



DOVER DAILY DEVOTIONS

On Sunday we considered 1 Kings 3 and 4 and saw that the question, “What do you want most?” reveals the heart. We watched Solomon ask not for ease, riches, or revenge, but for wisdom to rule faithfully, then saw that wisdom tested in the hard and painful case of two women and one living child. At every point the passage lifted our eyes beyond Solomon to Christ, the wiser King, the righteous Judge, and the gracious Savior, who gives wisdom to his people and will one day establish a kingdom of perfect peace and righteousness.

Monday: Asking for the Better Thing

Scripture Reading

“At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, ‘Ask what I shall give you.’” 1 Kings 3:5

Devotional

There is something searching in that question. If the Lord said to us, “Ask what I shall give you,” our answer would likely uncover more than we intend. We know how to speak in proper religious language. We know how to ask for what sounds holy. But the heart has a way of telling the truth when it is brought into the light. Very often what we want most is not holiness, but relief. We want the difficult conversation to go away, the burden to lift, the fear to settle, the road to smooth out. We want peace, but usually on our own terms.

That is what makes Solomon’s request so instructive. He does not ask first for comfort,

wealth, or the removal of every threat. He asks for wisdom. He asks for the grace to live rightly under God and to serve others faithfully. That is the better thing. It is not wrong to ask God for help, relief, or daily bread. Scripture teaches us to do so. But there are moments when our deepest need is not escape from the road, but wisdom for the road already beneath our feet. We need hearts taught by God, governed by truth, and made willing to obey.

This is where the passage begins to lead us toward Christ. Solomon asked for wisdom because he lacked it. Christ is wisdom. Solomon needed grace to govern. Christ governs in perfect righteousness. So the call before us is not merely to admire Solomon's answer, but to ask the wiser King to shape our own. The Lord is still kind enough to uncover our hearts, not to shame us, but to turn us toward what is better.

Questions for Reflection

1. When you pray most honestly, what do your requests reveal about what you love and fear?
2. Where are you chiefly asking God for relief when you may need wisdom more than ease?
3. How would your prayers change if your first concern were faithful obedience rather than personal comfort?

Prayer

Father, you know what my heart reaches for before I even speak. Forgive me for how often I ask for ease more than holiness, and relief more than wisdom. Teach me to desire the better thing. Give me a heart that seeks to live rightly before you and to serve faithfully where you have placed me. Amen.

Tuesday: A Little Child Under a Heavy Crown

Scripture Reading

“And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in.” 1 Kings 3:7

Devotional

Solomon's words are striking because they are so unguarded. He does not begin with confidence in himself, but with confession of need. The crown is on his head, yet he does not pretend the burden is light. He knows he is unequal to the task. There is real wisdom in that kind of honesty. Scripture never teaches us to deny our weakness or perform a strength we do not possess. It teaches us to bring our insufficiency into the presence of God and to ask for help.

Most of us know this feeling better than we admit. A parent trying to guide a child through a confusing age. A husband or wife trying to love well through strain, fatigue, and misunderstanding. A believer carrying grief that does not yield quickly. A saint facing decisions with no easy answers. We often want to look composed, capable, and above it all. But the burden exposes what pride tries to hide. We are not enough for what has been placed into our hands. That is not failure. It is simply the truth.

And the truth, when brought before the Lord, becomes a doorway to grace. Humility is not the enemy of faith. It is one of its first expressions. Solomon's wisdom begins where all true wisdom begins: not in self-assurance, but in bowing before God. That same path leads us to Christ. He is not a distant observer of our weakness. He is the compassionate King who knows our frame. The weary do not have to become strong before they come to him. They may come as they are, confessing plainly, "Lord, I do not know how to go out or come in."

Questions for Reflection

1. Where in your life are you most tempted to hide weakness instead of confessing need?
2. What burden right now is exposing the limits of your own wisdom and strength?
3. How might honest humility become the beginning of deeper prayer and dependence?

Prayer

Lord, I confess that I often want to seem more capable than I am. Strip away pride and teach me the honesty of true humility. Help me to bring my need to you without shame. Grant me grace to trust that your strength is not hindered by my weakness. Amen.

Wednesday: Love Seeks Life

Scripture Reading

“Then the woman whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son, ‘Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means put him to death.’” 1 Kings 3:26a

Devotional

When Solomon’s wisdom is tested, it is not tested in a setting of grandeur, but in a room heavy with sorrow. Two women stand before him. One child is dead. One child lives. Words alone cannot settle the matter. Then Solomon speaks in a way that startles everyone, and by that hard moment he draws the truth into the light. The true mother is revealed not by argument, but by love. She would rather lose her son than see him die. Her heart would rather suffer than destroy.

That is a searching picture. Real love seeks life, even when it comes at personal cost. Envy does not. Envy would rather wound than yield. Pride would rather divide than repent. Bitterness would rather see good ruined than humbly released into another’s hands. We do not need to stand in Solomon’s courtroom to find this struggle. We see it in homes, friendships, churches, and within our own hearts. When self is enthroned, even love gets twisted. But where grace is at work, love begins to take the shape of sacrifice.

This too points us beyond Solomon. In that courtroom, a mother was willing to lose her child rather than see him perish. In the gospel, the Father gave the true Son so that sinners might live. Christ did not merely threaten the sword to reveal the heart. He bore the sword of justice in our place. Here is the deepest wisdom of God, and here is the deepest shape of love. The cross teaches us that life comes through costly mercy, and that those who have been loved by Christ must learn to seek life for others, not victory for self.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where do you see the difference between self-protecting pride and life-seeking love in your own heart?
2. Is there a relationship in which you are tempted to wound, withdraw, or win instead of seeking the good of the other?
3. How does the cross teach you what true love looks like when the cost is real?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, your love sought my life at the cost of your own suffering. Forgive me for the envy, pride, and hardness that still linger in me. Teach me to love in truth, to seek life

rather than victory, and to reflect something of your costly mercy in the way I treat others. Amen.

Thursday: The Judge Who Knows and Saves

Scripture Reading

“And all Israel heard of the judgment 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 do justice.” 1 Kings 3:28

Devotional

There is something both comforting and unsettling in this verse. The people stand in awe because they have seen that true wisdom can do justice. The weak were not ignored. The truth was not buried. A tangled situation that seemed impossible to resolve was opened up and judged rightly. We live in a world where much remains hidden, where lies are polished, motives are mixed, and appearances often deceive. So there is relief in knowing that God is not confused by what confuses us.

Yet the sermon pressed this truth further. Solomon could discern that one case, but Christ sees every heart. No secret bitterness, no private compromise, no polished surface can hide anything from him. That sobers us. We may manage appearances before others. We may soften the truth in our own minds. We may tell the same excuse so often that it begins to sound honest. But Christ cannot be misled. He knows the wound beneath the smile, the pride beneath the service, the fear beneath the anger, the unbelief beneath the outward habit.

And yet that is not bad news for those who come to him. The Judge is the Savior. The one who sees the worst is the one who went to the cross for sinners. He does not call us to come after we have made ourselves transparent and clean. He calls us because he already knows us fully. His knowledge does not make his mercy smaller. It makes it more astonishing. He sees the ruined house and says he will dwell there. He sees the stain and says he will wash it. He sees the debt and says he has paid it.

Questions for Reflection

1. What part of your life are you most tempted to hide, excuse, or keep covered from the Lord?
2. How does it sober you to remember that Christ sees more deeply than any earthly judge ever could?
3. How does it comfort you to know that the one who knows you fully is also the one who saves?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, nothing in me is hidden from your sight. That truth humbles me, but it also comforts me, because you are not only the righteous Judge but also the merciful Savior. Keep me from pretense. Teach me to walk in honesty before you, trusting that your grace is deeper than my sin. Amen.

Friday: Under the Vine and Fig Tree

Scripture Reading

“And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon.” 1 Kings 4:25

Devotional

This is one of the loveliest pictures in the chapter. It is quiet, ordinary, and full of peace. A man under his vine and under his fig tree does not sound dramatic, but that is part of the point. Much of life is not lived in moments of crisis, but in the daily work of home, table, labor, and rest. The Lord is showing us that wisdom is not only for emergencies. It is meant to order ordinary life. Wise rule creates stability. It makes room for households to flourish, for work to be rightly done, and for peace to take visible shape.

We should not rush past that. Everybody wants peace, but not everybody wants the order that peace requires. A disordered soul is not freer for being ungoverned. A disordered house is not happier for lacking restraint. A disordered people will not flourish simply because they have cast off structure. Wisdom gives shape. It receives God's order as a gift, not a burden. It knows that peace is not the absence of all demands, but the fruit of life lived under righteous rule.

And yet this beautiful scene is not the end of the story. Solomon's peace was real, but it was not final. His order was genuine, but it could not heal the human heart or secure a kingdom forever. Even the best earthly peace leaves us longing for more. We need peace with God. We need a kingdom no sin can fracture and no death can threaten. So the vine and fig tree become a kind of ache in the soul. They teach us to give thanks for every good order God grants in this age, while longing for the perfect peace that only Christ can bring.

Questions for Reflection

1. In what ways do you resist the kind of order that makes peace possible in ordinary life?
2. Where in your home, work, or habits do you need wisdom that takes visible form?
3. How does earthly peace awaken in you a deeper longing for the kingdom of Christ?

Prayer

Father, thank you for every good gift of order, peace, provision, and daily shelter. Forgive me for wanting peace without the wisdom and obedience that serve it. Teach me to receive your order as a kindness, and keep my heart longing for the greater peace of Christ's everlasting kingdom. Amen.

Saturday: Greater Than Solomon

Scripture Reading

"The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here." Matthew 12:42

Devotional

The final movement of the sermon is the most important one. Scripture never lets us stop with Solomon. His prayer is instructive. His judgment is impressive. His kingdom displays real glory. But the whole passage leaves us wanting more. Solomon is wise, yet he is not wisdom itself. He can order a nation for a season, but he cannot save a soul. He

can render a righteous judgment in one hard case, but he cannot bear the guilt of his people. He can foreshadow peace, but he cannot establish everlasting peace.

That is why Christ's own words matter so much: "something greater than Solomon is here." In Jesus, wisdom is no longer merely spoken. It has taken flesh. He is the righteous Judge who cannot be deceived, the true King whose goodness does not waver, and the Savior who lays down his life for fools and sinners. Solomon could teach us to admire wisdom from a distance. Christ calls us to bow before him, trust him, and receive from him what we could never produce for ourselves. In him there is pardon for our folly, light for our confusion, and grace for the road we must walk.

So this is where the week should end. Not with admiration, but with adoration. Not with a lesson merely learned, but with a King embraced. Christ is not one more wise voice among many. He is the end of all wisdom, because all true wisdom leads to him. To come to Christ is not to leave wisdom behind. It is to arrive at its source. And one day the peace, justice, and order only hinted at in Solomon's reign will stand complete in the kingdom of our Lord forever.

Questions for Reflection

1. In what ways are you tempted to admire Christ without actually entrusting yourself to him?
2. Where do you most need the wisdom, pardon, and grace that only the greater King can give?
3. How might your week ahead look different if you consciously lived under the reign of Christ rather than under your own understanding?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are greater than Solomon, wiser than every earthly ruler, and kinder than I deserve. I praise you for being not only the righteous Judge but also the crucified Savior and reigning King. Teach me to trust you, to follow you, and to seek in you the wisdom I lack. Keep my heart near you until the day your perfect kingdom comes in fullness. Amen.