

Dates of Purim and the Esther Fast

By Jim Goll with Ed and Bev Daniels

Purim is a Jewish holiday observed in celebration of God's supernatural deliverance of the Jewish people from Haman's genocidal plot to destroy them in the time of Persia's King Artaxerxes. The holiday was held the 14th of Adar (according to the Jewish calendar) in the unwalled cities and the 15th of Adar in the cities that were walled in the time of Joshua.

Esther called for a nationwide three-day fast preceding her intervention on behalf of the Jewish people. She entered the royal throne room on the third day (see Esther 4:16—5:1). This is the same fast we call for the Church, the spiritual Esther, to intercede once again on behalf of the Jewish people for deliverance from Haman's plot.

Year	Feast of Purim	Esther Fast Dates
2001	March 9	March 7-9
2002	February 26	February 24-26
2003	March 18	March 16-18
2004	March 7	March 5-7
2005	March 25	March 23-25
2006	March 14	March 12-14
2007	March 4	March 2-4
2008	March 21	March 19-21
2009	March 10	March 8-10
2010	February 28	February 26-28
2011	March 20	March 18-20
2012	March 8	March 6-8
2013	February 24	February 22-24
2014	March 16	March 14-16
2015	March 5	March 3-5
2016	March 24	March 22-24
2017	March 12	March 10-12
2018	March 1	February 27-March 1
2019	March 21	March 19-21
2020	March 10	March 8-10

Instructions for Prayer and Fasting

1. During the days of the fast, from sundown on the third day of Passover to sundown on the sixth day, eat or drink absolutely nothing. The only exception is the taking of the Holy Communion.
2. If you are not experienced with fasting, it is a good idea to start with one-day fasts the month before you attempt the Esther Fast.
3. You should not fast if you are pregnant or suffering from illness or some other medical condition.
4. When you complete your fast, come off it gradually. Do not eat meat for the first day and a half after your fast. When you begin to eat, consume light foods such as juices, soup, bread and crackers. Gradually add more protein foods until you are eating normally again at the end of the second day.
5. Be sure to spend extra time praying and reading the Scriptures. This is the purpose of fasting: so that you can devote yourself without reservation to seeking God in prayer. Study the verses given at the end of chapter 5 that deal with Israel's return to the Land.
6. Be specific in your prayers. You can refer to the Prayer for the Oppressed Jews found in chapter 3 and the list of items for prayer given in the Esther Fast Mandate in chapter 8. You could also contact your Christian friends who are fasting and exchange prayer requests with them. The following is a brief outline of some categories in which to pray:

Pray for forgiveness for yourself and also for the sins of your nation as Daniel did (see chapter 9).

Pray for God's direction in your life and ministry.

Pray for reconciliation in your own personal relationships as well as among groups, regions and nations.

Pray specifically about your own ministry in the Body of Christ. Ask God to direct and empower you so that you may be a blessing using the gifts He has given you in ministry to others.

Pray so as to deepen your commitment as you yield yourself to the Lord in every area of your life.

Bible References

Prophecies of God's Word:

Genesis 12:1-3; 35:11-12; Jeremiah 23:3-7; 30:10; Ezekiel 20:33-35; 36:17-28 & Zephaniah 2:1-2.

Performance of God's Word:

Isaiah 49:22; 59:21; Jeremiah 31:37; Ezekiel 36; Romans 11:11,12;17,18,25-31; 15:27 & Ephesians 3:6.

General References for Further Study:

Deuteronomy 4:27; 28:64a; 30:1-4; 32:26.

Psalms 105:37,42,43; 106:44-47; 122:6; 137:4-6; 147:1,2.

Isaiah 11:10-12; 14:1,2; 27:12,13; 36:8-10; 40:1-5; 41:8-11; 42:22; 43:1,2,6,8,13; 44:3-6; 45:2-6; 46:3,4; 49:8-10; 51:14; 57: 18;41; 60:4,8,9; 62:4-7,10-12.

Jeremiah 13:16-18; 16:14-16, 23:3,7,8; 30:16,17; 31:7-11,31-34.

Ezekiel 34:11-13,16; 36:8,24-28; 37:12-14; 39:27,28.

Hosea, chapters 3,4,11,14.

Amos 9:11-14.

Micah 4:6,7.

Zephaniah 2:6,7.

Romans 15:27.