

# Where's Your Chair?

Exodus 12 28-39



Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider the trouble I suffer from those who hate me,  
you that lift me up from the gates of death.  
Psalm 9:13

## **Praising:**

Light of the lonely pilgrim's heart,  
Star of the coming day,  
arise, and with thy coming beams  
chase all our griefs away.

## **Reading:**

Exodus 12:28-39  
The death of the firstborn

The Israelites make ready and events move quickly and terribly. From the highest to the lowest in the land, the firstborn pay the price for Egypt's enslavement of God's chosen people. Egypt's wail of grief shatters the silent darkness of the night. Pharaoh's response is to set the Israelites free there and then – and, notably, to ask for God's blessing for doing so. Having already gathered gold and silver from their Egyptian neighbours (who seem disposed to be generous,

whether out of gratitude or guilt), the Israelites are encouraged to leave immediately. The Egyptians have lost enough. Although the figures reflect a census list from the book of Numbers, most regard 600,000 as an exaggeration. Notwithstanding, and livestock and unleavened dough in tow, God effects the Israelites' escape to Rameses and Succoth. These become the starting places on Israel's itinerary.

## **Listening:**

## **Praying:**

Lord we pray for those who grieve the loss of loved ones

- whose shock and pain linger still and makes getting on with life feel meaningless
- whose guilt or regret haunts them with lost chances and missed opportunities
- whose hearts are closed to the comfort and hope of a life with Christ beyond this one

Father: when death in its fear and cruelty attacks, take me to that place where the grave clothes lie empty, the light of eternity breaks through, and Jesus speaks his word of peace. Amen

## **Doing:**