

Graduation

For over a thousand years Jewish Passover Seders have included the song “Dayenu”, which is a Hebrew expression translated as “It would have been enough” or “It would have been sufficient”. It is a joyful prayer of gratitude, retelling the story of God’s accumulated and unexpected blessings to His people, each line recounting one of God’s miracles, and ending with “Dayenu” – it would have been enough! It is an amazing litany.

This weekend I experienced something similar at my granddaughter Mykah’s graduation. Psalm 128 is a promise I have watched come true in my life and my family’s. It concludes with a promise precious to grandparents:

The LORD bless you out of Zion,
And may you see the good of Jerusalem
All the days of your life.
Yes, may you see your children’s children.
Peace be on Israel.

Saturday morning as the graduates processed into Ramsey arena at Western Carolina University, I found myself overwhelmed with gratitude to be present for this occasion. Of course, we looked for Mykah’s entrance, but it wasn’t until the occupants of the speaker’s dais entered that we saw her, walking with the chancellor and the trustees to take her seat among them on the platform, and I couldn’t hold back my tears. It would have been enough, Lord, to have just lived to see her come into the world, welcomed by her Mom and Dad, a miracle to her grandparents. *Dayenu*. But if I had just held her in my arms and never seen her as a little girl, *Dayenu*. But if I had seen her through childhood and never heard her sing “Breath of Heaven”, or “Popular” or “Pure Imagination”, *Dayenu*. But if I had watched all of that and attended her high-school graduation, but had missed her university graduation, I would have gone home grateful. *Dayenu*. But I was there, watching her walk gracefully, not only into the arena, but onto the speaker’s platform, there to be honored by her school’s faculty and staff as the chosen commencement speaker – *Dayenu*. To listen as she artfully, humorously, and so professionally delivered her address. Oh, it would have been enough! But I was also there to see her receive her diploma, with **Mykah Susanne Green, Summa Cum Laude** highlighted on the screen above - Oh Yes, *Dayenu*. Most importantly, she is kind, and loving, and beautiful in form and figure, and ready to live her life. I am overwhelmed with the fulfillment of God’s promises: I have lived to know and love my son’s daughter, and as a woman she is wonderful.

Assuredly, there is a bittersweet aspect of graduations, for they necessarily mark the end of one of life’s phases and the beginning of something new. For some, the stage they are leaving will be their apogee, remembered with nostalgia and the regret of unfulfilled expectations. I have no such fears for Mykah. I, too, am approaching a graduation of sorts, and my only regret is that I will miss other graduations, weddings, babies, and Christmases in the lives of my grandchildren – and yet, it has been enough. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness and Joy Unspeakable. I wish Mykah the same future.

