

It is the eve of Passover

April 12th, 2006

It is the eve of Passover, the holiday that for us Jews commemorates freedom to its utmost. In our case, it was God's love for us that freed us from bondage. No, we did not deserve it, we were actually a pretty "unpure" and "unholy" crowd at the time, but He did it anyway. Much of our story is that freedom from bondage in Egypt, the wandering for 40+ years, and then an ascent into the holy land.

In many ways this parallels a recovery journey. Like many other compulsive overeaters, I was led to OA not because I deserved it but because God loved me and wanted me to get better. I was a fairly rotten human being and I needed lots of time (aka wandering through the steps) to heal, grow, and recover. As for the promised land, well, I'll peek at it periodically vis-à-vis. The peace and serenity I experience periodically when the insides quiet down and the chatter arrests.

Many Jews today ask how this story is relevant in their lives – why in the world did the dumb Jews have to wander all those years when there is MapQuest. We certainly would not be lost now. We're too smart for that. The answer surprised me when I learned it. They wandered not because God did not want to show them the easy, direct, less than 6 month's path to the Holy Land, but because it was necessary to go through at least 2 generations to extinguish their slave mentality. They could not really enter with all their minds and hearts into God's land until they were spiritually free, which by the way, takes much longer than physical freedom. And for me as a compulsive overeater, this is highly relatable material. I lost weight fairly quickly, even after the relapse I lost most of what I had regained, but the head work, that has taken much, much longer. Its actually an ongoing lifetime endeavor. Compulsive eating is really spiritual bondage with serious physical side effects. It took me a while to get that, but once I did, I understood that no diet could cure me. I needed the OA program.

And so tonight I begin to re-experience freedom in a deeper, more relevant way. Not just freedom from physical shackles, but more

importantly from the spiritual and emotional ones. Jewish holidays often serve as a contrast to the binding in our physical world. We do not have to be bound to schedules, other's deadlines, traffic, etc. And when we loosen those chains, we often find, as I have, the room for spiritual renewal and rejuvenation.

This message is as relevant now as it was over 2000 years ago. May God bless me and my family, friends, and all people with release from what ever binds us and may He guide us toward spiritual freedom. Amen.

Happy Passover!

Natalie