

Dayenu

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Source: Love & Justice in a time of War

The name of this beautiful prayer is Dayenu, which means “it would have sufficed” or “we would have been satisfied.” Perhaps “grateful” would be a better translation. Dayenu is the song of our gratitude. A Jewish philosopher was once asked, “what is the opposite of hopelessness?” And he said, “Dayenu,” the ability to be thankful for what we have received, for what we are.

The first prayer that a Jew is expected to recite upon waking expresses hir gratitude for being alive. This holds for all generations, and surely ours. For each of us, every day should be an act of grace, every hour a miraculous offering.