



CANADIAN NEWS

Chosen People Ministries (Canada)

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March 2018

Dear Canadian Partner in Ministry,

Shalom in the name of the Lamb of God, Yeshua the Messiah! During March, our Jewish calendar covers parts of two different months, *Adar* and *Nisan*. There are also two Jewish festivals that take place in March. The first is ***Purim*** (Lots) which fell on March 1(14 Adar). The second festival is ***Pesach*** (Passover), beginning on the evening of March 30 (14 Nisan). These are two very different feasts, yet with similar messages for us.

Purim, the Festival of Lots

The events of Purim are recorded in the Book of Esther and took place about 356 BC during Israel's exile in the kingdom of Persia, in the capital city of Susa (or Shushan).

You probably remember the plot of the story. Haman, King Ahasuerus' right-hand man, wanted to destroy the Jews because they wouldn't pay homage to him. When Mordecai the Jew discovered the plot, he appealed to his cousin, Queen Esther, to do something to save their people from



destruction. During a banquet she prepared for Ahasuerus and Haman, she revealed the plot to her husband. Furious, the king had Haman hanged in the gallows Haman had prepared for Mordecai.

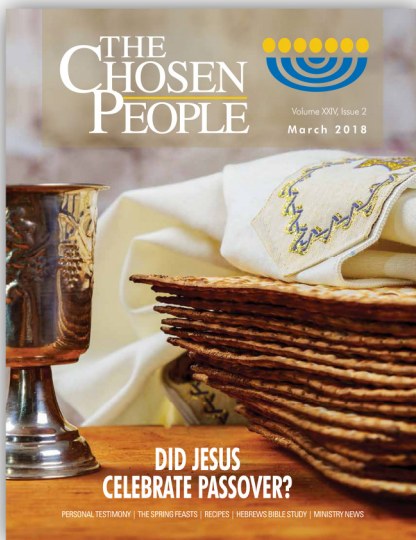
So, the Jewish people were saved and empowered to destroy their enemies. On the day they should have been killed, the Jews established a celebration to remember the occasion. Called *Purim* (Lots) from the word *pur* (lot) because Haman had cast lots to establish on which day the Jews were to be destroyed, even today it is a holiday for feasting, rejoicing and sending gifts to others. Everyone – especially children – dresses in costumes representing the characters of the story. Whenever the story is re-told, all boo, cheer or whistle when they hear Haman's, Mordecai's or Esther's names. And everyone eats *hamantaschen*, special pastries for Purim.

Pesach, the Feast of Passover

The story of the first Passover is found in the first 13 chapters of the Book of Exodus and is mentioned throughout the Old and New Testaments. Our Lord Jesus

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was celebrating His last Passover with His disciples when He used two of the Passover symbols to symbolize the New Covenant – unleavened bread and wine.

God established the original Passover as a memorial of His redemption and liberation of the Jewish people from their slavery in Egypt. It required *the sacrifice of a perfect lamb* whose blood was put on the doorposts and lintel of each Jewish home. At midnight on the 14th of Nisan, the angel of the Lord struck the firstborn of each Egyptian home, but passed over the Hebrew homes with the sign of the blood (Exodus 12:13).



The Jewish people ate the sacrificed lamb with *unleavened bread and bitter herbs*, reminding us of the bitter time we suffered when we were slaves. Through the years, other symbols were added. The *four cups* of wine representing the actions God did for His

people (see Exodus 6:6-7); the *charoset*, an apple-nut mixture representing the bricks and mortar my people used to build for the Egyptians; the *shank bone of a lamb* representing the sacrificial Passover lamb; the *karpas* (parsley) dipped in salt water reminding us of the tears we shed under slavery and the hyssop used to put the blood on the doorposts; and the *afikomen* (a piece of broken unleavened bread wrapped in a napkin that was hidden

earlier “comes to light” again) reminding us of our Messiah’s suffering, death, burial and resurrection. And, of course, we also sing Passover songs, tell Passover stories and ... then there is food. Lots of it!

Lessons from Purim and Passover

There is much we can learn from these two festivals. First, they remind us of the fulfillment of *God’s promises* as He keeps His covenants with His people. Second, we can see *God’s protection* of His people so that His plan of salvation would be accomplished. Third, *God’s provision* for all the needs of His people is clearly represented. And, fourth, *God’s prophecies* for the future of His people are revealed and assured.

As we go into this special season of the year, my prayer is that your faith will be strengthened by the reading of the Biblical stories and the celebration of these feasts.

Make sure you check our online calendar for Passover celebrations near you. Consider inviting your unsaved Jewish (or non-Jewish!) friend to one of these events so he or she can hear about Jesus the Jewish Messiah.

Thank you for your prayers and continued support of our Mission. Your partnership means the world to us!

Jorge Sedaca
Executive Director



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