



Faith Adventures Youth Resource

Embedded in Faith Adventures: Children Together, this youth resource is intergenerational in nature and designed to foster God-connection in church, home and beyond.

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Faith-Adventures-How-To-FAYR.pdf>

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9

Theme: Keep God’s word with you, every day and every where

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know before we begin?

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Welcome to 2025 – and your first theme for the new year is a big one: The Bible.

As usual, across the four weeks of the theme we will be exploring an Old Testament reading, a Psalm, a Gospel passage and an Epistle (letter).

This week’s focus will be keeping God’s word with you, every day and everywhere and we shall be exploring this using Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

This passage is the first section of the Shema – a prayer which is recited twice daily by observant Jews as part of their morning and evening prayers. It is usually said with the hands covering the eyes. The second section of the Shema specifies what will happen if God’s commands are heeded – and what will happen if they are not!

Orthodox Jews may be seen wearing a kippah (skull caps), a tallit (prayer shawl), and tefillin (phylacteries). The tefillin consist of two black leather boxes and straps to hold them on. One is worn on the biceps, and its strap, which is tied with a special knot, is wound by the wearer seven times around the forearm and hand—on the left arm for right-handed people and on the right for those who are left-handed. The second box is worn on the forehead at the hairline, with its straps



going around the back of the head, connected at the top of the neck with a special knot, and hanging in front on each side. Within the boxes are scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah. Tefillin are worn to help Jews keep the commandment in verse 8.

The reasoning behind these articles is to enable the wearer to have God's commands close to their heart, their minds and their hands (Matthew 22:37-38).

A mezuzah is a piece of parchment inscribed with specific Hebrew verses from the Torah, which Jews fix to the doorposts of their homes (verse 9) although the word is also used to include the decorative covering for the scroll. They are always deliberately fixed at a slight angle – to remind those who see them that only God is perfect. You can find out more about mezuzahs at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z2tpjty/revision/1>

These religious devices enable worshippers to remember God's commands without writing directly on property – graffiti is not recommended! – or tattooing (which is proscribed in Leviticus 19.28). If members of your group do wish to follow the passage literally, please ensure they use washable pens.

The passage invites believers to talk about God, and what God expects from us, and what God will do for us. This can result in some wonderful intergenerational conversations, and these should be encouraged. We find "God's commands" in the Bible and **this passage, particularly exploring it at the beginning of a new year, is an opportunity to give members of your group their own Bible (see the list below for suggested/recommended translations). Perhaps older members of the church could sponsor, or donate, suitable Bibles for your group.**

Having a Bible close to hand can remind us of what we should be doing and may be a source of comfort as well as information. Be aware, though, that the passage doesn't insist that we read scripture – but that we should discuss it with our friends and family, so it doesn't matter if members of your group can't read well, or don't read English well - it is the conversations that are important.

Together

Let's start our time with God and each other well

If used in a mixed-age group, then young people can support younger ones in using the gathering prayer in Faith Adventures: Children Together. If used in a youth group, you could use this opening prayer or encourage young people to open the session with a prayer of their own.

*All mighty God,
Be with us as we learn more about you through stories and people in the Bible.
Help us to walk in your way and follow your path.
Be with us as we make decisions that affect our lives, and the lives of those around us.
Amen*

In-person and online game

See this week's Faith Adventures : Children Together for suitable games for this theme.



Experience

Research different versions of this reading on <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

Watch: Short explanation of The Jewish Shema Prayer Deuteronomy 6 by Bible Project
https://youtu.be/6KQLOulKaRA?si=cdo0Bdv2VAPN0nY_

A 5 minute reflection on Deuteronomy 6: 4 – 9 by Martin Bender
https://youtu.be/Xu_MNs7pvWg?si=YxsBWe0Rqli2QaZR

Love the Lord your God by Lincoln Brewster
<https://youtu.be/EAbEfsqLdc?si=ilwmQKtQ4CKRi29E>

Discussion questions:

- What would it be like to have a prayer that you tied on your body every day? What would be the benefits and what would be the downside?
- What do you do to help you remember important things?
- How could you love God with your heart, soul and your strength? What do you think this means?

Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme

You may wish to use the explore section from this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together to guide your exploration of the theme this week.

Alternatively:

Begin by asking what the group already know about the Bible and perhaps do this by passing a bible round as a talking tool, capture their thoughts and comments on a big sheet of paper.

Each person has a bible, the game leader says the name of a book in the Bible and it's the first one to find it that wins.

This can also be played using Book, chapter and verse. A more tricky version of the game could be to be the first to find a particular story (for those who know their Bible)

Modern parables

This section includes references to TV programmes, films, books, TED talks, TikTok etc aimed at this age group that will have been widely seen, or where a clip is available to use as a stimulus for discussion. You may also enjoy the picture book recommended for Faith Adventures: Children Together and explore the relevance of the story to the theme of the session in more depth – young people and adults are often well tuned in to the deeper meanings in materials aimed at younger people and the authors are often very aware of the adults reading the books to or with younger ones.

Inkheart



Inkheart is the story of a man and his daughter who have a gift, whatever they read aloud becomes real. Watch this trailer.

https://youtu.be/Usm_nlcsmX0?si=B9_ANPZgHVxEFzAS

I wonder what it would be like if everything we read became real? What have you been reading lately? Is it something you would want to see in the real world?

Which parts of the Bible would you like to see played out in the world?

Do you ever speak scripture out loud or quote it to others?

Talking together: Going deeper

- Do you think the Bible would have been any different if women had been involved in writing/producing it?
- Some people believe the Bible is the direct word of God, some people believe it was inspired by God, some people believe it is totally made up. What do you think?
- There is a collection of books called the Apocrypha which is the books that didn't quite make it into the Bible. Some Christians think it is part of the Bible while others don't. What do you think is the reason? How did the people who put the Bible together choose?
- I wonder why there are parts of the Bible that we don't read very often?
- The image of the Jews keeping the scriptures close to their skin might remind us of tattoos. What's your opinion of tattoos? Does your view change if it's a Christian tattoo? Did you know it actually says in Leviticus that tattoos are wrong? Do you agree?

Conversation starters

- What is your favourite part of the Bible and what part do you find most difficult?
- Do you own a Bible and, if so, where do you keep it? Do you treat it the same way as other books or differently?

Express

How do we respond to what we've discussed and express our faith personally?

Praying together

Prayer

Respond to the theme by writing or saying a short prayer. Alternatively use the creative prayer from Faith Adventures: Children Together for this session, or use the prayer activity below.

Alternatively light a candle and play some music while you listen and talk to God together.

This is a well known prayer from long ago that you could make your own. Read it and make sure you understand what it is saying first, then use them in your prayers.

Prayer

God be in my head,
And in my understanding;
God be in mine eyes,
And in my looking;
God be in my mouth,



And in my speaking;
 God be in my heart,
 And in my thinking;
 God be at mine end,
 And at my departing.

Sarum Primer, 1558

Responding together

This is an opportunity for a social justice challenge, some research, craftivism, or a craft or STEM activity. You may have a specific activity chosen but free choice is also an option. Here are some suggestions for this week's theme. See Faith Adventures: Children Together for a craft and a STEM activity which may also be appropriate. Choose whatever will work best for your group.

Make a Bible Calendar

You will need:

- Four copies of the templates below
- Drawing/colouring/collaging or scrapbooking materials

What you do:

Decorate each of the templates, one for each quarter of the year.

You could do different words or illustrations as detailed above or could make one for the Old Testament, one for the Psalms, one for the Gospels (stories of Jesus) and one for the Epistles (letters). Use your calendar to mark the days you read your Bible or hear a Bible story.

On the calendar part of the page, write the month names in the top row (see below for illustration).

Look at a calendar to find out which day the first of the month lands on and in the row above that number, write the initial of the day, then the initial of the next day above the number 2 and so on. If the month has fewer than 31 days, cross out the numbers you don't need.

Punch holes in the top of the calendar pages and fasten them loosely together with ribbon to complete your calendar.

January							February							March						
w	Th	F	Sa	S	M	T	Sa	S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	S	M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31					29	30	31				



Challenge

Discipleship doesn't stop when you walk out of the church door – it is a part of everyday life. Take a challenge with you and try to make it part of your week.

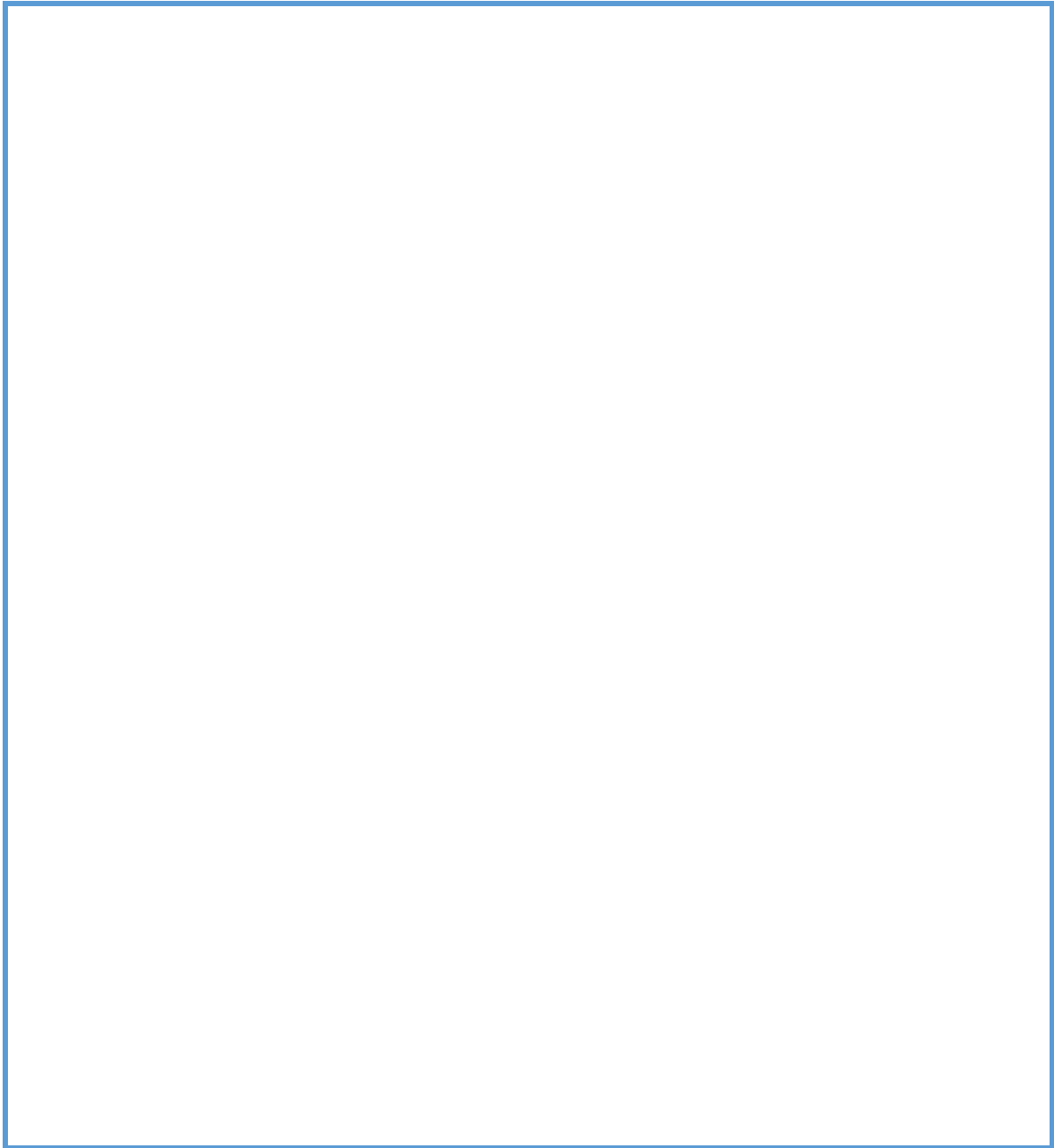
You may think of your own suggestion of what you as an individual or a group might do in the coming week in response to what you have explored today? If not here are some suggestions:

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- Use one of the “conversation starter” questions or the question below to talk with someone of a different generation or from a different setting and share your questions, thoughts, insights together. **If you could add a story to the Bible, what story do you think it should be?**
 - Research something suggested by JPIT, [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](https://resources.jpit.uk) Commitment for Life cforl.co.uk
 - See what you can find out about the work of the Bible Society <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk>
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Thank you for exploring the **Deuteronomy** passage with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing children.youth@urc.org.uk or by sharing it on https://bit.ly/FACT_FB





1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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