

# Dayenu Reflection

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Source: Rabbi Avi Weiss

Many feel that redemption requires complete change. Dayenu reminds us that redemption or self-improvement is a process. Each line of the Dayenu makes this very point. For example, we say had God taken us out of Egypt and not executed judgment upon the Egyptians, Dayenu – it would have been enough. One should be perpetually moving toward self-improvement. The process is sometimes more valuable than the end result.

[...] I remember, during some of the most difficult times of the Free Soviet Jewry Movement, standing outside Soviet government buildings and chanting Dayenu. Our message was clear. We were saying "Enough of the suffering that our sisters and brothers in the Soviet Union are experiencing." We would spell out what we meant using the structure of the Dayenu itself. "Had only the Soviets prevented the baking of matzot, and not imprisoned Sharansky, it would have been enough...."

But in reality Dayenu teaches the opposite message. It tells us that had God only done one favor for us, it would have been enough. Dayenu is not a song of complaint; it is rather a song of thanksgiving to God. Dayenu is a perfect way to bring the learning in the magid section to a higher level. Once recounting the story of the Exodus, we cannot contain ourselves as we declare: Thank you, God, for allowing us to ascend and come one step closer to full redemption.

**In what ways** have we made real, tangible improvements to ourselves and the world? Take some time to think about them and appreciate each one.

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