to The UJC,  
G.P.O. Box 6083, Hong Kong.**

## Help Us Know You Better!

As The UJC's membership grows our membership tracking systems have developed as well. This information helps us plan services and other functions to suit a wide range of family needs. However, if you were one of our early members, we may not have the same up-to-date information about you and your family that we have for newer members. If you haven't completed one of our new membership forms yet, please take a moment now and do it. Just return the completed form below to The UJC, GPO Box 6083, Hong Kong. If you know a friend(s) who might be interested, please pass on this form to him or her. If you have any questions about your membership, please call Mark Michelson at 522-6313.

### Membership Application (continued)

\* Activity/committee interests (please ✓)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious services                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult religious education          | <input type="checkbox"/> Secretarial       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's religious education     | <input type="checkbox"/> Liaison           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playgroups                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth activities                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Festival, holiday arrangements     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social/cultural                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy & planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below) _____ |  |

☐ I am interested in these activities

☐ I am willing to serve on these committees

Special talents or professional skills \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I learned about the UJC from:

☐ a friend ☐ newspaper ☐ a mailing ☐ other (below) \_\_\_\_\_

If you belonged to or attended a temple or synagogue before coming to Hong Kong please indicate name, city, and style of worship (Reform, Liberal, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Orthodox, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s), address(es) of others who may like to join \_\_\_\_\_  
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# Reform Judaism wins Soviet recognition

Adapted, abridged from article by Walter Ruby reporting from Moscow in the September 15, 1990 edition of THE JERUSALEM POST INTERNATIONAL EDITION

Reform Judaism gained an important foothold in Moscow last August with the notification by the Soviet Ministry of Religion that it has been registered as an official organization. This gives the Reform movement certain advantages such as the right to publish advertisements in the newspapers and the right to a house of worship.

The Reform congregation, "Congregation Hineini" (Here I Am) holds Friday night services in the private apartments of its members. Not yet a year old, the embryonic organization is so small that it barely registers on the flow chart of Soviet Jewry. But as seen in a visit to one of the services, the 30-40 active members appear highly enthusiastic and committed. They are happy to have found an accessible form of Judaism which allows for prayer in Russian and which accords complete equality to men and women.

Most of the members are quite young with many students in their late teens and early 20's. Hineini might be expected to grow rapidly except that as fast as it finds new adherents, most of them join the mass immigration to Israel.

The official Moscow Jewish religious structure is not overly pleased by the appearance of Hineini but has done nothing to oppose the Reform movement's application for official recognition. A spokeswoman for Moscow's main synagogue said "The Reform congregation has just begun and is presently so small it is not worth discussing."

An emissary of the Lubavitch movement in Moscow, Zeev Wagner, takes a different viewpoint. "The founders of the Reform movement are good people, but several of them have non-Jewish wives and wanted a religion where their children would be considered Jewish. They were strongly impacted by Reform Jews who came over from America and worked with them. They turned to the Reform movement out of a lack of knowledge. Whatever their congregation may be, it is not religion and it is not Judaism." Zinovi Kogan, a construction engineer of about 40 and the spiritual leader of Hineini, comments with a bemused smile:

"The fact of the matter is that all of our active women members are Jewish, although we have a number of male members who are either half-Jewish or not Jewish at all. Not that we have any objection to non-Jewish women taking part in our congregation. I see Judaism as an open movement that should be available

not only to Jews, to but all people. We are not a tribal religion, but a world movement."

Kogan said the congregation's sense of tolerance extends also to the Orthodox. "We have encouraged people from Orthodox yeshivas in Jerusalem to come here and give lectures to our congregation on Torah. We are anxious to learn about Judaism and about their approach. At Hineini, we believe strongly in pluralism and our door is open to all Jewish movements."

The progress of Congregation Hineini has been immeasurably boosted by the support of the Reform movement in the U.S., according to Kogan, and by the help of several American Reform rabbis. One, Robert Feinberg from Norfolk, Virginia spent several months in Moscow in the summer and autumn of 1989 during the congregation's formative period. The Congregation has American guests nearly every Friday night — either rabbis to lead the service or laymen to take part. The prayer books — with Russian and English translations of the Hebrew prayers — are provided by the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

A debate is now under way within Hineini as to whether the congregation should petition the Moscow municipality to turn over a pre-revolutionary synagogue on Bolshoi Bronaya Street. Ac-



PHOTO BY SIDNEY HARRIS

Left to right: Rabbi Robert Feinberg and President Zinovi Kogan, Congregation Hineini, Moscow.

cording to Hineini member Gregori Zhuraviov: The local government is prepared to give back churches and synagogues confiscated by the Soviet government, and we should ask to be given that building. Meeting in apartments as we are at present limits our growth, and I think we have a right to that building. After all, the Orthodox Jews have the main synagogue on Archipova Street, and the Hasidim have Marina Rosche. "Only Reform Judaism has no building."

But Alexander Ostrovsky, a Hineini member and director of the Soviet-Israel Friendship Society, is opposed to the idea. "I think the best approach would be to build a new building, so that no one would be able to say that the Jews took their property. Also, if we were to take over a synagogue building that was once Orthodox, we would simply be creating a source of tension with the Orthodox that we don't have at present and really don't need."

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# PERSPECTIVES ON PURIM

Adapted and abridged from *The Jewish Book of Why* (Alfred J. Kolatch, Jonathan David Publishers, Inc., 1988), *The Joys of Yiddish* (Leo Rosten, McGraw-Hill, 1968), and others, as noted.

## Purim — history or legend?

According to KOLATCH, Purim, like Chanukah "is a minor holiday connected to an historical event. One complete book of the Bible — the Book of Esther, often referred to as Megillat Esther or the Scroll of Esther — is devoted to recounting the events that led to the holiday.

"Purim, the Feast of Lots, commemorates the deliverance of the Jews of Persia in the fifth century B.C.E. by the beautiful Queen Esther and her cousin (the son of her father's brother) Mordecai. Haman, second in command to King Ahasuerus, planned to exterminate the Jews of Persia. He ordered that lots be drawn to determine on which day the massacre should take place, and it fell on the thirteenth day of the Hebrew month of Adar.

"Risking her own life, Esther pleaded before the king for her people and Haman's order was rescinded. Instead of the Jews of Persia being slaughtered, Haman and his family were hung on the gallows prepared for Mordecai. Thereupon, the Jews of the country turned on their enemies and avenged themselves on the fourteenth day of the month. In Shushan, the capital, the rampage continued for one more day."

Despite Kolach's description of Purim as an "historical event," it's most likely that you will not find the story of Purim in a Jewish history book because, as Leo ROSTEN points out in his book, "centuries of scholarship have failed to authenticate the tale." Rosten goes on to say that "Two thousand years ago, Jews had already challenged the validity of the Book of Esther, which was first set down in Persian, and rejected its right to be included among the canonical works of the Bible. "As for the feast of Purim, 'little or nothing is known' about its origin (John Dyneley Prince, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 5, page 237)."

In *A History of the Jews* (The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), author Solomon GRAYZEL observes that "the story does not sound impossible... nor is the plot difficult to believe... [but] no one has as yet identified the Ahasuerus of the story of Esther. There were several kings by the name of Xerxes who might have been meant. But none of them is known to have had a wife by the name of Vashti or Esther; none is known to have had a counselor called Haman who was replaced by another named Mordecai."

Rosten tells of another theory of the

Purim festival as a carryover from an old pagan carnival that used to take place on the Babylonian New Year — a festival that Persians and Jews alike loved because of its masks, dances and Mardi Gras shenanigans; the Jews could not be persuaded by their rabbis to reject such unseemly disportment [sic], so (it seems) the wise men finally decided to use the Esther-Haman drama as the purported reason for carnival celebrations they could neither ignore nor condone.

There are close resemblances between Purim and non-Jewish holidays such as Shrovetide, and ordinary carnivals descended from pagan festivities. The burning of Haman in effigy, the choosing of a special "Purim Rabbi," the masks and dances and mummeries — all these are related to celebrations that burn 'the spirit of the preceding year,' or burn evil and malevolent demons, or appoint a 'Bishop of Fools' just for the holiday, or stage masques and miracle plays.' (See Theodor H. Gaster, *Customs and Folkways of Jewish Life*, William Sloane, 1955. Also see "Purim," in *The Book of Jewish Knowledge*, Nathan Ausubel, Crown, 1964."

## Why do Jews observe Purim?

Despite the uncertainty regarding the events that led to the celebration, Purim, according to Rosten, "is a day which Jews regard fondly because it tells them that tyrants and fanatics can be defeated. In a larger sense, it signifies that evil cannot prevail forever. Since the Middle Ages, an enemy of the Jewish people has been known as a 'Haman.' Deliverances from other calamitous events have been celebrated and called Purim by Jewish communities in Saragossa, Frankfurt, Egypt, and Tiberias."

As Rabbi Hayim Halevy DONIN points out in his book *To Be a Jew* (Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1972), "The designs of Haman have had their unfortunate parallel in the evil designs of many other rulers throughout the centuries in whose lands Jews lived. The precarious nature of Jewish survival in countless countries of the Diaspora where the fate of the Jew was often subject to the whim and caprice of the local ruler is epitomized by the story of Purim. The sudden turn of events in the story of Purim which turned the tables on the oppressor and enabled the Jewish community to defend itself against assault has provided a spark of hope and encouragement to oppressed and victimized Jewish communities throughout the centuries."



So the King and Haman came to Esther's banquet. Again, during the wine course, the king asked her, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? What do you wish? Whatever it is, I will give it to you, even if it is half of my kingdom."

And at last Queen Esther replied, "If I have won your favor, O King, and if it please Your Majesty, save my life and the lives of my people. For I and my people have been doomed to destruction and slaughter. If we were only to be sold as slaves, perhaps I could remain quiet, though even then there would be incalculable damage to the king that no amount of money could begin to cover."

"What are you talking about?" King Ahasuerus demanded. "Who would dare touch you?"

Esther replied, "This wicked Haman is our enemy."

Then Haman grew pale with fright before the king and queen. The king jumped to his feet and went out into the palace garden as Haman stood up to plead for his life to Queen Esther, for he knew that he was doomed. In despair he fell upon the couch where Queen Esther was reclining, just as the king returned from the palace garden.

"Will he even rape the queen right here in the palace, before my very eyes?" the king roared. Instantly the death veil was placed over Haman's face.

Then Harbona, one of the king's aides, said, "Sir, Haman has just ordered a 75-foot gallows constructed, to hang Mordecai, the man who saved the king from assassination! It stands in Haman's courtyard."

"Hang Haman on it," the king ordered.

So they did, and the king's wrath was pacified.

(From *The Living Bible*, Eyre and Spottiswoode Limited, London, 1973)

# PERSPECTIVES ON PURIM

(continued)

## Why is it called "Purim?"

To determine the day on which the Jewish massacre was to take place, Haman cast a *pur* (plural, *purim*), which has been explained as a Persian word meaning "lot." Some authorities believe the origin of the word is Aramaic and means "a small smooth object" used to determine the winner of a lottery. It has a similar meaning in Arabic.

## How do we celebrate?

To commemorate the victory, the dramatic story from the Book of Esther (called the Megilla, i.e., the "scroll") is read in the temple or synagogue service on the night of Purim (the fourteenth of Adar, usually in the month of March) and again at the service the following morning. Before the day is over, friends and relatives exchange gifts and join in a festive meal.

## Why are noisemakers (groggers) used when the Megilla is read?

Since Haman was the archenemy of the Jews of Persia and also epitomizes all enemies of the Jewish people throughout the ages, children set up a racket of boos and jeers and spin ratchety noisemakers around and around whenever his name is mentioned during the reading of the Megilla. This is a method of "erasing" his name. Among the variety of methods used to "erase" Haman's name, the most literal was to write the name of Haman on two smooth stones or slates and then to rub and knock them together whenever his name was mentioned during the Megilla reading until it was erased. In some communities, Haman's name is written upon the soles of one's shoes so that his name may literally be wiped out.

## "Don't give me a whole megilla."

The word megilla (pronounced meh-GILL-eh) has become part of the English language to mean "a story repeated in its every detail." In the second century C.E. an entire tractate of the Mishna, called Megilla, was written. The tractate devotes itself to all the details of the Purim holiday and its observance, and especially to specific rules concerning the reading of the Scroll (of Esther). As Rosten puts it, "The Book of Esther wanders through a crushing concatenation of detail, and the devout sit through a long, long reading after a day of fasting."



## Why is drinking alcoholic beverages generally encouraged on Purim?

Purim is an occasion to "eat, drink and be merry." A festive family dinner (called a *seudah*) should be held on Purim day in fulfillment of the directive in the book of Esther that these be days of feasting. Being a joyous holiday, drinking on Purim was taken for granted. Esther's victory began at a "banquet of wine" (Esther 5:6). Because of the great and unexpected victory over Haman, letting oneself go and getting drunk was looked upon kindly and even encouraged. Rava, the renowned Babylonian talmudic scholar, said (Megilla 7b) that a man is obliged to drink so much wine on Purim that he is no longer capable of distinguishing (*ad delo yada*) between the words "blessed is Mordecai" and "cursed is Haman."

The spirit of joviality led to the institution of a Purim "rabbi" who created and expounded outlandish lessons by manipulating the meaning of an otherwise sacred text. The frivolity also led to masquerading on Purim and to otherwise forbidden activity."

## Why is masquerading permitted on Purim?

In Jewish tradition, masquerading was always banned because it often involved men and women interchanging garments. The prohibition is based on biblical law: "Neither shall a man wear the garments of a woman" (Deuteronomy 22:5). However, because Purim



was such a great and joyous festival, the Rabbis permitted this breach of biblical law. Under the influence of the Roman carnival, Italian Jews at the close of the fifteenth century were the first to add masquerading to the celebration

of Purim. From Italy, the custom spread to many other Jewish communities. Today, masquerading is a prominent feature of the Adloyada Purim Carnival held annually in Tel Aviv and Purim masquerade parties together with feasts and dances are popular in all parts of the world.

## Why do some people send gifts and goodies the day before Purim?

In celebration of Esther's success in defeating Haman's plan, we are told in the Book of Esther to "send portions" to a friend. This has been interpreted to mean gifts like cakes, candy, fruit or other delicacies. Although the minimum obligation in fulfilled by sending such a gift to only one person, it is customary to "send out portions" to several friends. Each person is also required to give gifts (charity) to at least two poor people or worthy causes. Even a poor person who is himself a recipient of charity must give to others.

## Why do we eat hamantaschen on Purim?

The symbolic, popular delicacies eaten during Purim are the hamantaschen (a German word meaning "Haman's pockets"), three-cornered pastries filled with fruit, cheese, or poppy seeds. One explanation for the name is that Haman stuffed his pockets with money taken as bribes. The triangular shape, according to one suggestion, is meant to resemble the type of hat worn by Haman. Many believe, however, that the shape was introduced in the early nineteenth century to copy the Napoleonic triangular-shaped hat. The more traditional explanation of the shape is that the strength of Queen Esther derived from the three patriarchs of Judaism — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

## Why are kreplach served on Purim?

It's customary to greet the name of Haman during the reading of the Megilla by clapping hands, stamping feet, turning groggers (noisemakers) and slapping or beating whatever object happens to be handy. From this, the idea of eating food that had been chopped or beaten evolved in Eastern Europe. Some kinds of kreplach, a German word probably derived from the French crepe, are filled with chopped meat and onions and formed into triangular shapes.