

Purim: Commandments

There are four mitzvot for Purim:

1. Shalach Manot (Gifts of food to promote friendship)

Send to one person at least two readily edible foods that will be appreciated by the recipient. Sending gifts of food (mishlo'ach manot) must be done on Purim day. The earliest time to send mishlo'ach manot is after hearing the morning megila reading (so that the commandment of giving gifts to friends is also covered by the blessing of she'hecheyanu over the megila).

2. Gifts to Poor People

Give some money to at least two poor people or to a fund designated to give to poor Jews on Purim. The earliest time in the day to give gifts to the poor on Purim is daybreak.

3. Hearing the Megila Twice (evening and morning)

- If you miss hearing a word or even syllable of the megila on Purim, say it to yourself and then catch up to the reader.
- If you are not near a minyan and do not have a megila scroll, you should read the megila from a book. But you will not have fulfilled the commandment of reading the megila and so you do not say any of the blessings.

4. Eating at a Purim se'uda.

- The minimum amount to eat and drink for a Purim meal is at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) of bread, any amount of meat (if you enjoy meat), and some wine (any amount more than you normally drink).
- The earliest time you may eat the Purim meal is from daybreak; the latest time you must begin is before sunset. You must eat at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) of bread and some wine (and meat if you enjoy it) before sunset. You may continue your meal after sunset as long as you ate the bread before sunset.