Today’s Old Testament story in Exodus tells the heart of the story of the Jewish people. This is the story of the Passover. The story itself is beautiful and complex, God’s making of a nation out of a people. The whole part about unblemished lamb, either from sheep or goats, and roasted, not boiled, may seem weirdly proscriptive to us, but it is a ritual meal in which God’s people would celebrate and continue to celebrate their relationship with God.

The essential part of that relationship is all tied up in the Passover itself. (Although Christians like to think of the Passover as our heritage, it isn’t really. Jesus’s words commanding the Eucharist come out of the setting of the Passover, but the Passover is its own ritual meal.) What is of utmost importance for the Jewish people is not that God created the world or is sustainer of all flesh (although God is)— -what is most important in the Jewish life in faith is defined by the ritual and theology that centers around Passover, God’s fundamental action as the “Lord your God who brought you out of the Land of Egypt to be your God.” All actions of the people stem from the ethical mindset to walk in God’s ways to be driven to ethical compassion because the Jewish people were once slaves, strangers in a strange land, brought out of slavery. God’s freeing of Israel as slaves of Egypt to be a new people, a new nation, reminds Jewish people and us that the world will not be redeemed until every slave is freed and all oppression is rooted out.

And yet, there is a profound sense of gratitude, thankfulness at its core that accompanies this celebration. The thankfullness is not ordinary “Oh gee, God, you shouldn’t have…” , but expresses heart-defining gratitude to God … it is a recognition that God does so much more. There is even a 1000 year old song, first seen in a medieval Haggadah, the Jewish text that sets forth the order of a Passover Seder, called *Dayenu* דַּיֵּנוּ, which means it would have been enough or it would have been sufficient— literally “enough for us.” What is meant by this is that God gives so many gifts, any one of the gifts would have been enough; —- taking the people out of slavery (*dayenu*- that would have been enough by itself), giving the Torah, the law (*dayenu*- that would have been enough). The song comes right after the telling of the story of the Exodus (*dayenu*).

As much as the Passover meal is not ours as Christians, we celebrate our Jewish roots. Having been made a people— a nation of Israel, the same people in covenant with God and to whom Jesus came, we too can say *dayenu.*

Most importantly we can also say *dayenu* from God’s life in Christ forward. It is enough that Jesus came in to world to save sinners- *dayenu.* It is sufficient or enough that Jesus Christ our Lord heals – *dayenu*. If is enough the Jesus conquered death- *dayenu*. If it were only that, it would be enough. Just the incarnation, just the resurrection, those are sufficient-*dayenu*. To practice gratitude for God’s mercy on us—- God’s commitment to us to want to save us from the get go. We are compelled, happy and grateful to offer our unceasing praise. *dayenu*

If all of those were not enough, and yet they are, we learn in scripture and continually today that God acting through us in God the Spirit opens up so much more.

We can learn love because we are loved. In today’s section of Paul’s letter to the Romans, he explains that love and keeping the law are not in opposition to each other. Because Jesus taught us fully how to love by loving us, we are able to understand that keeping commandments are loving acts. They are not arbitrary acts. The law shows you how to how love your neighbor. They show us how to be Christ to the other. *Dayenu. The law alone would have been enough – but God does more, takes us into the heart of the law, into love.*

The Gospel too, gives us more, gives us more than enough. There are many who would take and have taken this passage as a guideline for how to handle church conflict. (I would note that this passage has very few scholars who think Jesus actually said it because the concept of “church” or *ekklesia* was not part of Jesus’s world, but it was part of Matthew’s. Yet, I say this not to discount the passage; it still has many things to teach.) The important parts of this passage are two fold. One is that if you meet with someone who has sinned against you (not someone you just don’t like, but someone who has done something egregious), and you talk and work it out with or without the church involved, then you ***regain*** them. That is cause for celebration. This is enough – *dayenu.* We learn forgiveness because we are forgiven.

The second part of this, is even if the meeting doesn’t work out, then you treat the person as a Gentile (read sinner) or tax-collector. At first that sounds like a curse to them. But before we rejoice that we get to behave righteously indignant, first remember how Jesus treats sinners and tax-collectors. He loves them. He stays in relationship. And so do we, as much as the one who has offended us will allow. Still, we love. Still, we forgive. Whether they turn or whether they don’t. Our love and forgiveness are enough for them, even if they don’t know it yet. And that would also be enough for us- *dayenu.*

*Dayenu – from the God who graces us, every grace is enough, and yet God gives more.* You are to keep loving, because you are loved. You keep forgiving, because you are forgiven. We learn forgiveness because we are forgiven. Any one of these gifts or any of the others from God would by itself be enough. Yet God gives, superabundantly, more than we merit, more than we need. How the world might change if we could all sing *dayenu* every day!