

Lo Dayeinu: When Heaven's Angels Are Not Enough

Even though our ancestors had witnessed the signs and wonders that broke Pharaoh's spirit and tasted the first moments of freedom, *lo dayeinu*, it wasn't enough because they saw the waters blocking their way and Egypt's chariots charging for the kill.

And even when the waters parted and we crossed as if on dry land, *lo dayeinu*, it wasn't enough for us because we didn't have enough water.

And even when God inspired Moses to turn the bitter waters sweet, *lo dayeinu*, it wasn't enough for us because we didn't have enough to eat.

And even when *manna* fell from heaven to sustain us, *lo dayeinu*, it wasn't enough for us because we lacked direction.

And even with pillars of fire marking the way and angels of God guiding us, *lo dayeinu*, it wasn't enough because ...because we hadn't learned how to do it ourselves.

It was only when we accepted responsibility and realized that God had given us control over our own actions that we could fully say: *dayeinu*, it was enough.

It was only when we embraced our own leadership and realized that though there would never be a time without need and challenge, there need not be a time without hope and love, that we could fully say: *dayeinu*, it is enough.

In this week's Torah portion, we read the Ten Commandments. The significance of this most momentous revelation is that our ancestors no longer looked for angels and miracles to free us, feed us, or lead us. Rather, we had the inspiration of *mitzvot*, of the ideals, values and principles of sacred actions that could positively transform the world. And from that moment on, even though we were just straggling refugees, wandering in the Sinai Peninsula, our ancestors taught the world with the notion that God's greatest gift was not in performing miracles that interceded with history. Rather, it was in empowering us to deeds of kindness, generosity, courage, sensitivity, wisdom and love.

Instead of waiting for angels from heaven, Judaism teaches that we must play an active and personal role as we seek to address and solve society's problems. With so many

government workers currently furloughed because of the shutdown, it's important to mention that Jewish Family Service has opened its pantry and services to help those struggling families.

I also want to mention another very important organization that feeds thousands of hungry people in the greater Denver area, Project Angel Heart. I had the privilege of touring their impressive facility and reviewing the possibilities for volunteers and came away deeply moved and impressed.

Project Angel Heart improves health and well-being for people with life-threatening illnesses by preparing and delivering medically tailored meals and promoting the power of food as medicine. It was founded in 1991 to serve the HIV/AIDS community and has since expanded to serve over 3,000 people in the Denver and Colorado Springs communities with any life-threatening illness. Meals are provided at no charge and are brought to each person with great sensitivity and respect. Each meal is designed specifically to meet the needs of the person and/or family.

Temple Sinai will proudly participate in helping Project Angel Heart feed the hungry and lift up the spirits of those who feel forgotten and ignored. As you will hear much more in the coming months about this partnership, please take the time to check out their website: <https://www.projectangelheart.org>

Of course, if you are willing to help in this project, please let me know. Yes, it's not enough simply to have hopes that angels will come and save the day. And yet, we have something even better: we have "Earth Angels" like you!

B'vrakhah,

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