

“During those seven days, there must be no trace of yeast in your homes. Anyone who eats anything made with yeast during this week will be cut off from the community of Israel. These regulations apply both to the foreigners living among you and to the native-born Israelites.” Exodus 12:19 NLT

## lectio // Exodus 12:14-28

Growing up, I did not have any rituals or religious practices that required sacrifice or preparation. And certainly, even our regular family gatherings or ceremonies did not have any sense of spiritual or symbolic meanings. There may have been an occasion where china or our nice silverware was used, but it held no specific stories of our past. I don't hold any of that against my family, I think many families do not have a sense of ritual or meaningful ceremonies to talk about the spiritual stories in their history. Israel did! And Jews to this day hold Passover as a holy day, even for families that are non-orthodox or believers in the faith. The specificity of yeast is mentioned in this preparation many times. As we find later, it is symbolic of “sin” because of its enmeshed nature to bond with the wheat, becoming one with it and it's amazing nature to cause it to rise and give a distinct flavor to the loaf of bread. Yeast also takes time to rise and the story and lessons from it are clearly done in a rush. The message is there is no “time” to wait. In fact each day, seven in total, this is reinforced - be quick, there is no time. All of these symbols are applied directly to the grand story of God and the sacrifice that would be made for all humankind. The entire ceremony, from preparation to application are EXPERIENCED in the Passover. This experience is woven into every Jewish person, whether they acknowledge God (and his plan of messianic fulfillment) or not. What deep and connected ceremony does our family experience that tells and re-tells the story of God's provision and plan?

## oratio

Dad,

As much as I can enjoy the story and the deep connection of meaning to every element of the Passover ritual, it has not been a rhythm we have practiced in our family. What living object lessons have we experienced? We are a family of stories. We tell and re-tell stories every time we gather. We tell funny stories, sad stories and even stories of fear and hard moments in our family life. There is a thread of your grace and goodness in most of them - especially when it comes to blessing and provision. We would not be where we are or have what we have without your favor on our lives. Our children, and now grandchildren, will know this. Thank you for our family and the stories of faith we do share with each other.

## contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root