

Hebrew Bible

Hear God's ancient call to love from the book of Leviticus 19: 1-2, 15-18

Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying:

Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them:
You shall be holy, for I Yahweh your God am holy.

You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour.

You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbour: I am Yahweh.

You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself.

You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am Yahweh.

For the Holy One forever calling us to love,

We give thanks.

Gospel

Hear words of wisdom from the Gospel of Matthew 22:34-46

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.

"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love Most High God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment.

And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose descendent is he?" They said to him, "The descendent of David."

Jesus said to them, "How is it then that David by the Spirit calls the Messiah Sovereign, saying, 'The Most High said to my Sovereign, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet"'? If David calls the Messiah 'Sovereign,' how can the Messiah be a descendent of David?"

No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

May we hear these words with our minds and our hearts

And respond with our love and our lives.

Contemporary Reading

Listen for contemporary words of faith from theologian Dorothee Soelle, in *Against the Wind: Memoir of a Radical Christian*, p. 156.

Mutuality

It astonished me how often [my mother] folded her hands during a nearly four-weeks-long death struggle. As if crying out loud were not enough.

... While singing to her, I had a feeling of being connected to her, as if she had found contentment through it. It did not seem as if I were doing something 'for her', but as if we were together walking toward something greater than we are. An old theological conviction of mine was strengthened during those nights at her deathbed, namely, that without mutuality, without giving and taking on both sides, there can be no love. God cannot 'give' us anything if we do not become the bearers and givers of God's power.

For the Word that was in the beginning
for the Word that invites and inspires,
for the Word embodied in us,

We give thanks.