

LESSON 1

SOLOMON REQUESTS WISDOM

BEFORE YOU TEACH

David's Sons

David's numerous sons are listed in the genealogy of 1 Chronicles 3:1-9. Because he had many wives, it is very difficult to keep track of all his sons, especially those born to him by concubines. Amnon, the first born, was killed by Absalom for having raped their sister Tamar (2 Sam 13:20-33). David's second son, Daniel, is only briefly mentioned in the genealogy. Some scholars believe he had probably died by then. His third son, Absalom, died in a rebellion during which he tried to overthrow him (2 Sam 18:1-18). Logically, David's fourth son, Adonijah, would have been next in line for the throne. However, God had other plans. Since Adonijah knew that David favored Solomon as his successor, Adonijah had to plot to seize the kingship. He followed the example of his older brother, Absalom, by offering sacrifices and holding a great feast where he invited important men, thus announcing himself as the next king (1 Kgs 1:5-10). Once David was informed of the conspiracy, he immediately summoned the priest Zadok and the prophets Nathan and Benaiah to anoint Solomon as king over Israel, so that there would be no more disputes over the monarchy (1 Kgs 1:32-40). Solomon's succession to the throne fulfilled the promise in 2 Samuel 7:12-16. Solomon spared Adonijah's life at first, but later killed him for attempting to seize the throne again by marrying a former mistress of David's (1 Kgs 2:13-25).

Solomon

God gave Solomon a special name through the prophet Nathan: Jedidiah, which means "loved by the Lord" (2 Sam 12:25). ("Solomon" means "peaceful"; 1 Chr 22:9.) Clearly, God's favor rested with Solomon from the day he was born. Solomon was a humble and wise king. By asking God for wisdom, he also gained many blessings during his years as king of Israel. He ruled all of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and also had some degree of control over other countries from the Euphrates to the border of Egypt. He was a diplomat, a trader, and a collector of fine arts. His wealth, power, and wisdom was even known in southern Arabia (1 Kgs 10). One of Solomon's greatest achievements was building the temple, a task God entrusted to him because of the rest and peace that Israel enjoyed during his reign. He is also the author of Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.

Although Solomon was known as the wisest person who lived, he did make mistakes. The people of Israel complained about heavy taxes and forced labor. More significantly, Solomon married many foreign wives for political and personal reasons. This eventually led to his downfall because he let his wives affect his relationship with God.

BIBLE TEXT

1 Kings 1:5-51; 3:3-28;
2 Chronicles 1:1-17

BIBLE TRUTH

God will bless and give wisdom to those who seek after Him.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To follow Solomon's example in seeking spiritual wisdom.

MEMORY VERSE

"If any of you lacks wisdom,
let him ask of God."

(James 1:5a)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Dear Lord, we gather here at the start of the new quarter to learn more about Your teachings. We pray that we can learn from the people in the stories so that we can be obedient and be blessed by You. Let us understand Your will so that we can follow Your ways and serve You at all times. May Your Spirit guide us in our lessons. Hallelujah! Amen.

Gihon and En Rogel

Adonijah held his feast and crowned himself king at a place called En Rogel, just a few miles outside Jerusalem. Solomon was anointed at Gihon, which was slightly closer to the palace than En Rogel. Therefore, it was not surprising that those attending Adonijah's feast heard the noise after Solomon was anointed. David asked the priest

to go to Gihon because the tent David had set up to protect the ark of the covenant was probably there (2 Sam 6:17). The sacred oil, a mixture of olive oil, myrrh, and other expensive spices, was also kept there. After being anointed, Solomon was now God's representative to the people and would lead them with the wisdom of God.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

When God asked Solomon what he wanted, he could have requested wealth, power, or even longevity. However, Solomon humbled himself and asked only for a discerning heart so that he could govern God's people and distinguish between right and wrong. When God saw Solomon's sincerity, He not only gave Solomon wisdom, but also gave Solomon everything he had not asked for, such as wealth and power. This was because Solomon knew how to pray and seek after God's will.

When your students pray, what do they pray for? More notably, if they could ask for anything, what would that one thing be? Would it be more toys or good grades? It is not uncommon for them to be a little egocentric at their age. On the other hand, some may ask God to guide their

families and the church. Sometimes they may also pray for peace on earth. During special prayer sessions, they might ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Of course, all of these are significant, but it is also important to stress spiritual wisdom. In this world, higher education and knowledge are viewed as the keys to power and wealth. But in God's eyes, this worldly wisdom is nothing compared to the wisdom He can give your students. Spiritual wisdom allows them to discern all things and brings about great blessings. But they must seek after it in their prayers. Encourage your students to pray for wisdom from God. Like all things for which they pray, they need to be faithful and trust that the Lord will provide.

REVIEW

Last quarter, we learned about the lives of two prophets called Elijah and Elisha. They did many wonderful things in serving God. Elijah performed miracles and turned the Israelites back to God. Why did he have to do that? (The evil Ahab and Jezebel had led the Israelites to worship idols instead of the one true God.) Do you remember any of the miracles? (Not running out of flour and oil; restoring the life of the widow's son; triumph on Mount Carmel; praying for rain; parting the Jordan River.) Similarly, Elisha saved lives and cared for the needy during his ministry. Do you recall what Elisha did? (Restored the life of the Shunammite woman's son; filled the jars with oil; cured Naaman of leprosy.) Throughout their lives, both Elijah and Elisha demonstrated their unfailing faith and trust in God at all times. In turn, God protected and guided them everywhere they went. We learned from the two prophets that we have to rely on the Lord and follow His ways. Then we will be blessed and be able to lead a holy life.

VOCABULARY

wisdom: knowledge, insight, good judgment
conspiracy: a secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful

BIBLE STORY

[To help children understand this complex story, use storyboards or cartoons to illustrate the key events, like Adonijah's feast and Solomon's parade and anointing.]

A New King for Israel

King David was getting old. He had been the king for forty years and knew the time had come to choose a new king from among his sons. David had many sons, but the two he might have picked had already died: His oldest son, Amnon, was killed by his third son, Absalom. Absalom died trying to take over David's throne. As a result, King David had to

pick someone else. He knew that God had a plan for Solomon to become king. God chose Solomon, David's tenth son, because Solomon was a good and humble person.

As the next in line to assume the throne, King David's fourth son Adonijah tried to hold a feast and proclaim himself the king. However, when the prophet Nathan told Solomon's mother Bathsheba about it, she quickly went to tell David. David knew that God wanted Solomon to be king. So after listening to his wife, he immediately commanded the prophet Nathan and a priest called Zadok to take Solomon to Gihon, where he would be anointed as the new king of Israel. David also asked a commander of his army, Benaiah, to accompany them.

Nathan, Zadok, and Benaiah followed David's instructions and led Solomon, who was riding on his father's mule, to Gihon. Once they arrived, Zadok took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. The people who went with them shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" They played music from their pipes and shouted so loudly that they could be heard from miles away.

Just as Adonijah and his guests were finishing their meals, they heard a lot of noise coming from outside. They wondered what it was about. Then, a messenger came and told them that Solomon had just been anointed as the new king and was sitting on the throne! When the guests heard this news, they were very frightened and immediately left the party. They didn't want other people to know that they had supported Adonijah now that Solomon was the official king. In fact, Adonijah was even more terrified. He was afraid his brother might have him killed because he had declared himself the king at his own feast. In panic, he ran to the altar and held on to its horns (or corner posts), thinking God might protect him. He said to those who saw him, "I will not leave here unless King Solomon swears he will not kill me!" Fortunately for Adonijah, Solomon was a kind man and forgave his brother. He said to Adonijah, "Go home."

Once Solomon's throne had been established, David told Solomon to follow God's ways and to obey all of His commandments. Soon afterwards, David died.

Solomon Asks for Wisdom

Solomon was a good king. He obeyed all the commandments of God and prayed to Him constantly for guidance. One day, he went to Gideon to offer one thousand burnt offerings to God. That night, he slept there and had a dream. In this dream, God spoke to him.

God asked Solomon, "What would you like Me to give you?"

If God asked you that question, what would you ask for? [Let students respond.] Some people might ask for endless wealth, longevity, a strong army, or power over the surrounding nations. Solomon could have asked for anything! He thought about it and then he spoke to the

Lord, saying, "You loved my father, David, and you helped him to be a good king. I am but a little child. Help me to be wise so that I will know what is right and what is wrong and rule justly over your people. I want to be a good king for you."

God was pleased when He heard Solomon's request. Solomon did not ask for a long life or riches and power. Instead, he asked for help.

"Because you have not been selfish," said God, "I will give you wisdom, as you have asked, but I will also give you what you didn't ask for. I will make you rich and you will be honored. There will be no other king like you ever again. As long as you keep My laws and My commandments, just like your father David did, I will lengthen your days."

Then Solomon woke up. He knew that it had been a dream from God. He was very thankful and he returned to Jerusalem the next day with a joyous heart. He went and stood before the ark of the covenant and he offered sacrifices to God. He also held a great feast for all of his servants.

Solomon's Wise Judgment

One of the first wise judgments that Solomon made was in the case of two women fighting over a child. These two women lived together in one house. They were both pregnant and had delivered their babies three days apart. The son of one of the women died in the night, so his mother exchanged him with the other woman's son while the other woman was sleeping. In the morning, however, the mother of the living child found that the dead baby lying in her arms was not her son, so she brought the other woman and the living child and came before Solomon, demanding that the other woman give her son back. Of course, the other woman denied the whole thing.

Now, if you were Solomon, how would you choose between these two women? How would you know which woman was the actual mother of the living child?

Solomon told his servants to bring him a sword. When they returned with the sword, Solomon said, "Cut the living child in half. Give one half to each of these women." When the women heard this, the one who was the actual mother of the child said, "No, give the child to the other woman. Please do not kill the baby!" But the woman who was the pretender said, "Yes, let the child be neither hers nor mine—cut it in half." In this way, the women revealed themselves to Solomon, who understood that the child's true mother could not bear to see her child hurt because of her love for him. After seeing this, Solomon had the child returned to his true mother.

Because of his God-given wisdom, Solomon was able to help many people. His wisdom became known all over the country and even to other nations. People came to see him from far away to ask him many questions. But Solomon knew that all of this came from God and he was very thankful!

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Why did God choose Solomon to be king?** Because Solomon was a good and humble person.
2. **Who told King David of Adonijah's plan?** The prophet Nathan and Solomon's mother, Bathsheba.
3. **When Solomon was anointed king, did he forgive his brother Adonijah?** Yes.
4. **When God asked Solomon what he wanted, what did Solomon ask for?** Wisdom.
5. **What did God give to Solomon because he asked for wisdom?** Riches and honor, in addition to wisdom.
6. **How did Solomon show his wisdom in the case of the two women's children?** He understood that the true mother of the child would love her son more than the false mother, so she would not want the baby to be hurt. Therefore, he made a situation in which the two women would show how much they loved the baby.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God." (James 1:5a)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

Today, we learned that God asked Solomon in a dream what he wanted God to give him. Out of all the things that he could have asked for, Solomon asked for wisdom. Students, do you remember the motive behind Solomon's request? Why did he ask for wisdom? [Let students answer.] Solomon had just become king, and yet, he humbly called himself a "little child" because he faced many difficult first-time tasks. One of his responsibilities as king of Israel was to judge God's people, which required extraordinary knowledge! Therefore, his great desire to be a good king for God's people pushed Solomon to ask God for wisdom.

You may wonder why Solomon asked for wisdom when he could have obtained it elsewhere, such as in books! Was he being lazy? No, not at all! God's wisdom is not the same as the knowledge of the world. Today, we often consider people with higher education as knowledgeable, but their knowledge cannot be used to justify right or wrong. On the other hand, godly wisdom, which cannot be obtained from higher education, helps us know what is right or wrong. As Christians, our ultimate goal is to do what is right in God's eyes. God is righteous, and only His wisdom can teach us to judge. There is no education in this world that can do the same.

So, why is it so important for us to have wisdom? In other words, why is it so important for us to know what is right in God's eyes? When God created this world, He intended no evil—murder, lying, theft, greed, pride... not a single thought of evil! Sadly, many people today choose to follow the evil ways of this world instead of God's. Can you think of any recent news about someone who has done evil? [Let students share.] As children of God, we need to set ourselves apart from these people who disobey God. The Bible says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor 5:17). What does it mean to become new? "And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph 4:24).

Since we have already determined to follow God, we're God's new creation. We are to live a life in true righteousness and holiness. We must strive to make this world the way God had originally intended, by doing what is right in God's eyes and preaching to other people who haven't yet been introduced to God's righteousness. To be able to do this, we need to have God's wisdom. When we have God's wisdom and use it, we will know when and how to stop ourselves from doing wrong. Now that we understand the importance of God's wisdom, let's read a scenario that illustrates how this applies to our lives.

Peter just found out from the news that Andrew, his best friend from childhood, robbed a bank yesterday. The news reported that Andrew never admitted to doing anything wrong. He even said that stealing is a skill and that he uses it to make a living. After listening to the news, Peter recalled an incident that had happened many years ago when he was still Andrew's best friend:

One day, Andrew and Peter were walking home from school together. They passed by a candy store and saw that no one was inside, including the owner. Andrew stopped and said to Peter, "Hey, you see the candy store? There's no one inside! Let's take some candies home and share! They have our favorite Hi-Chews." Peter was very shocked when he heard that. He knew that stealing is wrong. He said to Andrew, "No! Are you out of your mind? Stealing is wrong!" Then Andrew said, "What? Who told you that? Stealing is like a game. You can take whatever you want, and you win if no one finds out. It's a game to test if you're smart or not. Only smart people can steal successfully!" However, Peter was not convinced. He stood firm in his belief that stealing is wrong because the Bible had told him so. Sadly, Andrew would not listen to Peter. Peter had never read the Bible. He did not have God's wisdom. In the end, Peter left and went home by himself. As he was leaving, he was really hoping that Andrew would follow him. But Andrew didn't. The next day, Andrew told Peter that he had stolen three packs of Hi-Chew from the candy store and that no one found out. Andrew even said that he had won the game and that Peter had lost. That day, Peter was very disappointed and sad that his best friend didn't have wisdom from God. Since then, Peter tried to introduce God to Andrew, but they eventually lost touch after they went to different high schools.

Even after they parted ways, Peter still often thought about Andrew. He wondered how Andrew was doing. Did he still have a habit of stealing? Well, Peter just received an answer from the news. From stealing from a candy store to robbing a bank, Andrew had not changed. Even today, Andrew doesn't think that stealing is wrong. Instead, he considers himself smart for knowing how to steal. Thinking back, Peter thanks God for giving him wisdom at such a young age. If he didn't have godly wisdom back then, he'd have probably gone stealing with Andrew that day at the candy store. That experience could have led him to enjoy stealing, and he might have ended up robbing the bank with Andrew years later! If this were the case, Peter would have ended up in prison today. Thank goodness that he had God's wisdom.

Students, godly wisdom is very important to us. It is the only standard that we should use to judge if something is right or wrong. When Andrew asked Peter to steal with him at the candy store, he recalled this standard. He recalled one of the Ten Commandments from the Bible, "You shall not steal." Even though Andrew made stealing sound so much fun, Peter stood firmly with God's wisdom. He knew that stealing is wrong.

Likewise, we can find godly wisdom in the Bible today. If there is anything we aren't sure of, we can find the answer in the Bible. Place your trust only in the words from the Bible, not the knowledge of this world. Take Andrew as an example. Many movies glorify stealing. Andrew might have gotten the idea from these movies that stealing is a very "cool" and smart thing to do. But in God's eyes, stealing is a sin. How do we know? The Bible tells us so. The Bible is where we find godly wisdom.

Let's read the following verses that illustrate godly wisdom and see how it differs from the wisdom of this world.

1. The world says, "Life is all about money. Money can get you almost anything you want. The more money you have, the better life you'll have. Money gives you more freedom and is the most important thing you need in life." The Bible says, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt 6:33). You should put God above all things. God can satisfy all your needs.
2. The world says, "Saturdays are when all the fun takes place. If you don't do anything fun on Saturdays, you'll miss out on a lot." The Bible says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God" (Ex 20:8-10). Saturdays belong to God. He blesses those who keep the Sabbath. God is more important than all the fun things in this world.

As you can see, there are two kinds of wisdom—the wisdom of this world and the wisdom of God. Wisdom of this world makes us smart, and sometimes devious like a serpent. In contrast, God's wisdom allows us to do what is right in God's eyes. Their main difference is this: while this world teaches us to be more self-centered—do what benefits ME the most—God wants us to love Him, love others, and be more considerate—do what benefits OTHERS the most.

Students, challenge yourself each day to please God with everything you do. Always choose to do what is right in God's eyes. If you continue to do so, you'll soon find that there's nothing for us to lose when we follow God's wisdom rather than the world's. More importantly, you'll find more love, peace, and joy in your hearts.

Apart from reading the Bible, it is also very important for us to pray for wisdom. In our daily prayers, we should always ask God to keep our hearts open so that His Spirit can fill us and help us understand His wisdom. In addition, we can also ask God to give us wisdom to complete a certain task, just as King Solomon asked for wisdom specifically to judge God's people. Let's read a testimony about how James prayed to have wisdom for his math exam.

Final exams are next week. James is particularly nervous about his math exam since math has always been his weakest subject. His parents have told him that if he fails this exam, they'll find him a tutor to give him an extra lesson every Saturday morning. Because of this, James prayed extra hard these few days to ask God for wisdom. In one of his prayers, he said to God:

"Lord, please give me wisdom for this coming math exam. I'm studying very hard for it, but I worry that I will still fail and that my parents will find me a tutor. I don't want a tutor because Saturday is Your holy day, and I want to be able to spend all day at church to worship You and learn Your words. I don't want to miss the morning service every week. Sometimes when studying math gets difficult, I tend to stop and give up. But I know that I cannot give up Your Sabbath. For this very reason, Lord, I need Your help! Please help me persevere, and give me wisdom to pass my math exam. May all the glory be unto Your name. Amen."

To the surprise of his parents, James passed his math exam. James is getting better at math, and his parents no longer mention getting him a tutor. Every Saturday, James attends the morning service, and he enjoys learning the wisdom of God.

Students, is there anything you need wisdom for? James set a very good example for us. When he needed help, he asked God to give him wisdom. He did the right thing in God's eyes by praying and studying extra hard to pass his math exams. If he chose to follow the wisdom of this world—the devious way—he would have decided to make things easier by cheating. But even if he passed, God would have been very disappointed in him. This is not what we want! Remember my challenge for you? [Let students answer.] Challenge yourself each day to please God with everything you do. Always choose to do what is right in God's eyes.

HOMWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Solomon
2. forgive
3. wisdom
4. True
5. False; we should ask for godly wisdom.
6. God chose Solomon because he was a good and humble person.
7. God was pleased with Solomon's answer. Solomon was humble, not selfish.
8. Worldly wisdom makes a person smart and devious, but godly wisdom brings a person closer to God.
9. Answers may vary.
10. Answers may vary.

ACTIVITIES

1

King Solomon's Prayer

Objective: To remind the students of King Solomon's prayer for spiritual wisdom by creating a figure of Solomon.

Materials

- Styrofoam cups
- Pipe cleaners
- Markers
- Tape
- 1 " styrofoam balls
- Construction paper
- Toothpicks
- Glitter or sequins, optional

Instructions

1. Take a styrofoam cup and turn it upside down. This will be the body of Solomon. Draw directly on the cup to create clothes for the king. You may also want to cut his robe out of construction paper and then tape it onto the cup.
2. Take the styrofoam ball and create Solomon's face. Make sure the eyes are closed since Solomon is praying to God.
3. Using construction paper, cut out a crown to fit on Solomon's head. You can decorate the crown with markers, sequins, or glitter. Tape the crown onto Solomon's head.
4. Use the pipe cleaner to create Solomon's arms. Fold the pipe cleaner in the front so that he is praying. Tape it onto his body.
5. Finally, attach the head to the body by punching several toothpicks through the styrofoam ball and the bottom of the cup.
6. Use this figure of King Solomon to remind yourself to pray for spiritual wisdom from God.

2

The Lord's Prayer

Objective: To explain and reflect on the Lord's prayer so that students may know what to pray for.

Instructions: Explain that Jesus taught His disciples this prayer. Ask the students to think about each line as you read the prayer. Explain the meaning of the words, and encourage the students to think about the prayer and what they can pray for based on the discussion today.

Our Father in heaven,
 Hallowed be Your name.
 Your kingdom come.
 Your will be done
 On earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our debts,
 As we forgive our debtors.
 And do not lead us into temptation,
 But deliver us from the evil one.
 For Yours is the kingdom and the power
 and the glory forever. Amen.

-Matthew 6:9-13

E1 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 1—Solomon Requests Wisdom

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: God will bless and give wisdom to those who seek after Him.**Lesson Objective:** To follow Solomon's example in seeking spiritual wisdom.**Bible Reading:** Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.**Prayer:** Please put a check mark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(James 1:5a)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Fill In the Blank

1. God chose _____ to be the next king after David.
2. Adonijah became scared and asked the new king to _____ him.
3. The only thing that Solomon asked God for was _____.

True or False

4. Nathan knew about Adonijah's plan and told Solomon's mother about it. _____
5. If we are given the chance to ask for anything, we should ask for riches. _____

Short Answer

6. Why did God choose Solomon to be the next king?

7. Why did God give Solomon money and power, even though Solomon had not asked for them?

8. What is the difference between worldly wisdom and godly wisdom?

9. If you could ask God for anything in your prayer, what would it be?

10. Why do we need wisdom? How can you use godly wisdom in your life?
