

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...When your children ask you in time to come, "What is the meaning of the decrees and the statutes and the ordinances that the LORD our God has commanded you? then you shall say to your children..."¹

Cannot you just hear the families of Israel and our families today in turn saying, "We **will** recite them to our children when we are at home and when we are away, when we lie down and when we rise. We **will** bind them as a sign on our hand, fix them as an emblem on our forehead, and write them on the doorposts of our house and on our gates...When our children ask us in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the decrees and the statutes and the ordinances that the LORD our God has commanded us?' then we **will** say to our children...What?... What **will** we say?"

Tell them a story. Tell them a story about God; tell them a story about children; tell them a story about the world; tell them a story about the nature of their relationship to God, the world, and each other. Tell them a story.

Tell them a story about Christian care and nurture: Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge, written by Mem Fox and illustrated by Julie Vivas; Different Just Like Me, written and illustrated by Lori Mitchell; The Old Woman Who Named Things, written by Cynthia Rylant and illustrated by Kathryn Brown; and Don't Laugh At Me, written by Steve Seskin & Allen Shamblin and illustrated by Glin Dibley.

Tell them a story about gratitude: Joseph Had a Little Overcoat, by Simms Taback; Whoever You Are, written by Mem Fox and illustrated by Leslie Staub; Thank You, World, written by Alice B. McGinty and illustrated by Wendy Anderson Halperin; and When I Was Young In The Mountains, written by Cynthia Rylant and illustrated by Diane Goode.

Tell them a story that demonstrates the love of God: Koala Lou, written by Mem Fox and illustrated by Pamela Lofts; You're All My Favorites, written by Sam McBratney and illustrated by Anita Jeram; The Stars Will Still Shine, written by Cynthia Rylant and illustrated by Tiphonie Beeke; and Always, written by Alison McGhee and illustrated by Pascal Lemaître.

Tell them a story about hope: Our Children Can Soar: A Celebration of Rosa, Barack, and the Pioneers of Change, written by Michelle Cook and illustrations by, Cozbi A. Cabrera, R. Gregory Christie, Bryan Collier, Pat Cummings, Leo and Diane Dillon, AG Ford, E. B. Lewis, Frank Morrison, James Ransome, Charlotte

¹ Adapted from Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 20 (NRSV).

Riley-Webb, Shadra Strickland, and Eric Velasquez; The Boy Who Didn't Believe in Spring, written by Lucille Clifton and illustrated by Brinton Turkle; The Story of Ruby Bridges, written by Robert Coles and illustrated by George Ford; and Because of You, written by B. G. Hennessy and illustrated by Hiroe Nakata.

Tell them a story about forgiveness: Down the Road, written by Alice Schertle and illustrated by E. B. Lewis; tell them a story about mourning: Tough Boris, written by Mem Fox and illustrated by Kathryn Brown; tell them a story about creation: Song of Creation, written by Kathleen Long Bostrom and illustrated by Peter Fasolino; tell them a story about sharing: The Beastly Feast, written by Bruce Goldstone and illustrated by Blair Lent; tell them a story about the gifts of God: Today Is the Birthday of the World, written by Linda Heller and illustrated by Alison Jay. Tell them a story.