

Passover Remembered

By Alla Bozarth

Pack Nothing. Bring only your determination to serve and your willingness to be free. Don't wait for the bread to rise. Take nourishment for the journey, but eat standing, be ready to move at a moment's notice.

Do not hesitate to leave your old ways behind— fear, silence, submission. Only surrender to the need of the time— to love justice and walk humbly with your God. Do not take time to explain to the neighbours. Tell only a few trusted friends and family members. Then begin quickly, before you have time to sink back into the old slavery.

Set out in the dark. I will send fire to warm and encourage you. I will be with you in the fire and I will be with you in the cloud. You will learn to eat new food and find refuge in new places. I will give you dreams in the desert to guide you safely home to that place you have not yet seen. The stories you tell one another around your fires in the dark will make you strong and wise.

Outsiders will attack you, and some who follow you, and at times you will weary and turn on each other from fear and fatigue and blind forgetfulness. You have been preparing for this for hundreds of years. I am sending you into the wilderness to make a way and to learn my ways more deeply. Those who fight you will teach you. Those who fear you will strengthen you. Those who follow you may forget you. Only be faithful. This alone matters.

Some of you will die in the desert, for the way is longer than anyone imagined. Some of you will give birth. Some will join other tribes along the way, and some will simply stop and create new families in a welcoming oasis. Some of you will be so changed by weathers and wanderings that even your closest friends will have to learn your features as though for the first time. Some of you will not change at all.

Some will be abandoned by your dearest loves and misunderstood by those who have known you since birth and feel abandoned by you. Some will find new friendship in unlikely faces, and old friends as faithful and true as the pillar of God's flame.

Wear protection. Your flesh will be torn as you make a path with your bodies through sharp tangles. Wear protection. Others who follow may deride or forget the fools who first bled where thorns once were, carrying them away in their own flesh. Such urgency as you now bear may embarrass your children who will know little of these times.

Sing songs as you go, and hold close together. You may at times grow confused and lose your way. Continue to call each other by the names I've given you, to help remember who you are. You will get where you are going by remembering who you are. Touch each other and keep telling the stories of old bondage and of how I delivered you.

Tell you children lest they forget and fall into danger— remind them even they were not born in freedom but under a bondage they no longer remember, which is still with them, if unseen. Or they were born in the open desert where no signposts are. Make maps as you go, remembering the way back from before you were born.

So long ago you fell into slavery, slipped into it unawares, out of hunger and need. You left your famished country for freedom and food in a new land, but you fell unconscious and passive, and slavery overtook you as you fell asleep in the ease of your life. You no longer told stories of home to remember who you were.

Do not let your children sleep through the journey's hardship. Keep them awake and walking on their own feet so that you both remain strong and on course. So you will be only the first of many waves of deliverance on these desert seas.

It is the first of many beginnings— your Paschaltide. Remain true to this mystery. Pass on the whole story. I spared you all by calling you forth from your chains. Do not go back. I am with you now and I am waiting for you.

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"Passover Remembered", by Alla Renée Bozarth,
was commissioned by *The Witness Magazine* (July 1984) and has been widely shared in many contexts since, from Seders and Rosh Hashanah services to retreats and meditation practices. [More.](#)