

Sensitivity to Gratitude - Dayenu

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Source: Original

We also hope to bring Rabbi Akiva's sensitivity to bear on our sense of gratitude. Let us find and express gratitude for the many gifts, obvious and subtle, that we have been given.

We may well have lost touch with how amazing our lives are. Putting aside for a moment the details of our personal lives, let us fully appreciate the gifts we have been given as a people. We were slaves in Egypt, and Hashem took us out. Hashem! Himself! Hashem took us out—a miracle! And not only that, Hashem made it crystal clear to us just how He is the real, true G-d. That is an amazing thing! We actually know the Name of the One Power that is the highest Will in the universe! And He is invested in our success and well-being!

Not only that, Hashem showed His willingness to subvert the laws of nature on our behalf, showing us permanently that, since He controls nature and He likes us, He is willing to go beyond nature for us when He wishes.

And not only that, Hashem revealed to us the greatest secret in the world: Shabbat! Hashem taught us how to align with His time, and taught us how to access holy rest, the key to working in the world while maintaining proper perspective.

And Hashem brought us to Har Sinai and taught us how to be one people with one heart, and showed us how to be genuinely concerned for each other's spiritual and physical well-being. Hashem planted this secret of the unity of the Jewish people deep within our hearts so that we will always carry around with us a sense of family.

And Hashem gave us THE BOOK, the blueprint of reality, that contains ALL THE KEYS to accessing the goodness of every situation, from getting dressed to eating to praying. This Book helps us to know ourselves and know Hashem, keeps us young and forward-looking.

And then Hashem took us to the greatest place in the world, the Land of Israel. The place where even the air makes one wise, where one can feel the eyes of Hashem always, where the fruits can give one prophecy.

And then Hashem gave us the gift of the Temple, a place where we could always find and access Him. And even though we don't have the Temple today, it is in our memory as a possibility and as a goal. This is great!

Even the average Jew starts life with these gifts: freedom, guidance, access, love, goals. That is quite a birthright!

Spend time feeling gratitude for these precious gifts, even and especially in places where they challenge you. Find gratitude for the subtleties of these gifts - a particular aspect of Shabbat that you like, a particular place in Israel that you connect to. Which are you feeling this year more than the others?