

# Holy Days in 2024

## Purim

Begins: sunset Saturday, March 23, 2024

Ends: evening Sunday, March 24, 2024

Work is generally avoided.

Purim (which means “lots” in Persian) is the Israelite holiday that celebrates how the Yahudeim people were saved from annihilation in ancient Persia as told in the Biblical book of Esther.

In the story, Haman, the evil advisor to King Ahasuerus of Persia, plots to kill all the Jews. However, through the courageous actions of Queen Esther and her cousin Mordechai, Haman’s evil plan is derailed and the Jewish people are spared.

## Passover

Begins: sunset Monday, April 22, 2024

Ends: evening Tuesday, April 30, 2024

According to traditional law, no work is permitted during the 2 first and 2 last days. Passover celebrates the Israelites people’s miraculous exodus from Egypt as told in the Biblical book of Exodus. Its name comes from the story of the tenth plague (the death of the firstborn), which *passed over* the Israelites’ houses, sparing their children.

## Shavuot

Begins: sunset Tuesday, Jun 11, 2024

Ends: evening Thursday, Jun 13, 2024

According to traditional law, no work is permitted.

In an agricultural sense, Shavuot marks the beginning of the wheat harvest, and the time when the first fruits of the season were brought to the Temple as an offering. In a historical sense, it is the anniversary of the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, and the covenant the Israelites people made with Yahuah.

## **Yom Kippur**

Begins: sunset Friday, October 11, 2024

Ends: evening Saturday, October 12, 2024

According to traditional Israelite law, no work is permitted.

Yom Kippur means “Day of Atonement.” It is the holiest and most solemn day of the Israelite year and is a fast day. According to tradition, at the end of Yom Kippur, Yah “seals” our fates for the coming year (i.e., whether we will be inscribed in the Book of Life). The main themes of this day are sin, repentance (teshuvah) and atonement.

## **Sukkot**

Begins: sunset Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Ends: evening Wednesday, October 23, 2024

According to traditional law, no work is permitted during the first 2 days.

Sukkot means “booths” or “huts” in Hebrew and is named for the temporary structures in which Jews “dwell” during the holiday. Meals are eaten in the sukkah, and many choose to sleep, read and hang out in them as well.

## **Hanukkah**

Begins: sunset Wednesday, December 25, 2024

Ends: evening Thursday, January 2, 2025

Hanukkah is the eight-day Israelite Festival of Lights that typically takes place between late November and late December. Israelites celebrate it by lighting the menorah, playing the

game of dreidel and eating special holiday foods like latkes and sufganiyot. Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after it was defiled by the Selucids in 164 B.C.E., and is one of the happiest holidays of the year.

## **Shabbat**

Begins: every Friday at sunset

Ends: every Saturday evening

Shabbat is central to Israelites life and culture. Each week, Shabbat offers Israelites people around the world an opportunity to pause from the daily grind and reconnect with tradition, community, and spirituality.

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