

the milford jewish voice



DEAR FRIENDS

Sometimes, we are reminded that as much as things change, things stay the same...as much as we'd like to think we've made progress as civilized humans, we are reminded that old habits die hard. October 7 was one such wake-up call and a reminder that the oldest hatred in the world has not been relegated to the past; it has been lying dormant, waiting for the right opportunity to clothe itself in the latest social justice cause and ideology. The fact that people can openly call for the destruction of Jews and the State of Israel under the guise of "resistance" and "protest" should shake us to the core and yet we are not surprised. The "antizionism≠antisemitism" myth has been shown to the world for the lie it is. The Jewish people cannot be separated from their indigenous land, the land that birthed our ancestors, our prophets, kings, leaders, scholars, and housed our Holy Temples. The Purim story took place in Persia (present-day Iran), but have you ever

heard of Purim Constantinople? Purim Saragossa? How about Purim Vinz? All these and dozens more were celebrated as mini Purims, commemorating a different Jewish community under threat of annihilation by a merciless ruler or an evil villain and the miraculous rescue that followed. Indeed, that is what we hope for today! May the Purim holiday we will soon celebrate (March 23-24) be the harbinger of yet another miraculous rescue and victory for the Jewish nation.

Best wishes,

*Rabbi Schneur
& Chanie Wilhelm*



THE PURIM RUNDOWN

The joyful Jewish holiday of Purim is celebrated every year on the 14th of the Hebrew month of Adar (late winter/early spring). Purim 2024 begins on Saturday evening, March 23, and continues through Sunday, March 24. It commemorates the (Divinely orchestrated) salvation of the Jewish people in the ancient Persian empire from Haman's plot "to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews, young and old, infants and women, in a single day," as recorded in the Megillah (Book of Esther).

The Story in a Nutshell

The Persian Empire of the 4th century BCE extended over 127 lands, and all the Jews were its subjects. When King Ahasuerus had his wife, Queen Vashti, executed for failing to follow his orders, he arranged a beauty pageant to find a new queen. A Jewish girl, Esther, found favor in his eyes and became the new queen, though she refused to divulge her nationality.

Meanwhile, the Jew-hating Haman was appointed prime minister of the empire. Mordechai, the leader of the Jews (and Esther's cousin), defied the king's orders and refused to bow to Haman. Haman was incensed, and he convinced the king to issue a decree ordering the extermination of all the Jews on the 13th of Adar, a date chosen by a lottery Haman made.

Mordechai galvanized all the Jews, convincing them to repent, fast and pray to G-d. Meanwhile, Esther asked the king and Haman to join her for a feast. At a subsequent feast, Esther revealed to the king her Jewish identity. Haman was hanged, Mordechai was appointed prime minister in his stead, and a new decree was issued, granting the Jews the right to defend themselves against their enemies. On the 13th of Adar, the Jews mobilized and killed many of their enemies. On the 14th of Adar, they rested and celebrated. In the capital city of Shushan, they took one more day to finish the job.

Why Is It Called Purim?

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. In Eastern tradition, it is called poo-REEM. Among Westerners, it is often called PUH-rim.



The Four Mitzvot of Purim

- Reading of the Megillah (Book of Esther), which recounts the story of the Purim miracle. This is done once on the eve of Purim and then again on the following day.
- Giving money gifts to at least two poor people.
- Sending gifts of two kinds of food to at least one person.
- A festive Purim feast, which often includes wine.

Purim Traditions and Customs

There is a spirit of liveliness and fun on Purim that is unparalleled on the Jewish calendar. If there were ever a day to “let loose” and just be Jewish, this is it!

It is also customary for children (and adults, if they desire) to dress up in costumes.

A traditional Purim food is hamantaschen (or oznay Haman), three-cornered pastries bursting with poppy seeds or another sweet filling.

On the day before Purim (or on the Thursday before, when Purim is on Sunday), it is customary to fast, commemorating Esther’s fasting and praying to G-d that He save His people.

The Meaning of Purim

In addition to the miracle of Jewish survival despite the efforts of our enemies, Purim celebrates G-d’s intimate involvement in every aspect of this world. Even though there were no overt miracles recorded in the Megillah—indeed, His name is not



even mentioned once—G-d was actively “pulling the strings” to care for His nation.

Additionally, Haman’s edict catalyzed a spiritual revival among the Jews. In a sense, this was even more significant than the Covenant at Sinai—an overwhelming spiritual experience that compelled the Jews to accept the Torah—since it occurred of their own volition, even as they were scattered among the Persian people and immersed in their culture. It was in the merit of this spiritual reawakening that G-d orchestrated their salvation.

Reprinted with permission from Chabad.org

**STRATFORD
PURIM
Celebration**

Megillah Reading
followed by Lunch

Sunday, March 24 | 11:30 AM
at the Stratford Library
2203 Main St, Stratford

No Charge ~ RSVP required by March 19
www.JewishMilford.com/Purim2024

**FAMILY
HAMANTASH
BAKE**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 17
2:00-3:30 PM**

Make, roll, and fill your own
delicious Hamantashen.
Fun for all ages!

No charge
RSVP: JewishMilford.com/bake



CONFESSIONS OF A LAZY MILLIONAIRE

BY N. OZICK

Yay! My package came in the mail. Inside are two scarves. Or "mobius scarves," as their manufacturer calls them. Because who can resist an accessory that claims to know something about non-Euclidean geometry? Now people who want to appear intelligent no longer need to wear pocket protectors. Math nerds, too, can be chic.*

Indeed, these scarves are lovely. They have a raggedy sort of polish to them, like fabric necklaces. They are exactly what I needed.

But oops, they are not quite the colors I like to wear. They are kind of bright. Like Playdoh, or birthday cake lettering. I am selective about colors, and I especially like not to be mistaken for a traffic light.

What to do, what to do?

Maybe I can dye them. Now that's an idea! I quickly start Googling professional fabric dyers. I discover that cotton and linen are the most dye-able of fabrics, which is splendid because cotton and linen are exactly what these scarves are made of.

I call my friend who has an interest in these things. I email her a link with pictures of the scarves so she can understand how simultaneously right and wrong they are, and help me map out a plan for scarf rehabilitation. "We really do have an emergency brewing," she agrees. Let the conference begin.

Finally I find the fabric-dyer website of my dreams. Apparently, they can do anything. In their photo gallery, white lace curtains are reborn a delectable orange. A brown suede belt is reinvented in black.

"How much do they charge?" my friend asks.

Well, I explain relevantly, the scarves were on sale. They were originally \$39 each, but I got mine for only \$9. That gives me a \$60 budget for modifications.

People can organize their budgets any way they want, but I The sheer volume of things it is possible to not do all at once is staggering personally ascribe to the accounting theory that a penny saved is a penny earned. Obviously a return counts as profit, but so does a purchase never made. Sometimes, when in need of quick profit, I just drive to the mall and go home.

But back to the crisis at hand.

This website is fascinating. "They are fabric fixers to the stars!"

I enthuse to my friend. "It says here: 'We can get your garment back to you in 24 hours.'" We are suitably impressed. Maybe I really will get these things dyed, someday.

"Well, it's been great chatting," we both say. It is time to go to sleep. But first I must pay my phone bill. I use the \$60 I haven't just spent on dyeing, of course.

I go to sleep, but my sleeping brain continues to calculate. There are probably more than \$60 floating around there to be spent, because I never found out how much the dye job would actually cost. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if I didn't spend close to \$100.

This brings me to something that has long engrossed me: the concept of not doing. The sheer volume of things it is possible to not do all at once is staggering.

For example, just while lying here asleep, here is a partial list of the many things I am not doing:

I am not reading a book.

I am not calling my aunt in Australia.

I am not training a dolphin.

Opportunity to not do calls to me from all over the place; my eyes leap hither and thither. (Or maybe this is what they call REM sleep?).

It occurs to me that these horizons of not doing that I am finding so dream-like and enticing have a Torah parallel. An important part of the Torah is a list of 365 things not to do. They are crucial to Jewish observance, and not doing them accomplishes appropriately staggering things in the spiritual realms.

Now, that's a reason for a sense of satisfaction that does not depend on having accomplished anything, which I am always in the market for. As our Sages say: "One who passively abstains from sin is rewarded as though he had actively performed a mitzvah" (Kiddushin 39b).

Which means, according the author of the Tanya, that "one should rejoice in one's compliance with a 'don't' just as one does when performing an actual positive precept" (Tanya, ch. 27).

Eventually, it is morning again.

*If you were someone who wore a pocket protector in the past (now, of course, you wear a scarf) you would know that a mobius strip is a surface with only one side. You can make one by taking a strip of paper, giving it a single twist, and then taping the two ends together.

JWC FUSED GLASS MEZUZAHS



KIDS' HAVDALLAH GLOW PARTY



STRATFORD CHANUKAH PARTY



CHABAD OF MILFORD-HCW
IN ACTION!



ICE MENORAH ON THE MILFORD GREEN



LEGO MENORAH AT THE MALL



LIGHT FROM THE ABYSS WITH IRIS HAIM



PAULA SHOYER COOKING DEMO WITH FEDERATION'S WOMEN'S PHILANTHROPY



COMEDY WITH DR. BONNIE

**FOOD
FOR
THOUGHT:
G-D**

A French astronomer announced, "I have swept the universe with my telescope, and I find no G-d."

A famous violinist responded to him, "That is as unreasonable as if I were to say, 'I have taken my violin apart, examined each piece with my microscope and find no music.'"

- *Chicken Soup for the Neshama*



JEWISH WOMEN'S CIRCLE
OF MILFORD

PRE-PASSOVER

Resin Seder Plate Workshop

Create your own family heirloom!
Design and craft a gorgeous, unique Seder
Plate with resin artist Sara Rosenstein.
Use it at your Seder and treasure it for
years to come.

TUESDAY, APRIL 2 · 7:00 PM



www.JewishMilford.com/JWC



Decisions of Fate

Four Wednesday evenings

7:00-8:30 pm

Begins May 15

More info & to register:

www.JewishMilford.com/AdultEd

GUIDING JEWISH VALUES FOR
MAKING LIFE-AND-DEATH DECISIONS



New four-session course from JLI



Community PASSOVER SEDER

Celebrate the Festival of Freedom in a
warm and welcoming atmosphere! Enjoy
handmade Shmurah Matzah, 4 cups of
wine, delicious food, traditional customs,
and inspiring Passover insights.

First Seder, Monday, April 22

7:15 PM at Chabad-HCW

\$40/Adult, \$20/Child, \$200/Sponsor

Kindly RSVP by April 16

No one will be turned away due to lack of funds



A TALK ON ANTISEMITISM



Local author Sarah Darer
Littman will discuss her
recent book, research on
hate, and the things she's
learned along the way.

SUNDAY, MAY 19

7:00 PM

Refreshments will be served

\$18/person

RSVP: JewishMilford.com/author



LETTERS FROM OUR **INBOX**

Dear Rabbi,

Thank you so much for taking the time and effort to visit the house with your ingenious mobile sukkah! I left work early today and lucky for me!! Have a wonderful holiday, Rabbi, and thank you!

Bill Laskin

Dear Rabbi and Chanie,

Last evening's Stand With Israel event was so important. I was encouraged to speak up more and hope that I can make a difference.

Thank you for coordinating this event.

Stephanie P.

The [Project Dignity] meals are delicious, thank you for providing them. They really get me through tough times. So much appreciated!!

- L.

It has been a hard day. I put on Tefillin and will study Torah later...At this difficult time, I just want to be with other Jews, and I love the warmth of our spiritual community.
S. L.

Dear Rabbi,

I live in Milford and attend P.B. Parish. I am praying daily for Israel and the Jews of all countries. If there is anything I can do for you and your community, please let me know. I am happy to contact my service groups on your behalf. If you ever do not feel safe or are in need, please call me/us to help. May G-d keep you safe and bless you mightily.

-Paula Sabino

Dear Rabbi Schneur,

It's an important part of our happiness that you and Chanie and the children live around the block. Your visit was just what we needed. Thank you for coming by. We are so grateful for the kindness you bring to our lives.

Monique & Jed

Hi Chanie,

I'm really enjoying the Bible series. You make it so incredibly current and so interesting!

B.K.

Thank you Rabbi and Chanie and Adam for a great evening. Thanks for making us laugh, we needed it!

Shavua Tov and good news,
Rachel Statlander

Chanie,

Thank you for your words on Friday night at the Solidarity Shabbat... this is such a difficult time, and being together is what we all need.

Stuart

Chanie, thank you SO much for the warm and friendly welcome in your shul yesterday!! We had a lovely time meeting your community members. What a special congregation!!

Vivian S.

Last night, I attended the Chabad Women's Concert at the Parson's Complex and I have NEVER experienced a more uplifting, energizing, amazing concert in my entire life! I will be writing about it as soon as I can put my feelings into words, but, meantime, given the number of concerts I've attended by stars like Barbra, Bette, Neil, Billy Joel, and dozens of others, the fact that this was the #1 should tell you something!

Love,

Joyce Saltman

BLT
BAGELS. LOX. TEFILLIN.
MEN'S MONTHLY TEFILLIN CLUB
SUNDAYS, 9:00-10:00 AM
MARCH 31 MAY 5



FIRST FRIDAYS
Celebrating Shabbat Together

Join us on the first Friday of each month as we welcome Shabbat with prayer and song, followed by Shabbat dinner. Make Shabbat a meaningful and cherished part of your week.

Upcoming Dates:
April 5, May 3, June 7

RSVP: www.JewishMilford.com/fridays





15 Edgefield Ave.
Milford, CT 06460
www.JewishMilford.com

Hebrew Congregation of Woodmont

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Murrysville, PA 15668
Permit #51



- Purim Insights & Events
- Family Hamantasch Bake
- New JLI Course: Decisions of Fate
- Resin Seder Plate Workshop
- "Some Kind of Hate" Author Talk

SAVE THE DATE!



Passover Seder

Monday
April 22, 2024



Purim in the Groove

SUNDAY, MARCH 24 • 5:30 PM

FUN FOR ALL AGES!

FAR OUT FOOD AND OPEN BAR
GROOVY MUSIC
NIFTY BEADING & CRAFTS FOR KIDS
HYPNOTIST SHOW
COSTUMES ENCOURAGED FOR ADULTS & CHILDREN

RSVP:
WWW.JEWISHMILFORD.COM/PURIM2024