

The Laws of Purim (5780)

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The four parshiyot¹ (special Torah readings)

1. The sages ordained the reading of special Torah portions, in addition to the regular weekly Torah portion (parshat shavua), on four Shabbatot.
2. If a synagogue has only one Torah scroll, the weekly parsha is read first and then the scroll is unfurled to the location of the appropriate special reading for that Shabbat. It is proper to elevate the Torah scroll for each of the two readings, despite the fact that they are read from the same scroll.²
3. Parshat Shkalim is read on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Adar or on the preceding Shabbat, in years when Rosh Chodesh falls out on a weekday.
4. Parshat Zachor – a Torah mandated reading – is read on the Shabbat before Purim.³
5. It is proper to read Parshat Zachor from the highest quality Torah scroll in the synagogue.⁴
6. The Torah reader should intend to fulfill the obligations of all those attending the reading. Before the reading, it is best to announce that all should listen attentively, with the intention of fulfilling their obligation through the reading.⁵
7. The words should be read with grammatical precision⁶: Ashkenazim repeat the phrase “timcheh et zecher Amalek” (blot out the remembrance of Amalek) – reading the word ‘zecher’ with a ‘tzereh’ the first time and the second time with a ‘segol’.⁷ According to Rav Eliyahu ztz”l⁸, Sephardim are not stringent regarding this issue.
8. There are different opinions regarding women’s obligation to attend the reading of Parshat Zachor.⁹ Therefore, they are urged to attend, even if not unanimously required to.
9. Parshat Parah is read on the Shabbat before Parshat Hachodesh is read.
10. Some maintain that Parshat Parah is also ordained from the Torah.¹⁰
11. Parshat Hachodesh is read on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Nissan or on the preceding Shabbat, in years that Rosh Chodesh falls on a weekday.
12. On these four Shabbatot we do not say “Hazkarat Neshamot”, or “Tzidkatcha Tzedek”. Regarding “Av Harachimim” – according to the Mishnah Berurah opinions are divided: ¹¹the Luach Heichal Shlomo determines that “Av Harachamim” is not recited.
13. On a leap year, these four parshiyot are read in Adar B.

¹ Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim) 685:1-7.

² Piskei T’shuvot at the conclusion of 134:4.

³ Mishnah Berurah 685:14.

⁴ Yalkut Yosef Mo’adim p. 258:3; Mikraei Kodesh, Purim, 1:12.

⁵ Chazon Ovadiah pp. 3-5, Mikraei Kodesh, Purim, 1:13 and note 34.

⁶ Yalkut Yosef Mo’adim p. 258 and note 6.

⁷ Mishnah Berurah 685:18.

⁸ Mikraei Kodesh, Purim, 1 and note 44.

⁹ Chazon Ovadiah, Purim, pp. 9-10; Mikraei Kodesh, Purim, 1:19.

¹⁰ Chazon Ovadiah, p. 17, rules stringently: according to Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztz”l (Mikraei Kodesh 1 note 83) stringency is not required.

¹¹ Mishnah Berurah 685:18.

14. If one of the parshiyot was mistakenly read prematurely, on the wrong Shabbat, some say that it should be read again on the appropriate Shabbat with a blessing¹² while others say it should not be re-read.¹³
15. There is disagreement regarding whether a boy under bar mitzvah age can be called up for Maftir of one of these parshiyot and therefore it is preferable to refrain from doing so.¹⁴
16. If, after the reading of the correct special Torah portion, the reader begins to read the wrong Haftarah – the Haftarah that regularly accompanies the Parshat Shavua – the reading should be interrupted and the correct Haftarah read instead. The blessings should be recited only upon the conclusion of the reading. If the incorrect Haftarah has already been read through to the end then the correct Haftarah should be read without the blessings.¹⁵

Ta'anit Esther

“During the time of Mordechai and Esther, the Jews assembled for war on the 13th of Adar, to fight and defend their lives and had to request mercy and beg G-d for help in exacting vengeance on their enemies. And we have found that they were fasting when they waged war...therefore Jews have the custom of fasting each year on the 13th of Adar (when it falls on Shabbat the fast is advanced to the 11th). The day is called the “Fast of Esther” to remind us that G-d hears and sees every person in their hour of distress, when that person fasts and returns to G-d wholeheartedly”.¹⁶

17. The hours of the fast are from dawn¹⁷ (04:27 this year, according to the calculation of 90 minutes before sunrise and 04:40 according to the calculation of 72 minutes before sunrise) until nightfall¹⁸ (18:05 this year).
18. Women who are pregnant or nursing, or any person who is ill –even if not dangerously so – are exempt from the fast and are not permitted to practice stringency in this regard. Healthy people, however, should not deviate from the practice of the community.¹⁹
A bride and groom during the seven days of celebration following their wedding and a father whose son is being circumcised as well as the mohel and sandek (the ba'aley brit) are obligated to fast the other minor fasts but are exempt from Ta'anit Esther.²⁰
19. Ta'anit Esther is not a fast of mourning: therefore, it is permissible to hold celebrations on the day of the fast, even according to those who hold stringently regarding the other minor fasts.²¹

¹² Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztz"l in Mikraei Kodesh 1 note 12 and seemingly according to Rav Nevenzal as well.

¹³ Chazon Ovadiah, p. 26.

¹⁴ Mikraei Kodesh, Purim, 1 and note 47.

¹⁵ Chazon Ovadiah, p.22; Mikraei Kodesh, Purim, 12 and note 21.

¹⁶ Mishnah Berurah 686:2.

¹⁷ Shulchan Aruch 540:2; 564:1.

¹⁸ Shulchan Aruch, 564:1.

¹⁹ Rema 686:2; Chazon Ovadiah pp. 37-42.

²⁰ When there is a need 686; Taz and Kaf Hachayim 686:16 and 28; Chazon Ovadiah p. 42. (According to the Gra they are even exempt from the minor fasts). According to the Rema 686:2 the father whose son is being circumcised as well as the mohel and the sandek, must fast too and this is the prevailing custom although leniency is practiced regarding a bride and groom. See Mikraei Kodesh Harrari 3, 7.

²¹ Halichot Shlomo, Mo'adim 18:5-6; Be'Ohalah Shel Torah Responsa, Part 2, para. 102.

20. One should not eat before the reading of the Megillah: however, someone who is feeling unwell from the fast may have something light such as fruit or up to an egg-sized portion of cake.²²

Remembrance of the half-Shekel (Zecher le-machatzit ha-shekel)

21. It is customary to give money to charity during the month of Adar in commemoration of the half-shekel that each person would contribute towards the next year's (beginning in Nissan) sacrifices when the Temple was standing.²³
22. Ashkenazim donate the "zecher le-machatzit ha-shekel" before Mincha²⁴ on Ta'anit Esther (when Purim is on Sunday, the coins are given on Thursday)²⁵ while the Sephardi custom is to donate before the reading of the Megillah.²⁶
23. Ashkenazi custom is to donate at least three half-Shekel coins²⁷ (half of the unit of the local currency).
24. Sephardi custom is to donate the monetary worth of the biblical half-Shekel, which is about 10 g. of pure silver²⁸ (NIS 20.08 as of 24 Tevet 5780).
25. A prevailing custom is for the father to donate for ones' sons who are not capable of donating on their own,²⁹ and for one's wife and daughters too.³⁰

Obligation of reading the Megillah (kriyat Megillah)

26. One is obligated in kriyat Megillah in the evening and in the morning. The time for the evening reading of the Megillah is from nightfall to dawn and during the day, from sunrise to sunset.³¹
27. The Megillah should ideally be read in a minyan: however, when there is no minyan it should be read individually.³²
28. Women are also obligated in kriyat Megillah in the evening and in the morning.³³

The kashrut of the Megillah

29. One may read only from a kosher Megillah written on parchment.³⁴

²² Mikraei Kodesh, 4:6-7.

²³ Rema 694:1; Chazon Ovadiah 101.

²⁴ Rema 694:1; Mishnah Berurah 694:4; Luach Dinim U'Minhagim.

²⁵ Luach Eretz Yisrael for 5761.

²⁶ Chazon Ovadiah p. 101.

²⁷ Rema 694:1; Mikraei Kodesh 2:12.

²⁸ Mikraei Kodesh 2:12 citing Rav Ovadiah Yosef ztz"l; Hilchot Chagim by Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztz"l (although he noted that VAT should be calculated in), but in Chazon Ovadiah (p. 102) it is written to give 9 grams. See too Torat Ha-Mo'adim 200:2.

²⁹ Mishnah Berurah 697:5; Chazon Ovadiah Ch. 18 note 30.

³⁰ Chazon Ovadiah p. 105; Halichot Shlomo, Mo'adim Ch. 18 note 30.

³¹ Shulchan Aruch 687:1 and Mishnah Berurah; Yalkut Yosef, Mo'adim pp. 282-283.

³² Shulchan Aruch 690:8; Mishnah Berurah 690:62.

³³ Shulchan Aruch 689:1 and Mishnah Berurah 689:8, poskim were divided regarding women's ability to discharge men's obligation (Shulchan Aruch 689:2; Chazon Ovadiah p. 57).

³⁴ Shulchan Aruch, 691:1-2.

30. In contrast with a Sefer Torah, if the Megillah scroll contains a scribal error – as long as the main part of it is properly written, it is still permissible to read from it³⁵ because the Megillah is described as “a letter” (igeret).

The order of tefilla on Purim

31. In the evening the order of tefilla is: Ma’ariv, Kaddish (Sephardim: half-kaddish³⁶, Ashkenazim: Kaddish “Titkabel”³⁷), Megillah reading, reciting of “Arur Haman”³⁸ (Ashkenazim begin from “Asher Heni” in the evening³⁹), “Ve-Ata Kadosh”, full Kaddish (Sephardim: Kaddish “Titkabel”), “Aleinu”, Kaddish Yatom, “Barchu”.
32. In Shacharit, after chazarat hashatz, we say half-Kaddish, followed by the Torah reading of “Vayavo Amalek” (Sephardim read the last verse twice)⁴⁰. The Sefer Torah is returned to the aron and the Megillah is read. Ashkenazim read it before “Ashrey” and “Uva Letzion”⁴¹ and Sephardim before the verse “Ve-Ata Kadosh” and then proceed from there when the reading is over.
33. The “Al Hanissim” prayer is added in Shmoneh Esreh and in Birkat Hamazon. If someone forgets to say it and has already concluded the blessing then he/she does not go back to recite it.⁴²

The blessings and reading of the Megilla

34. It is customary for two people to flank the reader.⁴³
35. Before the blessings are recited, it is customary for the reader to unfurl the entire scroll so that it is folded (on the shulchan [reader’s table] and not haphazardly, in mid-air) rather than rolled⁴⁴. After it is read, it is rolled back to its beginning before the last blessing.⁴⁵
36. Before the evening reading, the reader recites three blessings: “Al Mikra Megillah”, “She’asah Nissim” and “Shehechyanu”. After the reading – if it took place in the presence of at least 10 – he recites the “Harav et Rivenu” blessing.⁴⁶
37. Before the daytime reading, Ashkenazim recite all three blessings (it is best to keep in mind all four mitzvoth of the day when the “Shehechyanu” blessing is recited). Sephardim do not recite “Shehechyanu” before the daytime reading.⁴⁷

³⁵ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 690:3 and Mishnah Berurah 690:7-10.

³⁶ Chazon Ovadiah p. 101.

³⁷ Luach Dinim U’Minhagim.

³⁸ Shulchan Aruch 690:16.

³⁹ Rema 692:1.

⁴⁰ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 693:4.

⁴¹ Luach Dinim U’Minhagim.

⁴² Shulchan Aruch and Rema 693:2; Yalkut Yosef pp. 309-310 and note 3.

⁴³ Chazon Ovadiah p. 70; Mikraei Kodesh 7:19.

⁴⁴ Shulchan Aruch 690:17 and Mishnah Berurah 690:56; Ma’amar Mordechai by Rav Mordechai Eliyahu zt”l Ch. 64 para. 18.

⁴⁵ Shulchan Aruch 690:17; Mishnah Berurah 690:57; Chazon Ovadiah p.75.

⁴⁶ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 692:1; Chazon Ovadiah p. 89.

⁴⁷ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 692:1; Mishnah Berurah 692:1.

38. Ashkenazi custom is for all those attending the reading to stand while the blessings are recited⁴⁸. Regarding Sephardim, there are diverse customs: the reader stands and those attending the reading either sit or stand.⁴⁹ Thus, each person should follow his family tradition or that of his rabbis.
39. The reader should stand at a public reading but may sit when reading for himself, although he should stand when reciting the blessings.⁵⁰
40. Following the final blessing, we recite: “Haman is cursed, Mordechai is blessed, Zeresh is cursed, Esther is blessed, all idolaters and wicked people are cursed, all Israel and righteous people are blessed and Harvona is also remembered favorably”⁵¹. Ashkenazim recite this in the evening in the piyut (liturgical poem) “Asher Heni”. In the daytime, we recite only “Shoshanat Ya’acov”⁵², “Ve-ata Kadosh”, Kaddish “Titkabel” (For Ashkenazim without “Titkabel”).

Laws of the Megillah reader

41. The reader should be attuned to the noise level, and if certain words were not sufficiently audible (e.g. drowned out by booing of Haman) he should go back and repeat those words.⁵³
42. The reader should make sure to read “U-Mordechai yoshev” and “Haman nofel” with the “cholam” vocalization: if he makes a mistake, he should be corrected and the passage should be reread.⁵⁴ Similarly, he should reread the passage “Ba-erev hee **ba’ah** u-vaboker hee **shavah**” if he did not stress the last syllables of the bolded words.⁵⁵
43. Ideally, the ten names of Haman’s sons – from the words “chamesh me’ot ish”, should be uttered in one breath until “aseret”⁵⁶. It is advisable for the reader to use his right hand to follow the column enumerating Haman’s sons, and his left hand to follow the column with the word “ve-et” to ensure that all words are read from the Megillah itself as is proper.
44. It is customary to read and then to repeat the following verses from the Megillah: ⁵⁷(8:11) “Lehikahel ula’amod al nafsham, l’hashmid, la’harog u-l’abed” - l’hashmid, la’harog u-l’abed is repeated; (9:2) “V’ish lo amad bifneyhem” is repeated; some Ashkenazim also repeat “Ve-haya ke-omram elav yom yom” from verse (3:4) and, when repeated, say “Va-yehi **B**’omram elav....”
45. According to Ashkenazi custom, the congregation recites these four verses of redemption aloud: “Ish yehudi”; “U-Mordechai yatza; “La-Yehudim hayta orah”; and “Ki Mordechai ha-yehudi”. The reader

⁴⁸ Mishnah Berurah 690:1 and Sha’ar Ha-Tzion 1.

⁴⁹ Kaf Hachayim 690:2; Yalkut Yosef, Mo’adim p. 294:23.

⁵⁰ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 690:1; Mishnah Berurah 690:1; Ma’amar Mordechai by Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztz”l Ch. 64 para. 10.

⁵¹ Shulchan Aruch 690:67.

⁵² The Maharil’s Sefer Ha-minhagim, Hilchot Purim para. 5; Ma’amar Mordechai 64:28.

⁵³ Chazon Ovadiah p. 79.

⁵⁴ Mishnah Berurah 690:51; Chazon Ovadiah pp. 79-80.

⁵⁵ Chazon Ovadiah p. 80, note 55; Mikraei Kodesh 7:20. Rav Eliyahu writes, in note 79, that the reader should reread without a blessing. However in Pninei Halachah, Zmanim 15:10 note 12 he writes that if the change was such that the modified meaning escaped most people’s understanding then, de facto, there is no need for him to reread.

⁵⁶ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 690:15 and Mishnah Berurah 690:54.

⁵⁷ Yalkut Yosef, Mo’adim p. 300; Halachic Responsa 690:3 and he cites two more verses that some have the custom to repeat; Luach Dinim U’Minhagim.

then reads aloud the verses recited by the congregation.⁵⁸ Sephardim also read aloud the verse “chamesh me’ot ish”.⁵⁹

46. It is customary for the reader to raise his voice when reading the words “Balayla hahu nadedda shnat ha-melech”.⁶⁰

47. It is customary to shake the Megillah when reading the words “Ha-igeret ha-zot” and “Igeret ha-Purim ha-zot”.⁶¹

Laws for those hearing the reading of the Megillah

48. It is obligatory to hear/read the entire Megillah; someone who did not hear/read even one word did not fulfill his obligation.⁶² Therefore, each person should follow the reading (even) from a printed Megillah,⁶³ so that if he misses a word during the reading, he can immediately read it aloud himself from his copy of the Megillah, until he ‘catches up’ to the reader.

49. If the reader made a mistake and his rendering changed the meaning of the text, he must be corrected and go back to the place of the mistake.⁶⁴

The mitzvot of the day of Purim

50. **Matanot la’evyonim** (charity) – it is obligatory to give two gifts, to two needy people on the day of Purim itself.⁶⁵ The basic mitzvah is to give one perutah to each needy person⁶⁶ but it is proper to give a sum large enough to enable each needy person to purchase a meal.⁶⁷ It is permissible to distribute the “zecher le-machatzit ha-shekel” on Purim to needy people and through this to fulfill one’s obligation of matanot la’evyonim.⁶⁸

A soldier who knows that he will not encounter any needy people over Purim can give his contribution to the gabay tzedakah or other emissary before Purim, in order to remit the sum to needy people on the holiday itself. A second possibility is to set aside a sum for poor people on Purim itself and to remit it later.⁶⁹ A third possibility is for the soldier to call family or friends and to have them donate matanot la’evyonim on his behalf of Purim itself.⁷⁰

51. **Mishloach manot** (sending gifts of food) – should be given on the day of Purim. It is obligatory to give at least one mishloach manot that includes at least two types of food – a respectable portion of each⁷¹ – to one person⁷². Aveilim (mourners) for a parent do not customarily receive mishloach

⁵⁸ Rema 690:17.

⁵⁹ Ma’amar Mordechai 64:23; Chazon Ovadiah p. 84.

⁶⁰ Mishnah Berurah 690:52; Ma’amar Mordechai 64:23.

⁶¹ Mishnah Berurah 690:52; Chazon Ovadiah p.108; Ma’amar Mordechai 64:26.

⁶² Shulchan Aruch 690:3; Ma’amar Mordechai 64:20.

⁶³ Mishnah Berurah 690:60 citing the Pri Megadim; Chazon Ovadiah p.79, Ma’amar Mordechai 66:22.

⁶⁴ Shulchan Aruch 690:14; Bi’ur Halacha beginning from “Ein”; Chazon Ovadiah p. 79:12.

⁶⁵ Shulchan Aruch 694:1.

⁶⁶ Mishnah Berurah 694:2.

⁶⁷ Mikraei Kodesh 11:2; Ma’amar Mordechai Mordechai 64:30.

⁶⁸ Bi’ur Halacha 697 beginning from “Leten Lefachot” citing the Pri Megadim.

⁶⁹ Shulchan Aruch 694:4; Mikraei Kodesh 11:11-12 and note 27.

⁷⁰ Halachic Responsa 694:8.

⁷¹ Mikraei Kodesh 12:7 and note 17 citing Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztz”l.

⁷² Shulchan Aruch 695:4; Ma’amar Mordechai 64:33; Chazon Ovadiah p. 125.

manot during the 12 months of aveilut⁷³; other mourners do not receive mishloach manot during the 30 days of mourning.

52. **Seudat Purim** (festive meal) – it is a mitzvah to consume a festive meal on the day of Purim⁷⁴ that includes many dishes⁷⁵. Bread should be consumed⁷⁶ as well as meat, or at least chicken.⁷⁷ The meal should also include wine⁷⁸, and one should drink at least more than one's usual consumption – as long as one is not prohibited from consuming wine for health reasons. Soldiers and others who must be completely sober in order to perform their duties can fulfill their obligation with a sip of grape juice.

If the meal is begun after chatzoth hayom (halachic mid-day), mincha should be recited before the meal.⁷⁹

When Purim falls out on a Friday, the meal should ideally be held in the morning, before chatzoth hayom.⁸⁰ These three mitzvot should be observed specifically on the day of Purim: however, it is also a mitzvah to rejoice and to eat a generous meal on the night of Purim.

Women are also obligated in the mitzvot of matanot la'evyonim, mishloach manot and seudat Purim.⁸¹

Dates of the holiday in unwalled and walled cities

53. The dates for performing the mitzvot of Purim differ from place to place: in unwalled cities, we read the Megillah on the 14th of Adar while in cities that were surrounded by a wall during the time of Joshua we read it on the 15th.⁸²

54. The walled status of some cities is uncertain and therefore in these places the Megillah is read on the 14th and 15th of Adar at night and during the day: however, the blessings are only recited on the night of the 14th and on the following morning.⁸³

55. Nowadays, Jerusalem (and Shushan habirah) is the only place where Purim is definitively observed according to the laws pertaining to a walled city. The following is a list of cities where the observance of Purim conforms to the rules of cities of uncertain status: Tiberias, Hebron, Shilo, Nablus, Jaffa, Lod, Gaza, Safed, Acre, Haifa, Beth She'an, Jericho, Be'er Sheva, Ramle, (Tyre, Sidon, Damascus, Izmir and Baghdad).⁸⁴

⁷³ Rema 696:6 and Mishnah Berurah 696:20.

⁷⁴ Shulchan Aruch 695:1.

⁷⁵ Rema in the introduction to 675; Chazon Ovadiah p. 173.

⁷⁶ Chazon Ovadiah p. 173; Mikraei Kodesh 13:2.

⁷⁷ Chazon Ovadiah p. 173-180; Mikraei Kodesh 13:3.

⁷⁸ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 695:2; Chazon Ovadiah p. 175; Ma'amar Mordechai 64:36; Mikraei Kodesh 13:15 and note 40-41.

⁷⁹ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 695:2; Mishnah Berurah 695:8; Mikraei Kodesh 13:5; Ma'amar Mordechai 66:34.

⁸⁰ Rema 695:2 and Mishnah Berurah 695:10.

⁸¹ Rema 695:7; Mishnah Berurah 695:25; Chazon Ovadiah p.140.

⁸² Shulchan Aruch 698:1,3.

⁸³ Shulchan Aruch and Mishnah Berurah 698:4.

⁸⁴ Regarding these cities, there is disagreement over whether a second day should be celebrated due to uncertainties that stem from a variety of reasons unique to each city (for example – it is not known if modern-day Lod is located on the site of the ancient city of Lod, etc.). This is not the forum to discuss the issue in detail: the laws concerning specific places should be investigated on an individual basis. However, in all these places, the Megillah is read with a blessing on the first day, which is when the other mitzvot are performed too. Mikraei Kodesh 5:9-11; Pninei Halacha, Zmanim Ch. 17.

56. Someone who travels to or from the (walled) city of Jerusalem on Purim must keep in mind two main considerations: his location at dawn and his intention to return to his place of residence or not.⁸⁵

From Rav Golan's compilation of the laws of Purim 5779:

Regarding someone travelling from a (unwalled) city to a large (walled) city – the deciding factor is generally where you are at dawn: if you are in an unwalled city at dawn, you observe the holiday according to the schedule for an unwalled city; if you are in a walled city at dawn, you observe the schedule of a walled city.

Thus, if a resident of an unwalled city (e.g. Efrat) travels after sunrise on Tuesday (14th Adar, Purim for unwalled cities) from his town to Jerusalem (even if his intention is to stay overnight in Jerusalem on the night of the 15th) he is obligated in all the mitzvot of Purim on the 14th (including a Seuda) and is completely exempt on the 15th. (According to some opinions based on the Yerushalmi, he is obligated on the 15th as well).

If he travels to Jerusalem on the evening of the 14th, (and will be in Jerusalem at dawn on the 14th and on the 15th too) he is required to observe all the mitzvot of Purim only on the 15th of Adar (like a Jerusalemite).

If he returns to his town of residence on the 14th (i.e. he was in Jerusalem at dawn on the morning of the 14th and is in his own town on the morning of the 15th) his status is 'uncertain': therefore it is preferable for him to remain in Jerusalem on the 15th so as to limit his obligations to the 15th (as per a walled city). If despite this, he returns to his town on the evening of the 15th, he should read Megillah on both days but without the blessings.

57. **From Rav Golan's compilation of the laws of Purim 5779:** Many have addressed themselves to the question of when Purim should be celebrated in Efrat since the Old City of Jerusalem and Har Habayit are visible from certain vantage points within Efrat. The Shulchan Aruch⁸⁶ rules: "This includes small towns that are visible from the walled cities, even if they are not close by – e.g. if they are located on a mountain. If they are close by but not visible – like in a valley – they are likewise included, as long as they are located within a *mil* (around one kilometer) of the city." The distance between Efrat and Jerusalem obviously exceeds a *mil* and therefore the *megillah* is read here on the 14th of Adar, as is the rule in a city without a wall. Rav Moshe Sternbuch⁸⁷ in *Teshuvos VeHanhagos* (vol. 3, siman 234) writes: "It's difficult to rely on a *heter* by dint of the 'visibility' factor. The *Reishit Da'at*, the *Pri Chadash* and the *Birkei Yosef* all agree that if there is visibility but the distance exceeds one *mil* then the *megillah* is read on the 14th of Adar. The *GR"A* also tends to this view since it is clear from the *Gemara* that 'visibility' is specifically limited to the distance of one *mil*, as they contend. However, even if we were to say that the 'visibility' parameter applies when distances exceed one *mil*, this would be the case only when visibility means 'in plain sight', as explained by the *Meiri*, whereas in the case under discussion, visibility is only transitory and partial. Moreover the opinion of the holy *Tzitz zts"l* and of the book *Ir Hakodesh V'Hamikdash* was that the entire city should be visible." This is not the case concerning Efrat and Jerusalem.

⁸⁵ The details of these halachot have generated many disagreements. See *Mikraei Kodesh* 5:1-8.

⁸⁶ *Shulchan Aruch* 688:2.

⁸⁷ *Tshuvot Ve-Hanhagot*, vol. 3 para 234.

58. **Work** - One should refrain from work on Purim: no benefit ever accrues from work that is performed on Purim unless the work is related to the needs of the day or is necessary for the performance of a mitzvah.⁸⁸
59. **Shabbat clothing** - It is the custom to wear clothing appropriate for Shabbat and Yom Tov on Purim.⁸⁹
60. **Purim D'Prazim** - "Al Hanisim", "Tachanun", "Lamenatzeach" and "B'yom Tzara" are not recited and Sephardim do not recite "Tehilla le-David" after "Uva Letzion".⁹⁰

Aveilut (ritual mourning) on Purim⁹¹

Only mourning rituals that take place in private are practiced on Purim (as on Shabbat): the mourner is permitted to wear leather shoes and should not sit on the floor or on a low chair. The post-funeral ritual meal (seudat havra'ah) is consumed but without the traditional round foods

Megillah reading: A mourner is obligated to hear the reading of the Megillah. Regarding a mourner who is still sitting shiva - if a minyan cannot be arranged in his home, he is permitted to visit the synagogue to hear the Megillah read and to recite Ma'ariv and Shacharit.

According to Ashkenazi custom, a mourner should not lead the prayers or read the Megillah to discharge others of their obligation. According to Sephardi custom, he may lead prayers and read the Megillah but not during the week of shiva. There is disagreement over whether he or someone else in his stead should make the blessings.

Mishloach manot: Some say⁹² that a mourner is required to send mishloach manot. The custom is for him to send only one. Mourners for parents do not receive mishloach manot during the year of mourning and other mourners do not receive within the thirty days of mourning.⁹³ However, if the mourner did in fact receive mishloach manot, they should be accepted, preferably by another family member.⁹⁴

Matanot La-evyonim: The mourner is obligated to give matamot la-evyonim and a poor mourner may accept monetary gifts even during the week of shiva – moreover it is a mitzvah to remit these gifts to him.

Seudat Purim: The mourner is required to eat a festive meal on Purim and if he plays a musical instrument, he may do so too.

Tefillin: A mourner is required to put on tefillin on Purim even if it is the day of burial – the first day of mourning. However, if it is also the day of his relative's death he should not put on tefillin even after the burial.⁹⁵

Visiting the grave: Visits to the grave at the end of shiva, shloshim or on the yartzheit should take place before or after Purim.

Timetable for Purim 5780

Parshat Shkalim – on Shabbat parshat Mishpatim (27 Shvat)

⁸⁸ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 696:1.

⁸⁹ Rema citing the Maharil 695:2; Kaf Hachayim 695:13; Yalkut Yosef, Mo'adim p.360:1; Ma'amar Mordechai 64:39.

⁹⁰ Shulchan Aruch and Rema 693:3; Mikraei Kodesh 10:16.

⁹¹ Mikraei Kodesh 14:6-end of chapter; Gavriel Goldman, Me'olam Ve-ad Olam, 38:12-25.

⁹² Shulchan Aruch 696:6.

⁹³ Rema 696:6; Mishnah Berurah 696:19-21.

⁹⁴ Ma'amar Mordechai 64:40.

⁹⁵ Chazon Ovadiah p. 192.

Parshat Zachor –on Shabbat parshat Tetzaveh (11 Adar)

Parshat Parah – on Shabbat parshat Ki Tisa (18 Adar)

Parshat Hachodesh – on Shabbat parshat Vayakhel-Pekudey (25 Adar)

Ta’anit Esther – Monday, 13 Adar.

Fast begins at dawn – 04:27 according to the calculation of 90 minutes before sunrise

04:40 according to the calculation of 72 minutes before sunrise

Fast ends at 18:05

Purim eve – Monday evening, 14 Adar.

Megillah reading from nightfall – 18:05 until dawn (Tuesday) 04:25

Daytime Megillah reading from sunrise – 05:55 until sunset – 17:47