**Purim Is a Persian Word**

Purim means “lots” in ancient Persian. The holiday was thus named since the evil Haman had thrown lots to determine when he would carry out his diabolical scheme. You can pronounce this name many ways. In Eastern tradition, it is called poo-REEM. Among Westerners, it is often called PUH-rim.

Purim is celebrated by observing the following four rituals:

**There Are Four Purim Mitzvahs**

* Reading the Megillah which recounts the story of the Purim miracle. This is done once on the eve of Purim and again the following day.
* Giving monetary gifts to poor people.
* Sending gifts of food to at least one person.
* A festive Purim feast, which often includes wine or other intoxicating beverages.

Graggers are spinning noisemakers (ratchets) used to drown out Haman’s name during the Megillah reading. Since every word must be heard clearly, the reader repeats the name after the racket has died down. Although traditionally made of wood, graggers can be made of tin, plastic, or anything else.

**We Spin “Graggers” on Purim**

Purim is Preceded by a Fast

On the day before Purim (or on the Thursday before, when Purim is on Sunday), it is customary to fast, commemorating Esther’s fasting and praying to G‑d that He save His people.