

PREPARING AT HOME

September 4-10, 2017

Focus reading: Exodus 12:1–14 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=369389289>).

Other lectionary readings: Psalm 149; Romans 13:8–14; Matthew 18:15–20

Theme: Remember, Restore, Renew

This week we read the Passover story, which establishes God's identity as the one true sovereign God who acts to set people free. The Egyptians call upon their gods to match the plagues that come at the hand of the God of the Hebrews, but they cannot compete. Instructions are given for the Passover meal, a ritual that is to this day a time of remembrance, restoration, and renewal. The firstborn son of every Egyptian will die, but death will pass over Hebrew homes where lamb's blood is painted on the doorpost. The ritual of Passover invites the Hebrews to remember the mighty acts of God on their behalf and to be thankful. By following the detailed instructions each year, generation after generation will remember God's gracious acts and their own identity as former slaves who are now the people of God. The journey of Passover is a political as well as religious one. God has taken them from slavery to freedom. They began the journey as a diverse group of Hebrew people but end it as the nation of Israel. They have been re-created and delivered to a new land. Through the ritual of Passover, the people remember who and whose they are. As they remember that God hears the cries of God's people, they are restored. As they remember and celebrate the gift of freedom, they are renewed.

SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

What are some special celebrations for your family? Do you celebrate with a meal? What do you eat? What are some special celebrations for our church family? Why is Passover such a special celebration for Jewish families?

REMEMBERING MEALS

Passover is a remembering meal, helping people remember how God rescued the Hebrews from slavery. The Lord's Supper is a remembering meal for Christians. What do you remember during communion, or the Lord's Supper?

GOD'S RESCUE

God heard the peoples' cries and rescued them from slavery. From what does God rescue us today?

PRAYER

Loving God,
May we remember your gifts to us
and all that you have done to show your great love for us.
Remembering what you have done in the past,
may we have hope for the future.
Amen.

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