



פסח

“The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ‘This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. . . . That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. . . . Eat it in haste; it is the LORD’s Passover.’”

— EXODUS 12:1-3; 8, 11 —

P A S S O V E R

the festival of unleavened bread

Passover, or *Pesach* in Hebrew, commemorates the most influential event in Jewish history — the Exodus of the people of Israel from bondage in Egypt. It was at that particular juncture three thousand years ago that the national Jewish identity was shaped, and it was from this event that some of the most profound affirmations of the Jewish faith were drawn.



Primary among them is the notion that God is not some distant power, uninterested in His creation. No, the story of Passover affirms for the Jewish people that God is present in human life, that He hears the cries of His people, and that He intervenes in human history to deliver His people from affliction and redeem us from oppression so we can experience His promises and be in His presence.

God heard
their entreaties
and called
Moses to
lead them out
of slavery.

A TIME OF DELIVERANCE

One of the key elements of the Passover celebration is retelling the story of the Exodus. In doing so, Jews are to symbolically relive the events and feel as if we were just delivered from Egyptian bondage. Judaism maintains that God's act of liberation is not a one-time-only event, but an ongoing and repeated one. In the words of the *Haggadah*, the text we use during the *Seder* meal to retell the Exodus story, "For God did not redeem our ancestors alone, but us, as well."

The story (found in the Bible from Genesis 37—Exodus 14) begins with Joseph, sold into slavery by his jealous brothers. Joseph ended up in Egypt, where he became the house servant to a good man with a lying wife. Through false accusations, Joseph wound up in jail. But when God allowed him to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, Egypt's leader, and warn him of a devastating famine ahead, Joseph was appointed the second most powerful leader in all of Egypt.

When the famine came, it impacted Joseph's family back in Israel as well. They went to Egypt seeking food, not knowing Joseph was the leader overseeing the food distribution. Joseph lovingly forgave his brothers, and they and their families moved to Egypt in order to survive

the famine. They lived there freely for many years until a new Pharaoh arose who didn't know about Joseph and, in fear of the growing numbers of Israelites among his people, enslaved the Israelites and brought upon them great suffering.

After hundreds of years of this oppression, the Jews cried out to God to save them. God heard their entreaties and called Moses to lead them out of slavery. Though God got Moses's attention in a miraculous way — through a burning bush that was not consumed — and assured him that He would empower Moses for the task at hand, Moses was afraid and reluctant to step into this leadership role.

In His patience and compassion, God told Moses that his brother Aaron could help him, and that God would allow them to perform miracles to show that they were indeed God's appointed spokesmen.

Finally, Moses agreed to be God's servant and obediently went to Pharaoh with God's message: "*Let my people go.*"



WHERE ARE YOU?

Sometimes it may feel like God is far away. When you are in the midst of a difficult time — whether you’re struggling to find a job, or a loved one is losing a battle against cancer, or your child is involved in ungodly activities — it may at times feel like God is nowhere to be found.

“Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” At various points in his life, David (the author of this psalm) probably had good reason to question where God was and what He was doing. Where was God when David was running for his life from the jealous King Saul? Where was God when David’s own son led an uprising and attempted to take over his father’s kingdom? Where was God when David was surrounded by arrogant men who had no room in their hearts for God?

It’s at the low points in our lives that God seems to be far away, hiding from us. And it’s times like that when we are tempted to let those doubts come between us and God. We may stop praying; we may shut ourselves off from the very One who can carry us through these difficulties. We might look at our circumstances and conclude that God simply does not care.

But notice what David did in this psalm. Despite his doubts, David continued praying and asking God to come quickly to his aid. David didn’t

“WHY, LORD, DO
YOU STAND FAR
OFF? WHY DO YOU
HIDE YOURSELF
IN TIMES OF
TROUBLE?”
—PSALM 10:1

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assume that because of his current situation God did not care or was unwilling to help him.

Rather, David affirmed what he knew about God from his past experiences — *“But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted”* (v. 14). David knew that he was not alone; God knew what was happening, and was with David in his troubles.

This is one of the key messages of Passover: God hears the cries of His people. That is the story of the Exodus. God heard the cries of the Israelites and miraculously delivered them from slavery to freedom.

Thankfully, He is the same compassionate and listening God for us today. It is the times when we are alone, when we feel abandoned and oppressed, that we most need to remember that truth and pray to God. Tell Him your troubles. Share with Him your doubts. Cry out for His help. Then hold on to the truth, knowing, as the Israelites and King David did, that *“You, LORD, hear the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry”* (v. 17).



*The Psalmist David: Worship,
by Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld*

GOING DEEPER FOR CHRISTIANS

For a Christian perspective on answered prayers, read these Scriptures:

- Mark 11:23–25
- 2 Corinthians 1:10–11
- Philippians 4:5–7
- James 5:14–16
- 1 John 5:13–15

BATTLE OF THE GODS

... so that we
may never
again forget
God's power
and His mercy.

One of the key players in the drama of the Exodus story was Pharaoh, the Egyptian king. Even before Moses and Aaron appeared before him, they were well aware of the difficult task ahead of them. God had forewarned them that Pharaoh would not easily let the Israelites leave.

In fact, God told Moses and Aaron that Pharaoh would “*harden his heart*” and refuse to let God’s people go despite the plagues and disasters that would be brought upon the land and the people. Unmoved by the miracles Moses and Aaron performed in his presence, Pharaoh refused their request to release the Israelites. After all, his magicians were also able to perform the same miracles.

It gets harder, however, to understand his continued refusal when God allowed Moses to turn the Nile River into blood — and when plagues of frogs, gnats, flies, illness, boils, hail, locusts, and darkness descended on his kingdom. Despite all these displays of God’s power, Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he refused to release the Israelites. In many ways, God was exceedingly patient with Pharaoh.

Initially, the Bible records that Pharaoh hardened his own heart

(Exodus 7:13, “*became hard*”; v. 14, “*unyielding*”; v. 22, “*became hard*”).

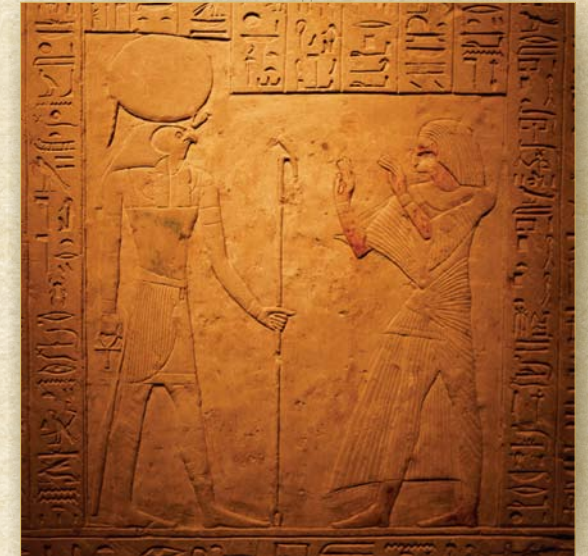
Pharaoh hardened his own heart six times by refusing Moses’s requests.

Then, after the seventh plague, God is said to have hardened Pharaoh’s heart — and by doing so, confirmed the Egyptian king’s willful disobedience and stubbornness.

Since Pharaoh’s heart remained callous and stubborn, it was ultimately necessary for the tenth and final plague, the death of all firstborn sons throughout the land of Egypt.

Incredibly, Moses had warned Pharaoh that this would happen if he did not obey God. (See Exodus 4:21–23.) And in that first *Pesach*, meaning Passover, God proved to Pharaoh and all Egypt who was supreme and all-powerful.

The *Torah* tells Jews to mark this entire series of events — from the bitterness of slavery by the Egyptians to the plague of death passing over the homes marked by lamb’s blood — by celebrating the *Pesach* festival and recalling our salvation from Egyptian oppression, so that we may never again forget God’s power and His mercy.



“BUT THE EGYPTIAN
MAGICIANS
DID THE SAME
THINGS BY THEIR
SECRET ARTS, AND
PHARAOH’S HEART
BECAME HARD;
HE WOULD NOT
LISTEN TO MOSES
AND AARON,
JUST AS THE
LORD HAD SAID.”
—EXODUS 7:22

A HARDENED HEART

No matter what your age, it’s wise to make a yearly visit to our doctors for a complete physical. That way we check our cholesterol, weight, blood pressure, and other key indicators to get a picture of our overall health. Depending on the results, we then can make the necessary changes to improve our physical well-being.

Undergoing routine checkups is a great idea for anything you want to keep in good condition — your health, your teeth, even your car! But what about your spiritual health? When was the last time you checked the condition of your heart, spiritually speaking?

From the story of the Exodus, we can see what happens when our heart becomes hard. Initially Pharaoh had hardened his heart, but as his stubbornness and disobedience continued, God allowed Pharaoh’s heart to remain obstinate and recalcitrant.

While it is easy to judge Pharaoh for his hard and stubborn heart, we must be careful to attend to the condition of our own hearts. A hardened heart doesn’t happen all at once. It results from stubbornly and consistently setting ourselves against God, just as Pharaoh did. In choosing to disregard God’s will and

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command, we can become so hardened that we no longer are able to listen to Him and we can no longer turn to Him for forgiveness.

Certainly, many will experience times of rebellion and stubbornness. But we can keep our hearts soft and open to God through prayer and worship. In Hebrew, “to pray” means “to judge oneself.” True prayer always must involve introspection, meditation, and self-scrutiny. As we do this and continually bring our confession and sins before God, we will lessen our chances of becoming hardhearted.

Take a few moments this week for a spiritual heart-check. In what areas of your life do you find yourself resisting God’s call? Where is He prompting you to turn toward Him? God wants to soften your heart today.



*Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh,
by Gustave Doré*

GOING DEEPER FOR CHRISTIANS

For a Christian perspective on your spiritual condition, read these Scriptures:

- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Galatians 6:15
- Ephesians 2:1–5
- 1 Peter 4:1–6

Matzah, “poor man’s bread,” reminds Jews to be humble and never forget our former life of servitude.

FOODS RICH WITH MEANING

*P*assover is also called the Festival of Unleavened Bread because of the major role *matzah* plays in the remembrance and the celebration of the Exodus story. Since the Jews were in such a hurry to leave Egypt when Pharaoh finally let them go, there was no time to allow the dough to rise for the bread baking that day. So they took the dough with them and then made it into a hard flatbread, or *matzah*, over their open fires in the desert.

Some rabbis have taught that *matzah* is so significant to Passover because it symbolizes the fact that the people of Israel had such deep, abiding trust in God that they were willing even to leave the security and comfort of their homes in Egypt and to enter into the dry, barren desert. Others teach that because *matzah* is considered “poor man’s bread,” it reminds Jews to be humble and to never forget our former life of servitude. By remembering this difficult past, Jews are all the more grateful for the freedom God miraculously secured for us.

Matzah is one of the key foods eaten during *Seder*, the special meal to commemorate the Exodus. And it’s not the only food at the meal rife with spiritual meaning. Here are a few of the other foods included:

The *Afikomen* is the “dessert,” or the piece of *matzah* hidden during the service and sought out by children toward the end of the meal. It

symbolizes the Passover lamb, which was eaten at the end of the meal.

Wine (or grape juice) plays a big part in the *Seder*. It is traditional to drink four glasses of wine during the *Seder* to symbolize the Jewish people’s trust in God’s **fourfold promise** of redemption:

“I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.” —Exodus 6:6–7, emphasis added

Elijah’s Cup is a fifth glass of wine, filled only at the conclusion of the *Seder*, and it represents the fifth stage of God’s promise of redemption: *“And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob”* (Exodus 6:8).

According to Jewish tradition, the fifth glass is poured but not drunk symbolizing that God’s promise for the Jewish people’s return to our homeland remains unfulfilled. It is called Elijah’s Cup since, according to tradition, it is the prophet Elijah who will usher in the Messiah and the ingathering of the Jewish people into Israel.



“FOR SEVEN DAYS
YOU ARE TO EAT
BREAD MADE
WITHOUT YEAST.
ON THE FIRST
DAY REMOVE THE
YEAST FROM YOUR
HOUSES, FOR
WHOEVER EATS
ANYTHING WITH
YEAST IN IT FROM
THE FIRST DAY
THROUGH THE
SEVENTH MUST
BE CUT OFF
FROM ISRAEL.”
—EXODUS 12:15

SPRING CLEANING

Maybe yours is one of those households that undergoes a thorough and careful spring cleaning, where every nook and cranny in the house gets a good scrubbing, and where every closet and drawer gets a painstaking purge of all unwanted and used items. While a lot of hard work and effort goes into it, afterward we feel our load lightened a bit; we feel refreshed and renewed.

During the Passover celebration, Jews undergo a similar exercise of meticulous and painstaking cleaning as part of our observance. During that first Passover, God commanded the Israelites not only to eat unleavened bread for seven days, but they also had to remove any trace of yeast from their homes. To do otherwise would result in that person being cut off from the rest of the community.

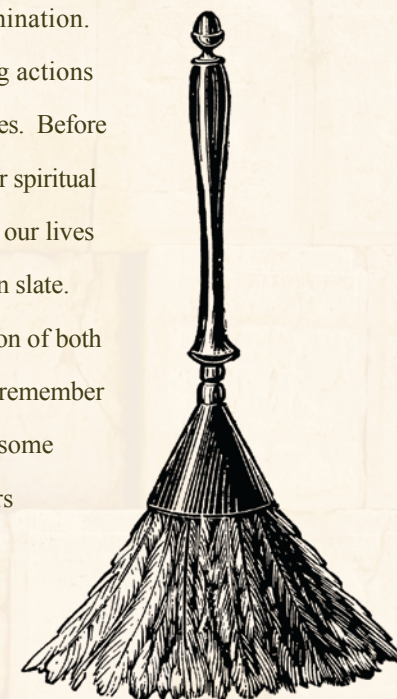
It is a command that Jews take very seriously. Prior to the holiday, we meticulously clean our houses, searching for any traces of yeast, or *chametz*, as it is called in Hebrew. We set aside certain utensils for Passover, which never come into contact with *chametz*. On the evening before Passover, we conduct the *bedikat chametz*, or “searching for leaven,” ceremony, in which

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the family goes through the entire house with a candle searching for any leaven that might have been overlooked.

Chametz can be understood in two different ways. While it certainly refers to the physical removal of leavened products from the household, it also is used to suggest a spiritual contamination. Spiritual *chametz* consists of those wrong actions and unhealthy thoughts that damage our lives. Before Passover, we make an effort to get rid of our spiritual *chametz* as well as the physical *chametz* in our lives so that we can begin the spring with a clean slate.

As we enter into this time of celebration of both Passover and, for Christians, Easter, let us remember our need to clean house spiritually. Take some time during this week to search the corners of your soul for any *chametz* so your relationship with God and with others is open and fulfilling.



GOING DEEPER FOR CHRISTIANS

For a Christian perspective on your need for spiritual cleansing, read these Scriptures:

- Romans 12:2
- Ephesians 4:31–32
- Colossians 3:8–10
- Hebrews 10:22

Passover bids us to affirm the indissoluble link between slavery and redemption, between our tribulations and our joys.

A HOLY MEAL

The *Seder* meal is the centerpiece of the Passover celebration. While many Jewish holidays revolve around the synagogue, the *Seder* customarily takes place at home. Key to the meal is the *Seder* plate, which contains six unique foods that symbolize the experience of the Jewish people as they moved from bondage and slavery in Egypt to freedom as God's chosen people. These *Seder* foods include:

Charoset is a mixture of apples, nuts, and red wine or grape juice. This mixture symbolizes the mortar the Jewish slaves made in the building of cities of Egypt for Pharaoh and his kingdom.

Zeroa is a roasted shank bone of lamb or neck of a chicken, representing the paschal lamb that was sacrificed and eaten at Passover during the time when the Temple was the central place of worship for the Jewish people.

Maror and **Chazeret** are two bitter herbs, often horseradish and romaine lettuce, that represent the bitterness of life under slavery.

Baytza is an egg that is first hard-boiled, then roasted, serving as a reminder of the festival sacrifice during the time of the Temple. With its destruction,

the Jews began to associate the egg with the loss of the Temple. Today the egg is a reminder for us to mourn the suffering of all people living under bondage and slavery.

Karpas is a green vegetable, usually parsley or celery, which represents the reemergence of life at springtime. During the *Seder*, the *karpas* is dipped in salt water and eaten. The salt water represents the tears of suffering that became tears of joy as the people moved from slavery to freedom.

Passover bids us to affirm the indissoluble link between slavery and redemption, between our tribulations and our joys. To lose sight of either, or of the tension that affirming both necessarily involves, is to miss the mark. We are neither to be fixated and obsessed with past suffering nor overly and unrealistically optimistic about the future. For this reason, explain the rabbis, we begin the *Seder* with deprecating remarks of how our ancestors were once slaves in Egypt, but conclude it by praising God for delivering us from our suffering.



A MEAL TO REMEMBER

How do you share with your family the important events and traditions that you hold dear? Maybe on certain anniversaries, you visit the place where you grew up. Or perhaps you spend time with your children looking through old photos and recounting the stories behind them. Maybe your family holds yearly reunions where the entire clan gathers and shares memories.

Whatever you might do, you know it's important to understand your roots and to celebrate the traditions and history that make your family unique.

That's true for faith families, as well. During our Passover celebration, Jews share our roots, our traditions, our history, and our faith through the *Seder* meal. It not only helps us *tell* the story, but it also helps us to *reenact* the events as if we were there.

The story of the Exodus from Egypt has been a spiritual inspiration for people all over the world. Over the centuries, the liturgy of the *Haggadah*, the guide to the *Seder*, was developed to include the strivings for freedom of Jews who had no homeland. Even today, Jews

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who feel distanced from the mainstream Jewish community continue to create liturgy for Passover that expresses their wish for freedom and redemption from a sense of isolation.

Observance of the Passover binds us throughout history with those first Israelites who came out of bondage from Egypt. And it marks us as unique followers of God.

What about you? What in your faith traditions mark you as a person of faith and a follower of God? What do you do that sets you apart? Perhaps it is the way you raise your children, or care for the poor, or demonstrate love for others that marks you as different.

Whatever it might be, think of how you can be a blessing to others, then celebrate that within your own family, and pass it along to the next generation.



*The First Passover, by
Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld*

GOING DEEPER FOR CHRISTIANS

For a Christian perspective on expressing your faith, read these Scriptures:

- Matthew 28:18–20
- Mark 5:18–20
- Acts 1:8

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

True freedom and redemption, in the Jewish view, involves both spiritual and physical liberation.

Freedom, both in the spiritual and physical sense, is an underlying theme of the Passover celebration. One of the many ways we express this idea of freedom during the *Seder* meal, in particular, is how we sit. As we drink the wine throughout *Seder*, we recline slightly, as was the manner of Roman emperors, to demonstrate our freedom on this day.

Even if we live under conditions of oppression and are not, in fact, physically free, we are to *feel* as if we are. *Pesach* reminds us that true freedom also involves the inner, spiritual realm. It cannot be externally denied, nor can a condition of slavery and servitude be outwardly imposed. The physically oppressed must also recline and feel like emperors on *Pesach* night. According to the *Talmud*, those who are poor must even sell their clothes or borrow money if necessary to buy wine for the four cups! Nothing must stand in the way of fulfilling the *mitzvah* (spiritual duty) of feeling free on this holiday.

In addition to recalling our Exodus from Egypt long ago, Jews are also urged to actively pursue freedom for all those to whom it is presently denied. That is the meaning of the biblical command to love

the strangers in our midst since we were once strangers in Egypt, and we can best understand their hearts. And while bringing about man's spiritual freedom and redemption is, of course, a significant part of the Jewish mission, Judaism regards the poor, the hungry, and the oppressed as equally enslaved and also in need of redemption, albeit of a materialistic kind.

True freedom and redemption, in the Jewish view, involves both spiritual and physical liberation. And Jews are commanded to take an active part in extending this freedom to all people.



“WHEN A
FOREIGNER
RESIDES AMONG
YOU IN YOUR
LAND, DO NOT
MISTREAT THEM.
THE FOREIGNER
RESIDING AMONG
YOU MUST BE
TREATED AS YOUR
NATIVE-BORN. LOVE
THEM AS YOURSELF,
FOR YOU WERE
FOREIGNERS IN
EGYPT. I AM THE
LORD YOUR GOD.”
—LEVITICUS 19:33–34

THE FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM

In retelling the story of the Exodus, perhaps that hardest thing for many of us to connect with is the concept of being an enslaved people. Living in the United States, or even Israel for that matter, we enjoy freedom to worship, freedom to pursue a career or education, freedom to speak, and freedom to elect our government. We are, by the world’s standards, a free people.

Yet, Passover reminds us that true freedom also involves the inner, spiritual realm. It is true that in a time of freedom we can feel enslaved. And it is equally true that while enslaved or under oppression, we can feel free.

We marvel at how it was humanly possible for Jews living in concentration camps and the Warsaw Ghetto during the Holocaust to fulfill this sense of “feeling free” on Passover. And yet, the amazing testimony to the power of God’s spirit moving within humankind is that many Jews *did* find the spiritual strength and courage to feel free despite their wretched conditions.

Passover bids us to remember the good and the bad, our joys and

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our tribulations, our past sufferings and our hopes for the world’s future redemption. In recalling our own Exodus from slavery and bondage, we are to actively seek freedom for all those to whom it is presently denied — whether it’s spiritual freedom, or freedom from such things as hunger or poverty.

The very essence of Passover and our longing for freedom — both physical and spiritual — is expressed beautifully in the closing reading of the *Seder* liturgy:

“Our Passover service is completed. We have reverently repeated its ordered traditions. With songs of praise we have called upon the name of God. May he who broke Pharaoh’s yoke forever shatter all fetters of oppression, and hasten the day when war will be no more. Soon may he bring redemption to all mankind — freed from violence and from wrong, and united in an eternal covenant of brotherhood.”

That is a hope and prayer that Christians and Jews can share.

GOING DEEPER FOR CHRISTIANS

For a Christian perspective on freedom, read these Scriptures:

- Luke 4:18–19
- Romans 8:20–22
- 2 Corinthians 3:17
- Galatians 4:3–7; 5:1
- 1 Peter 2:16

THE PASSOVER LAMB

The *Korban Pesach* —
Passover
lamb — was
a tangible
reminder to
the people of
their special
relationship
to God.

Many of the sacred aspects of Christian worship trace their spiritual roots directly to the Jewish faith and the early history of the nation of Israel. Such is the case with the term “Paschal Lamb” or “Lamb of God,” which in the Christian tradition refers to Jesus. In the Jewish faith, the term is *Korban Pesach*, or “sacrifice of Passover,” which dates back to the Exodus from Egypt.

In the times of the Jewish Temple worship — both in Solomon’s Temple and the Second Temple — Jews obeyed God’s command to remember that first Passover by sacrificing a lamb on that day. The lamb had to be male, one year old, and, most importantly, without blemish. (See Exodus 12:5.) Only then would it suffice to be the perfect Passover sacrifice.

This Passover observance is what the Christians Scriptures reference when speaking of “a lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Peter 1:19) — referring to the sacrificial death of Jesus.

The word *korban* “sacrifice” is related to *le-karev*, which means to come close. Through the sacrifice, worshipers felt they were giving themselves vicariously to God. In addition, these offerings

required a great sacrifice on the part of the people. They were, in fact, giving up something from their prized possessions since the required sacrifice was to come from their own flock. In making this sacrifice in connection with the Temple rites, the people were giving up a precious source of income and food.

The *Korban Pesach* was a tangible reminder to the people of their special relationship to God and His mercy in recuing and saving them from the plague of death. In protecting them from this tenth plague, God made the Jewish people His personal nation, and they therefore earned the privilege of serving Him. By performing this sacrifice each year at Passover, the people were acknowledging the unique relationship they had with God.

This quality is still a feature of the Jewish people today. There has never been a successful attempt by Jews to integrate into any other nation; we have always remained distinct, a people apart.



OUR GOD WHO RESCUES

“GIVE THANKS TO
THE LORD, FOR
HE IS GOOD; HIS
LOVE ENDURES
FOREVER. LET THE
REDEEMED OF THE
LORD TELL THEIR
STORY — THOSE
HE REDEEMED
FROM THE HAND
OF THE FOE.”
—PSALM 107:1–2

Some may remember watching the televised events as hundreds worked around the clock to rescue thirty-three Chilean miners who had been trapped underground for sixty-eight days. More than a billion people watched as that first miner emerged and stepped before a throng of cheering family and other concerned observers.

It was an emotional moment for anyone watching this remarkable rescue, and indeed, as one observer wrote later, “They became an example to the world, a symbol of survival. A brief reminder that like evil, good exists. And a reminder that in an ever more connected world, a single event has the power to unite us.”

Great and amazing stories of rescues have the power to unite and encourage us. Throughout the Bible, we encounter a God who delights in rescuing His people. He rescued righteous Noah and his family from the punishing flood. He rescued Jonah from the belly of a whale. God used Esther to rescue the Jews from the evil Haman. Time and again God rescued the Jews from attacking armies. And at that first Passover, God rescued the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.

Psalm 107 celebrates God’s gracious habit of rescuing His people. The opening verses are a call to praise God for His redeeming work. The

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psalm writer explores the depths of God’s goodness by portraying four distinct ways that God reaches down to rescue those who trust in Him: the wanderers (107:4–9); the prisoners (107:10–16); the distressed (107:17–20); and the storm-tossed (107:23–30).

Today, when we are rarely in physical danger and seldom in need of the type of rescue we read about so often in the Bible, it’s sometimes difficult to remember that our God is a God who rescues. But the God we love and serve today is the same God who saved Noah, Jonah, David, and the Israelites. And this is a good thing, because we still need rescuing, even if only — or perhaps most importantly — from ourselves and our sinful ways.

We who seek to follow God today must be as hungry and thirsty for His holy word and His blessing as were the people described in Psalm 107. At times, we too may feel like weary travelers, prisoners in chains, the sick or distressed, or storm-tossed sailors. But God can reach down and bring us out of any circumstance if we will put our hope and trust in Him.

Let’s give thanks to God today for His goodness and trust that because of His love for us, He will rescue us in our time of need.

GOING DEEPER FOR CHRISTIANS

For a Christian perspective on God’s ability to rescue you, read these Scriptures:

- Matthew 16:24–26
- Mark 16:15–16
- Luke 19:10
- John 3:16–17
- Romans 5:9–11
- Galatians 1:3–5
- Colossians 1:13–14