

Self-control

Welcome to this time of Quiet Reflection. Take your time reading to yourself (or out loud) some or all of these bible passages, and then pausing for a few minutes after any that you wish to reflect on.

The Taizé chants between readings can be sung in your head as often as you like, or out loud, or listened to from these links, pausing as you wish:

Within our darkest night - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8BmvxqJH0g>

The Lord is my light - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qcp6fOFMg9w>

O Lord hear my prayer - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nCj07ECM>

Beginning

*Within our darkest night,
you kindle the fire that never
dies away,
that never dies away.*

Genesis 43.26-31

When Joseph came back to his house, his brothers bowed to the ground before him. He inquired about their welfare, and said, 'Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still

alive?' They said, 'Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.' And they bowed their heads and did obeisance. Then he looked up and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, 'Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!' With that, Joseph hurried out, because he was overcome with affection for his brother, and he was about to weep. So he went into a private room and wept there. Then he washed his face and came out; and controlling himself he said, 'Serve the meal.'



Genesis 45.1

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, 'Send everyone away from me.' So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

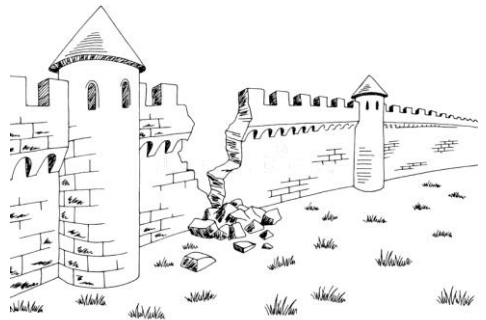
*Within our darkest night,
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Proverbs 16.32

One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,
and one whose temper is controlled than one who captures a city.

Proverbs 25.28

Like a city breached, without walls,
is one who lacks self-control.



Jeremiah 10.23-24

I know, O Lord, that the way of
human beings is not in their control,
that mortals as they walk cannot direct their steps.
Correct me, O Lord, but in just measure;
not in your anger, or you will bring me to nothing.

Ecclesiasticus 21.11

Whoever keeps the law controls his thoughts,
and the fulfilment of the fear of the Lord is wisdom.

*Within our darkest night,
you kindle the fire that never dies away,
that never dies away.*

Acts 24.24-25

Some days later when Felix the Roman Governor came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him speak concerning faith in Christ Jesus. And as he discussed justice, self-control, and the coming judgement, Felix became frightened and said, 'Go away for the present; when I have an opportunity, I will send for you.'

1 Corinthians 9.20-27

To the Jews I, Paul, became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I might by any means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.



Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.

*The Lord is my light,
my light and salvation:
in God I trust,
in God I trust.*

Galatians 5.22-23

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

1 Thessalonians 4.1-9

Finally, brothers and sisters, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that, as you learned from us how you ought to live and to please God (as, in fact, you are doing), you should do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you knows how to control your own body in holiness and honour, not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one wrongs or exploits a brother or sister in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we have already told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness. Therefore whoever rejects this rejects not human authority but God, who also gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Now concerning love of the brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anyone write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another.

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Titus 1.4-9

I left you behind in Crete for this reason, that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you: someone who is blameless, married only once, whose children are believers, not accused of debauchery and not rebellious.

For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled.



Titus 2.1-3.2

But as for you, teach what is consistent with sound doctrine. Tell the older men to be temperate, serious, prudent, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance.

Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behaviour, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, so that the word of God may not be discredited.

Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, and sound speech that cannot be censured; then any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed



hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarrelling, to be gentle, and to show every courtesy to everyone.

*The Lord is my light,
my light and salvation:
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2 Peter 1.2-11

May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants in the divine nature.

For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Passage to be read slowly – explore what resonates with you

Wisdom of Solomon 7.21-8.7

I learned both what is secret and what is manifest,
for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me.

There is in her a spirit that is intelligent, holy,
unique, manifold, subtle,
mobile, clear, unpolluted,
distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, keen,
irresistible, beneficent, humane,
steadfast, sure, free from anxiety,
all-powerful, overseeing all,
and penetrating through all spirits
that are intelligent, pure, and altogether subtle.

For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;
because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things.
For she is a breath of the power of God,
and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty;
therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her.

For she is a reflection of eternal light,
a spotless mirror of the working of God,
and an image of his goodness.
Although she is but one, she can do all things,
and while remaining in herself, she renews all things;
in every generation she passes into holy souls
and makes them friends of God, and prophets;
for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom.

She is more beautiful than the sun,
and excels every constellation of the stars.
Compared with the light she is found to be superior,
for it is succeeded by the night,
but against wisdom evil does not prevail.

She reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other,
and she orders all things well.

I loved her and sought her from my youth;
I desired to take her for my bride,
and became enamoured of her beauty.

She glorifies her noble birth by living with God,
and the Lord of all loves her.

For she is an initiate in the knowledge of God,
and an associate in his works.

If riches are a desirable possession in life,
what is richer than wisdom, the active cause of all things?

And if understanding is effective,
who more than she is fashioner of what exists?

And if anyone loves righteousness,
her labours are virtues;

for she teaches self-control and prudence,
justice and courage;

nothing in life is more profitable for mortals than these.

Time for Silent Prayer

O Lord hear my prayer.

O Lord hear my prayer.

When I call, answer me.

O Lord hear my prayer.

O Lord hear my prayer.

Come and listen to me.

(...repeat at end of the silence)

Ending Prayer

Heavenly Father,
give us patient faith in times of darkness,
and strength to meet any troubles in the days to come.

May we may ever draw closer to you,
and find strength within the shelter of your love.

Amen.