

Dayeinu: It Would Have Been Enough:

<p>Ilu ilu ho-tzi-a-nu, ho-tzi-a-nu mi-Mitz-ra-yim, ho-tzi-a-nu mi-Mitz-ra-yim, Da-ye-nu! (Da-da-yei-nu...) Ilu ilu natan lanu; natan lanu et haShabbat. . . Ilu, ilu natan lanu, natan lanu et haTorah. . .</p>	<p>אֱלוֹ אֱלוֹ הוֹצִיאָנוּ, הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם דַּיֵינוּ! אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת. . . דַּיֵינוּ! אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה. . . דַּיֵינוּ!</p>
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<p>If God had only taken us out of Egypt — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> It would have been enough for us! If God had taken us out of Egypt and not punished them — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had punished them and had not punished their gods; — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had punished their gods and had not killed their firstborn — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had killed their firstborn and had not given us their money — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had given us their money and had not split the Sea for us — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had split the Sea for us and had not taken us through it on dry land — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had taken us through it on dry land and had not pushed down our enemies in [the Sea — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had pushed down our enemies in [the Sea] and had not supplied our needs in the wilderness for forty years— <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had supplied our needs in the wilderness for forty years and had not fed us the manna— <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had fed us the manna and had not given us the Shabbat— <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had given us the Shabbat and had not brought us close to Mount Sinai — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had brought us close to Mount Sinai and had not given us the Torah — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had given us the Torah and had not brought us into the land of Israel — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i> If God had brought us into the land of Israel and had not built us [the Temple] — <i>Da-yei-nu!</i></p>	
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- Haggadah

See next page. . .

As the scholar Dr. Solomon Schimmel has written, “One interpretation of the structure of this poem is that when we reflect on a benefit that G-d (or by extension, another person) has done for us, we should break it into its multiple components, meditating on each element.”

Dayenu begins with an experience we had just been through, the exodus, and uses it to wax lyrical on a host of other experiences, asking us to see the interconnectedness of our blessings. It invites us to break each gift into its multiple components and then put them back together and stare in disbelief at our good fortune: I am grateful for this and for this and for this — until we become saturated with the unfolding of our prosperity and can think only of God’s myriad kindnesses.

Dr Erica Brown “Dayenu: A Jewish Template For Gratitude”

What does this mean, “It would have been enough”? Surely no one of these would indeed have been enough for us. It means to celebrate each step toward freedom as if it were enough, then to start out on the next step. It means that if we reject each step because it is not the whole liberation, we will never be able to achieve the whole liberation. It means to sing each verse as if it were the whole song-and then sing the next verse!

Then how much more, doubled and redoubled, is the claim the Place beyond all places has upon our thankfulness! . . .

But there is also work for us to do. It is our own labor that must give birth to freedom. In every generation we stand with those who first gave birth to freedom: with the midwives Shifrah and Puah. When Pharaoh chose death, they chose life. When Pharaoh proclaimed that babies must be murdered, they revered God and resisted Pharaoh. Their eyes saw God in every mother’s face, their ears heard God in every baby’s cry, their hands drew forth from the narrow place not only life but freedom.

The Saratoga Haggadah, compiled by Rabbis Linda Motzkin and Jonathan Rubenstein

Assignment for JEWL:

A Recording of you singing dayeinu, and your own personal list of gratitude for the blessings in your life right now!