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Shabbat Zachor and Special Purims



There are special **Purims** in Judaism. Besides the main one, the **Purim** in the book of **Esther**, there are special **Purims** in various Jewish communities around the world. Shabbat Zachor (Shabbat of Remembrance), for example, is the Shabbat immediately preceding **Purim**. **Deuteronomy 25:17-19**, describing the attack by **Amalek**, is remembered. **There is a tradition from the Talmud that Haman, the antagonist of the Purim story, was descended from Amalek.** The portion that is read includes a commandment to remember the attack by **Amalek**, and therefore at the public reading, both men and women make a special effort to hear the reading. In addition to Shabbat Zachor, whenever a Jewish community was saved from danger, there was usually a local observance that would imitate the format of **Purim**. There would be a day of fasting before the day of feasting. They would read *the Megillah*, or a written scroll that recorded the new experience and retelling the new story. They would also repeat some of the prayers that they would normally recite on the feast day. Altogether, there are over one-hundred special **Purims** among the various Jewish communities around the world.¹³⁵