

Exodus Passover

Interpreting the Text:

1. What is the importance of the repeated instruction to tell the Exodus story to one's children? Should we read this as the cause of major Jewish observances today, or might this story be retroactively explaining how the observances came to be?
2. Child sacrifice, the giving of 'first fruits', and God's providential authority are all things that come up when discussing this story in Exodus. Reading it, does the author (or authors) seem to be relying on one or more of these preexisting notions in recounting the events of the Passover? Is it possible that interpreters are reading these ideas back into the text anachronistically?
3. This story lays an important foundation for what will come in Jesus' ministry and death on the cross. How does reading this passage from Exodus alongside the Gospels change the way you read them?

Applying the Text:

1. Are the citizens of Egypt a single oppressive force? Do they deserve the suffering inflicted upon them, particularly that of the final plague? How does this kind of generalized retribution in today's society affect how you read this story (or how does this story affect how you read about similar contemporary events)?
2. In the passover story, the Israelites were told to mark their houses in order to receive God's protection. What signals do you give, both to the world and to God, that you seek God's love and protection?
3. While Christians and Jews both tell this story from Exodus, a major observance of this event remains a uniquely Jewish observance, as Christians observe the events of (or leading up to) Easter at a similar time. What is a Christian's role in respecting the Jewish observance of the Passover?