

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening

Week 9: Our reading this week comes from the first testament, the Hebrew scriptures. God forms the Chosen People by asking them to hear the words of life.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Deuteronomy 6.4-9

Choose the reflective questions that suit your family:

Hear, O Israel, God says. What do we hear? Love God with all of our heart and all of our soul and all of our might. Do we know someone who does that? Jesus loves God with his whole self—with his little baby finger, with the tip of his big toe, with his belly, with his arms, with his legs. All of his thinking, all of his dreaming—his whole self loves God. How does he do this? He gives his whole self to his friends, his body and his life as the bread and the wine. Is Jesus the only one who loves God with his whole self?

Ages 3-6

Hear, O Israel, God says. What do we hear? You shall, God says. “Shall” means we must and we can. How can we love with all our heart; can all our feelings love? How can we love with all our soul; can our whole special self love? How can we love with all our might; can our whole body love? You shall, God says. God seems pretty confident that we can do this!

Ages 6-9

Hear, O Israel, God says. What do we hear? God wants parents reciting these words to their children. What does that mean? God wants people talking about these words always. Why? What does this do? When we discuss things as a family, when we argue about them, when we ask questions, what does that do for us?

teenagers

Hear, O Israel, God says. What do we hear? God says to keep the words God commands in our heart. To keep can mean to treasure. It can mean to remember. God suggests putting them on our hand, our forehead and on our doorposts. How else could we keep them (so that we do not write graffiti on our bodies and homes!)?

Ages 9-12

Read the scripture.

Ask questions.

Listen to each other's answers.

Then pray the prayer together on page 2.

Listen Prayer

One person leads and everyone else responds (R.)

Lord, our God,

We praise you for the wisdom of your will that unfolds all around us. We desire to enter more profoundly into this mystery, to root ourselves firmly in your will, to listen ever more deeply to you.

R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

Teach us to listen closely to your Word—to the words on the page and the meaning they invoke, to the human author and to the divine, to the spaces between the letters where your Spirit dwells.



R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

Teach us to listen attentively to Creation—to the voice of the earth, to the whispering of wind and waves, to the silence of the rocks and soil and swarms of voiceless creatures.



R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

Teach us to listen respectfully to the culture that surrounds us—to its wisdom and its folly, to the loud voices and the quiet, to that which can teach us and form us and expand our thinking.



R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.

And teach us, Lord, to listen deeply to one another—to what we speak aloud and to what we leave unsaid, to our needs and to our concerns, to the love and the longing and desires of our hearts.

**R. We come before you.
We make ourselves still.
We listen to understand.
Amen.**

