

Wisdom

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:

Ubi caritas - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX7tAZIAWbE>

Nothing can trouble - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRsxU_3-fpk

O Lord hear my prayer - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nCy2j07ECM>

Beginning

Ubi caritas (Where there is charity and love, there is God)

Ubi caritas et amor.

Ubi caritas

Deus ibi est.

To set the scene - read this passage slowly – imagine being there as an observer.

1 Kings 3

Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt; he took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the city of David, until he had finished building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall around Jerusalem.

Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David.

He went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, and while he was there, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask what I should give you.'

And Solomon said, 'You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.

'And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted.

'Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?'

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.

God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word.

'Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.

'I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honour all your life; no other king shall compare with you.

'If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life.'

Then Solomon awoke; it had been a dream.

He came to Jerusalem, where he stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. He offered up burnt-offerings and offerings of well-being, and provided a feast for all his servants.



Later, two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him.

One woman said, 'Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth.

'We were together; there was no one else with us in the house, only the two of us were in the house. Then this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him.

'She got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your servant slept. She laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast.

'When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, I saw that he was dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, clearly it was not the son I had borne.'

But the other woman said, 'No, the living son is mine, and the dead son is yours.'

The first said, 'No, the dead son is yours, and the living son is mine.'

So they argued before the king.

Then the king said, 'One says, "This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead"; while the other says, "Not so! Your son is dead, and my son is the living one."'

So the king said, 'Bring me a sword', and they brought a sword before the king.

The king said, 'Divide the living boy in two; then give half to one, and half to the other.'

But the woman whose son was alive said to the king—because compassion for her son burned within her—'Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!'



The other said, 'It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it.'

Then the king responded: 'Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother.'

All Israel heard of the judgement that the king had rendered; and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice.

God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon; they came from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

Ubi caritas et amor.

Ubi caritas

Deus ibi est.

Deuteronomy 34.9:

Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Job 12

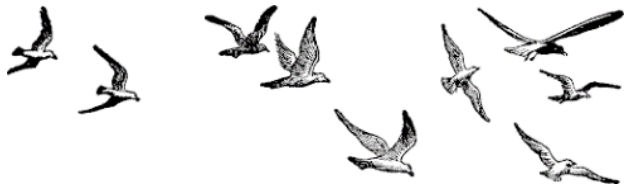
Ask the animals, and they will teach you;

the birds of the air, and they will tell you;
ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you;
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.

Who among all these does not know
that the hand of the Lord has done this?

In his hand is the life of every living thing
and the breath of every human being.

With God are wisdom and strength;
he has counsel and understanding.



Job 28

Where then does wisdom come from?

And where is the place of understanding?

It is hidden from the eyes of all living,
and concealed from the birds of the air.

Abaddon and Death say,

“We have heard a rumour of it with our ears.”

God understands the way to it,
and he knows its place.

For he looks to the ends of the earth,
and sees everything under the heavens.

When he gave to the wind its weight,
and apportioned out the waters by measure;

when he made a decree for the rain,
and a way for the thunderbolt;

then he saw it and declared it;
he established it, and searched it out.

And he said to humankind,

“Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
and to depart from evil is understanding.”

Ubi caritas et amor.

Ubi caritas

Deus ibi est.

Psalm 51

You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Let me hear joy and gladness;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence,

and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.

Psalm 111

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practise it have a good understanding.

Isaiah 11

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.



Daniel 2

Blessed be the name of God from age to age,
for wisdom and power are his.

Ubi caritas et amor.

Ubi caritas

Deus ibi est.

Wisdom of Solomon 7 - Solomon prays for wisdom

May God grant me to speak with judgement,
and to have thoughts worthy of what I have received;
for he is the guide even of wisdom
and the corrector of the wise.
For both we and our words are in his hand,
as are all understanding and skill in crafts.

For it is he who gave me unerring knowledge of what exists,
to know the structure of the world and the activity of the elements;
the beginning and end and middle of times,
the alternations of the solstices and the changes of the seasons,
the cycles of the year and the constellations of the stars,
the natures of animals and the tempers of wild animals,
the powers of spirits and the thoughts of human beings,
the varieties of plants and the virtues of roots;
I learned both what is secret and what is manifest,
for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me.

The Nature of Wisdom

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.

*Nothing can trouble,
nothing can frighten.
Those who seek God
shall never go wanting.
Nothing can trouble,
nothing can frighten.
God alone fills us.*

Luke 2.40

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

Luke 2.52

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

Mark 6.2

On the sabbath Jesus began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands!

Luke 21.15

I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict.

Acts of the Apostles 6.10

Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those

from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.

Romans 11.33

O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways!

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1 Corinthians 1.17

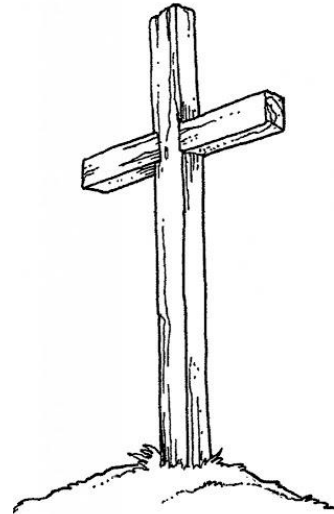
For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

For it is written,
'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe?
Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe.



1 Corinthians 1.25

For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

1 Corinthians 2.1

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom.

My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Corinthians 2.13

And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

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1 Corinthians 3.19

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

Ephesians 1.17

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

James 3.13

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. For the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.

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.*

*O Lord hear my prayer.
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When I call, answer me.
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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.