

ORDER OF EVENTS

HAG PURIM LYRICS

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Nina Kaushikkar and Annabel Cohen

“SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER” AND HOLI

Dr. Anantanand Rambachan

“THE MANY FACES OF PURIM”

Rabbi Shosh Dworsky

PURIM SCHPIEL

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“HAG PURIM

Led by Rabbi Shosh Dworsky

Hag Purim, Hag Purim
Hag gadol la'yehudim
Masei'chot, ra'ashanim, shirim
v'rikudim
Hava narisha RASH RASH RASH
(x3)
Ba'ra'ashanim

Purim, a great holiday for the Jews
Masks, noisemakers, songs and
dancing
Let's make noise on our
noisemakers!

STORIES OF HOLI

THE STORY OF KRISHNA AND RADHA

Krishna was the 8th avatar of the god Vishnu. His love story with Radha, the milkmaid, is one of the most celebrated in Hinduism. However, in his youth, Krishna was jealous of Radha's fair skin, as he himself was very dark. One day, Krishna complained to his mother, Yashoda, about the unfairness of this difference between himself and Radha. To calm him, Yashoda told him to go and color Radha's face in whichever color he wanted. The mischievous Krishna heeded his mother's advice, and applied colored powder on Radha's face, commemorating the first celebration of Holi.

THE CHARACTER OF HOLIKA

Versions of this story by indigenous and caste-oppressed people in India tell it a little differently.

In this version, King Hiranyakashipu is an Indigenous leader who incurs the wrath of the devas - a group of non-indigenous people (rather than gods) - and Holika is a Bahujan woman who is burned to death by them. The burning of Holika is therefore seen as an act of caste violence.

THE STORY OF PRAHLAD

The most popular rendition of the origins of Holi focuses on the demon king Hiranyakashipu and his son Prahlad. Hiranyakashipu, supposedly drunk on power, had been granted a boon that said that he could not be killed by "neither man nor animal, neither indoors or outdoors, neither in day or at night, neither on land nor air nor water, neither by supernatural or hand-held weapons." Prahlad was an ardent devotee of the god Vishnu, which angered his father greatly, and so he enlisted his sister, the demoness Holika to kill Prahlad. Holika had a cloak that protected her from fire, so Hiranyakashipu tricked his son to sit in a bonfire with her. However, the wind god was on Prahlad's side, shifting the blanket to wrap around Prahlad, saving him and instead burning Holika to death. This story is the reason why people light bonfires the night of the first day of Holi.