

2025-11-09 ... 6.30pm Evensong Sermon ... Mrs Jane Rylands

1 Kings 3: 1-15; Romans 8: 31-end

Wisdom is a wonderful gift to seek. We have heard this evening about Solomon's dream, the idea of requesting such a gift seems to have been God inspired, coming as it does in a dream, as well as then to have been God given.

And we understand that Solomon was indeed a wise ruler, much of the Wisdom section of the Old Testament is ascribed to him. And yet, as the story goes on we find that even Solomon is not infallible, even Solomon can be led astray.

Wisdom nevertheless remains something we would all be wise to seek.

A quality we wish those who have power and authority over us to have and frequently pray for them to receive.

In our political world, however, it often seems that wisdom is absent – how appropriate do we feel the decisions are that are made, even by a party that we have voted for.

And in judging political policy it is hard for us to put aside self interest, it is hard to stay focused on what we believe is the truth, it is so easy to be manipulated down a different route by peer pressure, by what we read in the newspapers, or if you are more up to date, by social media.

War is a very big question to tackle, isn't it. And yet, a conversation which is very live at the moment.

I have not lived through war, but I know from family stories that my relatives had different views on the World Wars, and fought or didn't fight for different reasons. A grandfather who was bitterly disappointed that he was too young to fight in the First World War and too old to fight in the Second. An uncle who was a conscientious objector. A father-in-law who eschewed signing up as a Chaplain but chose to be a fighting soldier.

Those we remember who lost their lives in the service of their country were individuals, with unique stories, each mourned by many. The stories of those who survived, bearing the many losses, should also be remembered today. And sadly, anew, are many to be remembered in campaigns and wars since, British and from so many other nations too.

As people on active duty face the fear of war, whether they are willing or reluctant participants, wouldn't it be a wonderful comfort for them and for those who worry about them if they could hold to the conviction of faith that Paul expresses in those last verses of Romans 8: '**For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Knowing God's love is with us always should make us strong in the fight for justice, strong in the fight for the weak, strong in striving for all to live in the light of God's wisdom.

Unique in our lives, united in our purpose.

Amen