

Purim

Purim commemorates the escape of the Jews, enslaved in the Persian Empire during the 4th and 5th centuries, from annihilation at the behest of the king's evil minister Haman. The Jews were saved through the influence of the queen, Esther, a Jewish princess, and her kinsman, Mordecai. The festival is celebrated in the synagogue with the reading of the Megillah, or scroll of Esther, which is often very highly artistic in form. Gifts are exchanged. The focus is on the triumph of good over evil, and of God as deliverer.



- 1 Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- 2 Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-
What part of the story did you like?
What part of the story didn't you like?
- 3 Make some Greggors (rattles) with the children, which are used during the reading of the scroll in the synagogue. Find instructions on how to make these in the Purim activity section on iChild.
- 4 Bake some Hamantaschen biscuits with the children. Again a recipe can be found within the Purim section on iChild.

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Purim reminds Jews of how they were saved whilst in exile in Persia, and so is one of the happiest of the Jewish festivals.

The story of Esther is recorded on the Megillah scroll.



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Esther was a Jewish girl brought up by her uncle Mordecai. She grows into a beautiful woman and marries the King.



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Esther and Mordecai save the king from a plot to kill him. The king is very pleased but he has an important minister called Haman. Haman does not like Mordecai because he refused to bow down to him, Mordecai only worshipped God.



Esther finds out about the plot to kill all the Jews so she asks the king to spare all the Jews.



The king finds out that Mordecai had saved his life, so he sends Haman to the gallows instead of Mordecai and all the Jews.