

MIDNIGHT
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... It is dark as this drama opens. The only light used is a single spotlight that focuses on one side of the platform, then the other. One side is set up with crude furnishings, befitting the home of slaves. In this room, a Hebrew mother, father, and son gather to talk. The remains of a meal are on the table. They glance from time to time at a door, painted on a backdrop, or a real door. They pack their clothes into bundles to be carried. The other side of the platform has only an ornate bed and maybe a wardrobe. The more gilt, the better. It is the bedroom of Pharaoh. A door opens to this area. The ticking of a clock is slowly growing louder. When it has the attention of the audience, it is suddenly stopped. In the silence, a deep voice says quietly....

Announcer: It's midnight ... in the home of slaves.

... The spotlight comes on, highlighting the slave family. They labor over their bundles.... The boy glances at the table and makes a face, disgusted about the meal....

Father: Jacov. You did not care for the food, no?

Jacov: Unleavened bread? And lamb cooked with bitter herbs? It tasted terrible. You even said so.

Mother: Even so, we ate it all. As instructed.

Jacov: Who said to? The task master? And why are we packing? Are we being moved? We have enough room. Since grandfather died in the mud pits.

Father: Oy! Since he died in the mud pits. *(Bitterly with his fists clenched)* That is no way for a man to die. These Egyptians. Treat us like dogs. When tonight is over, I shall not mourn them. Let them also taste death with no hope.

Mother: Husband! Enough of that talk. Jehovah alone is judge. *(Glances fearfully at the door)* Better to spend our time praying. That the angel passes over us.

Jacov: *(Gets up and goes to his father, who is also looking at the door. He says fearfully)* Father? What is happening?

Father: *(Gathers Jacov in his arms, talks to him, getting more excited)* Son! You know how often I have wished. That I had an inheritance to give you. Would that I had wealth and riches to pass on. I wanted to give you a better life. With no things to give, I tried at least to give you hope. That someday, you might be free. Remember I said? Someday we would leave this land of bondage? Our God promised father Abraham, he would always be our God. We have served him faithfully. Because of that promise. Remember I said? Jehovah would cause a deliverer to lead us to a promised land? Well, Son. Tonight we leave. The one thing I can give, I have. I have put blood upon the door posts. *(The sound of screaming and crowd noise becomes audible in the background)* That sorrow? It

is the cost of our freedom. The judgment of God upon on this land. (*Pass a piece of black gauze over the spotlight to create a passing shadow*) The death angel is above the house. But the blood of our spotless lamb protects us. Always remember the blood.

*.... As lights go out, crowd noise and screaming end. Silence descends. The ticking of a clock slowly grows louder. When it has the attention of the audience, it is stopped again. In the silence, the **announcer** says quietly....*

Announcer: It's midnight ... in the palace of kings

... The spotlight comes on, highlighting the bedroom. Pharaoh is sleeping. The tranquility is broken by pounding on the door. The Pharaoh sits up, fighting to wake up...

Pharaoh: Well, come in now. I am quite awake. Now!

Chamberlain: (*Sticks his head in the door*) I am terribly sorry, my lord. Ramses cannot sleep. He has been crying all evening. I was wondering. Perhaps you could speak to the boy?

Pharaoh: (*Yawns and sits on the edge of the bed*) Well, bring him in. Better than having him make a scene before the whole household

The chamberlain ushers in a softly crying Ramses, dressed in bathrobe and slippers. Ramses hesitantly approaches Pharaoh who hugs him)

Pharaoh: Well now! What is this? Are you having bad dreams?

Ramses: I am sorry, Sir. My slave boy told me a story. It frightened me badly.

Pharaoh: (*Frowns and studies the boy at arm's length*) A slave has frightened you? Perhaps we shall frighten him in the morning, eh? What was this silly story?

Ramses: He said his God Jehovah. Would send the death angel over our land at midnight tonight. That all first born sons would die.

Pharaoh: (*Amused*) Oh yes, the all powerful God of the slaves. Ha! And is he going to kill Hebrew children also?

Ramses: No, Sir! He said if they put blood over their doors, the angel would ignore their homes.

Pharaoh: (*Thoughtful*) So that is what has been going on in Goshen. I have been getting reports all day long. I thought it was just another bizarre ritual. Oh well! They will have a lot of flies in Goshen in the morning. ... Are you feeling better now, Son?

Ramses: (*Worried*) Uh, Sir? It's almost midnight> Could we get some blood and put it over...

Here he is interrupted by Pharaoh, who jumps out of bed. He is angry and begins pacing..

Pharaoh: Absolutely not!

Ramses: But, Father. I am your first born. I am frightened.

Pharaoh: Pharaohs do not cower before slaves. Or their insignificant gods. Do you understand? *(He softens his tone and picks up his boy in his arms)* You must understand, Son. It is a matter of which gods you believe in. Take the Hebrew God. He chooses to let his people suffer in slavery. Better to serve the gods we worship. Through them, we triumph over enemies. They give us wealth and power; even share their deity with us. Have you forgotten? As my son, you too are born divine? Only a god more powerful than we could touch us here. Do not fear this so called death angel. Tomorrow, it shall visit the Hebrews. And it shall be me. But tonight, we have Isus, our goddess of death, to protect us. *(Again, the black shroud passes over the light, creating a passing shadow)* She alone will decide who lives or dies. And we alone serve her. There is nothing to fear. Not only will my wealth and position will be yours, but my gods and my godhead. We will not put blood upon our door post. It will not happen. Do you understand? Son? Son???? SONNNNN!!!

Pharaoh stares down in horror at the dead boy in his arms. Lights fade out and stay out. Silence is again broken with the ticking of a clock slowly growing louder. When it has the attention of the audience, it softens but doesn't stop. Against this rhythm, the announcer says quietly....

Announcer: We choose for our homes which Gods we serve. Which lives we lead. And whether to apply the blood of the spotless Lamb to our homes. Our children will inherit consequences of our choices. *(Pause here)* Behold, I call heaven and earth to record this day against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life. That both thou and thy seed may live. *(Pause here)* It's almost midnight. In your home. And someone's coming. *(The ticking suddenly stops)*