

He is Risen, Alleluia!

In any Jewish home, the passover meal begins with a question. "Why is this night different than all the others?" From there the story of the delivery of God's people from slavery to freedom is recalled and shared. Central to that story is death. Death of the first born males of the households of Egypt and the "passing over" of the houses of Israel who had followed a very specific plan set out by God. This plan included dressing a certain way, and eating certain foods, most especially, the roasted meat of an unblemished lamb. The blood of this lamb was painted on the door posts of the Israelites. This was done as a sign to the angel of death that he should not enter their homes.

The Christian might rightfully ask: Why is THIS night different than all the others? My response, though I am hardly a respected elder, would be that this is the night of more. Our ears hear more readings, our eyes see more beauty, our mouths proclaim more praise, more people come into the family of God on this night than on any other.

More smoke, more song, more bells, more candles.

But, it is hardly a night of excess. In fact, considering this is our Passover feast, considering who and what it is we celebrate, even the more is not enough.

Our Passover is more in that while it references the death of Christ it is not about death, but rather life, a life with more - life made possible for you and I by the resurrected sacrificial lamb who is Jesus. He is the lamb we eat, his is the blood painted on our hearts, minds and souls in the waters of Baptism that saves us from eternal death.

Our Passover is more because while the traditional Passover remembers God's kindness and justice in liberating the Israelites from slavery... this night recalls God's mercy to all of His children in His rising from the dead to die no more.

This night is more because, by the power of the resurrection, the shackles of slavery to sin are shattered and His people are free.

A good man once said, "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, we are free at last"

I say that because of this night, we are indeed free at last. Free to love more fully both God and neighbor. Free to sin no more. We are free to act in justice, free to make peace. We are free to abolish racism, hatred, poverty, hunger and bigotry.

Because of this night of more, we are free to live for Jesus - regardless of what any government or Pharaoh might say! Because we are more, so much more, than citizens of any country subjects of any Earthly kingdom.

This night, more than any other, we are reminded that we are the children of God most high and our true home is heaven and that by the resurrection, heaven's doors are wide open..

Amen?

Brothers and sisters, let the Glory of this night wash over us, flood us with the light that dispels all darkness, and enkindle in our hearts the flame of Christ. Then let us set the world on fire to the Glory of God.

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