

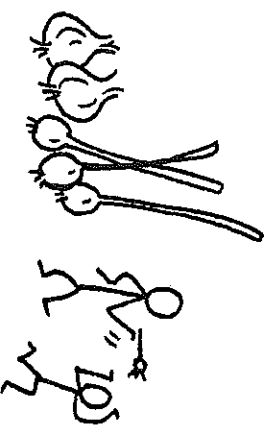
A.O. Post Night: The Family Participation Haggadah by Deon Zion

The Afghani Onion Free for All

If things at your seder are slowing down and people seem drowsy, try the Afghani custom of distributing green onions.

Beginning with the ninth stanza, "Even if you had supplied our needs in the desert for 40 years, but not fed us manna from heaven," the participants hit each other (gently?) with the green onion stalks, every time they sing the refrain "Da-yeinu."

Perhaps this custom is tied to the biblical story of the Jews who complained about the manna God had given them and recalled with longing the onions in Egypt. "We remember the fish that we used to eat in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the ONIONS and the garlic. Now our gullets are shrivelled. There is nothing at all. Nothing but this manna to look at" (Numbers 11:5-6). By beating each other with onions we admonish ourselves not to yearn for the fleshpots of Egypt and not to forget the Egyptian bondage.



Is It Ever Enough?

"Had God but split the sea, and not passed us through it on dry land – it would have been enough." How could it have been enough? Had Israel not escaped through the Red Sea, they would have been slaughtered by the Egyptians!

The point of the poem is to express gratitude for every facet of God's miraculous deliverance. There is a sense that the Exodus, which reached its fulfillment in the entry into the Land and the building of the Temple (a process of over 400 years!) unfolded in many steps, each constituting a miracle in itself. The poet feels the living power of each gesture of divine favor, irrespective of the total result. Had You only done this and no more – it would have been enough for me to feel Your divine love. The principle of "dayeinu," of giving thanks even for the partial and incomplete, is crucial for living in this uncertain world in which few dreams ever come to total fruition. We thank God every day for the miracle of being alive. In learning gratitude to God we also learn to show gratitude to parents, teachers, loved ones and friends, even when their efforts fall short of completeness.

Counting and Recounting Our Own Blessings: An Update

Dayenu establishes a pattern of enumerating our blessings one at a time but it ends with the building of the Temple circa 1000 B.C.E. Suggest another ten national or family events deserving thanks since then. For example, the Six Day War (1967), or the airlift of Ethiopian Jews to Israel (1991). You may wish to use Rabbi Irving Greenberg's contemporary Dayeinu (see page 109).

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A Contemporary Dayeinu

created in honor of the anniversary
of the birth of the State of Israel
by Rabbi Irving Greenberg

"It Would Have Been Enough..."

Had God upheld us throughout 2,000 years of Dispersion,
But not preserved our hope for return

Dayeinu!

Had God preserved our hope for return,
But not sent us leaders to make the dream a reality

Dayeinu!

Had God sent us leaders to make the dream a reality,
But not given us success in the U.N. vote in 1947

Dayeinu!

Had God given us success in the U.N. vote,
But not defeated our attackers in 1948

Dayeinu!

Had God defeated our attackers in 1948,
But not unified Jerusalem

Dayeinu!

Had God unified Jerusalem,
But not led us towards peace with Egypt and Jordan

Dayeinu!

Had God returned us to the land of our ancestors,
But not filled it with our children

Dayeinu!

Had God filled it with our children,
But not caused the desert to bloom

Dayeinu!

Had God caused the desert to bloom,
But not built for us cities and towns

Dayeinu!

Had God rescued our remnants from the Holocaust,
But not brought our brothers from Arab lands

Dayeinu!

Had God brought our brothers from Arab lands,
But not opened the gate for Russia's Jews

Dayeinu!

Had God opened the gate for Russia's Jews,
But not redeemed our people from Ethiopia

Dayeinu!

Had God redeemed our people from Ethiopia,
But not strengthened the State of Israel

Dayeinu!

Had God strengthened the State of Israel,
But not planted in our hearts a covenant of one people

Dayeinu!

Had God planted in our hearts a covenant of one people,
But not sustained in our souls a vision of a perfected world

Dayeinu!

