



DEVOTIONS FOR LIFE

Aldersgate Church ~ St. Louis Park, MN

Week of October 30, 2022 (1 Kings 3:4-28)

Prayer for Groups & Personal Devotion:

God of wisdom and compassion, listen to our cries as we share our deepest hope and desires.

We come before your throne seeking your justice and mercy. We come thankful that no matter who we are or what we believe you make time for us.

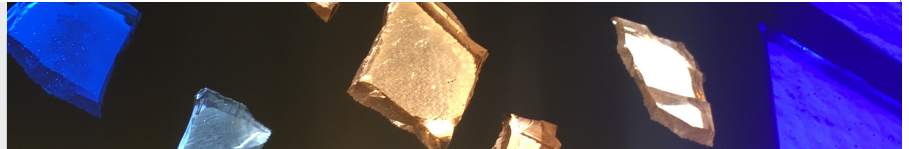
Merciful one, hear us as we place our requests and help us to be patient and accepting of your response.

We bring before you parents who have lost a child, comfort them and give them strength to face tomorrow.

We bring before you children who have been orphaned or abandoned, give them loving homes and families to care for them.

We bring before you situations where people are disagreeing with each other, may they find peaceful and acceptable solutions.

We bring before you places...



Devotions for Life

The Story: 1 Kings 3:4-28

Context: Last week we made a huge jump, both in time and also in context. This week we move just one generation later. Last week we left off with King David "taking" Bathsheba and "taking" the life of her husband Uriah. But, after all that is said and done, David and Bathsheba have another child together. They name him Solomon, a name rooted in the Hebrew word "shalom". As David's reign goes on, all kinds of turmoil takes place within his family, as predicted by the prophet Nathan. At his death, David names young Solomon to be the new king.

At the end of 1 Kings 2, we read this often overlooked, but significant verse: "So the Kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon." As Solomon prays for wisdom in this story, he refers to himself as a "little child". The Scriptures are not entirely clear about how old Solomon was when he took the throne, but based on clues around when he died, when David died, etc., most scholars believe he was not actually a boy, but more like about 20 years old. That is still young, however, to be the King of a nation!

It seems likely that when he refers to himself as a "little boy", he is using a bit of hyperbole to make the point that when it comes to the matters of ruling a nation, he is a little child. A sort of irony in it all, is that it takes a certain degree of wisdom to know that you should ask for

where violence or threats are endangering the safety of people, may you keep them safe and bring peace to their lands.

We bring before you in a moment's silence the people and places that lie heavily on our hearts and minds.

Pause

Merciful God, thank you for your time, for your willingness to listen and answer all our requests.

Give us patience to wait for your response and a desire to be the answer when you ask us to.

In your mercy, hear our prayers. Amen.

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Compassion & Justice: **Community Outreach Focus:** **Funds for UMCOR**

This month we have been raising funds for UMCOR's (United Methodist Committee on Relief) Menstrual Hygiene Kits. This is an often overlooked need in relief efforts after a natural disaster. October 23rd was the last Sunday for receiving these funds. Thanks to all who contributed! We will report back soon how many kits we assembled.

wisdom.

Reading the Story: This is a curious story. It is a bit contrived, as it seems to exist primarily to exhibit Solomon's wisdom. But if you play it out in reality, it's actually quite traumatic for both of the women involved. One of them has someone trying to claim her child, while the other has lost her child. Keep that in mind as you read/hear this story.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion:

1. What stood out to you in this story?
2. If you were granted one wish what would it be?
3. What does it mean to "govern"? What does it mean to "judge"? How are these related and how are they different?
4. What is wisdom? How do we become wise or attain wisdom? Can one be young and have wisdom?
5. Who do you know in your life today that seems particularly wise? What about them seems wise to you?
6. What do you think of Solomon's strategy in determining the mother of the child?
7. The books Song of Songs (or "of Solomon"), Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are all attributed to Solomon. What might this say about Solomon, who he was, and what wisdom looks like?
8. What kind of wisdom, exactly, does Solomon display? Is it focused on discerning what happened in the past, or is it a future looking wisdom, trying to put things on the best available course?
9. What is Solomon's legacy?

