

King Solomon's Wisdom



Scripture Reference:

[1 Kings 3:3-28](#)

Suggested Emphasis: Learn to be wise.

Memory Verse: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Psalm 111:10a



Background
Study



Story
Introduction



Telling
the Story



Review
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Songs



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Activities



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Story Overview:

After David's death, his son, Solomon, became king. The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and told him to ask for anything he wanted. Solomon did not ask for selfish things but instead, he asked for wisdom so he could be a good king for the people. God granted Solomon his request. He judged many cases such as the time two women claimed that they were the mother of a baby. When Solomon said he would cut the baby in two so each woman would have an equal share. To save the baby, the real mother said that the other woman could have the baby. By this

Solomon knew who the real mother was. These types of judgment and the great Proverbs that Solomon wrote made him famous for his wisdom.

Background Study:

The books of Chronicles record many of the same events that are found in the books of Samuel and the Kings. All of these books cover the time of the United Kingdom (when all of Israel was united and operated as one kingdom) and the Divided Kingdom (when Israel was divided into two parts - Israel and Judah - and operated as two kingdoms). 1 Chronicles 1 is a parallel passage to part of today's story.

- Solomon Becomes King ([1 Kings 2:10-12](#))
- Solomon Asks God for Wisdom ([1 Kings 3:5-15](#))
- Solomon Makes A Wise Decision for Two Women ([1 Kings 3:16-28](#))
- A Description of Solomon's Wisdom ([1 Kings 4:29-34](#))

David was King for forty years. His rule was, for the most part, wise and just. An excellent military leader, he conquered the city of Jerusalem and made it his capital. When he died, his son Solomon inherited a powerful empire. The ancient tabernacle had been moved to Gibeon, a few miles northwest of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 1:3). Early in his reign Solomon went there to offer a great sacrifice to the Lord.

Solomon's dream was not like most of ours. Although he was asleep, God actually talked with him. He told Solomon to ask for anything he wanted.

Solomon began by showing that he was thankful for all God had done for David, Solomon's father. God had kept him safe through many dangers, had made him king of Israel, had helped him defeat his enemies and build a great empire, and had given him a son, Solomon, to take his place as king.

As king, Solomon was to guide and direct a whole nation - more people than he could count. He knew he could not rule them well without help from God.

This was Solomon's greatest wish. He wanted the knowledge and wisdom to rule his people well, to know what was right and what was wrong.

The Lord was pleased because Solomon was not selfish. He was thinking of the people. If Solomon had been thinking of himself, he might have asked to be allowed to live and rule a long time. He had inherited wealth from his father, but rich people often want more riches. And kings generally wish destruction upon their enemies. However, Solomon wanted what was good for his people. They needed a king wise enough to rule justly.

Solomon got what he asked for. He was wiser than anyone before or after. Thousands of years have passed, and still he is thought of as the wisest man who ever lived.

Solomon got even more than he asked. In riches as well as wisdom he “was greater ... than all the other kings of the earth” (1 Kings 10:23). “The whole world” honoured him by coming to hear his wisdom and bringing costly gifts (1 Kings 10:24-25). Read more about his wealth in 1 Kings 10:14-29.

God also offered a long life - for which Solomon had not asked - but there was a condition with this promise. Solomon was to obey God’s laws as David had done. In later years, Solomon became careless (1 Kings 11:1-10). His life may have been shortened, and yet he lived to rule for forty years (11:42). In his time, the kingdom of Israel was richer and more powerful than it had been at any time before or has been since.

Although it is not covered in today’s story, it is unfortunate to note that Solomon’s wisdom did not keep him from sinning in later life. It seems that his 700 wives and 300 concubines led him astray in his old age (1 Kings 11:1-13).

Someone has said that wisdom is the ability to know how, when and where to put knowledge into action.

-  [What happened before this story?](#)
-  [What happens after this story?](#)
-  [List of all Bible stories and themes on this website.](#)

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Way to Introduce the Story:

“If the Lord came to you in a dream and told you that you could have anything that you want, what would you ask for?” (Let the children answer) “Today we are going to learn about a man that could have asked for anything he wanted. He was the king of a country. What do you think he asked for? Let’s listen to the story and find out who he was and what he asked for.”

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The Story:

David was very old. He had been king of Israel for forty years. He had been a good king who tried to serve God. Even when he made mistakes, David was always sorry and tried to do better. The Lord knew that David had a good heart.

David was about to die. He told his son Solomon to be the new king.

“Always follow the Lord, Solomon. Obey His commands,” David told his son. And then David died.

When Solomon became king he prayed to God and said, “Oh, Lord, I want to be a good king. I want to serve the people and help them. Please give me a wise heart so that I can always tell the difference between right and wrong. Help me to be a wise king for the people.”

God answered Solomon’s prayer. Solomon became known everywhere as a very wise ruler. He was also very rich and famous. People came from everywhere to talk to Wise King Solomon. They would tell Solomon their problems and he would give them wise advice to help them.

Once, there were two women who lived in the same house. Each woman had a baby of her own and at night the babies would sleep in the same bed with their mothers.

One night while the women were sleeping the first woman accidentally rolled over on top of her baby. Sadly, her baby died.

The woman wanted a baby so much that she decided to take someone else's baby. She quietly snuck into the second woman's room and switched the babies. When the second mother woke up she found the dead baby beside her in the bed. At first she thought it was her baby that was dead but then she realized that she had been tricked. She wanted her baby back!

The two women went to king Solomon. The second woman told him what had happened.

She said, "It is my baby, I want my baby back!"

The other mother said, "No! It is MY baby. You can't have it!"

Everyone looked at Solomon. How could he ever know which woman the baby belonged to? But remember, God gave Solomon special wisdom.

Because Solomon was wise he had an idea for finding out the truth. He ordered one of his servants to bring him a sword. Then Solomon said, "I order that the baby be cut in half with this sword."

The first woman said, "Okay, that's fair. The baby should be cut in half. That way neither of us will have more than the other."

But the other woman looked very sad. "No, do not cut the baby in half! I love the baby too much to see it hurt. I would rather the other woman have my baby. I do not want my baby to die."

Solomon had done a very wise thing. Now he knew which one of these was the real mother and which was not. A mother loves her baby very much and would never want it hurt. Solomon gave the baby to its true mother.

Everyone saw that Solomon really was wise. Everyone knew that God had given him special wisdom.

Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual

aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download the slideshow](#) or [click here to download the pictures to print.](#) Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

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Review Questions:

1. Which son of David's became king after David died? Solomon
2. Who came to Solomon in a dream? The Lord
3. What did Solomon ask the Lord to give him? Wisdom so he could be a good king
4. When two women were fighting over a baby, why did Solomon say the baby should be cut in half? So that he could find out who the real mother was

Song Suggestions:

- God is Listening When We Pray
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- Choose some favourite Proverbs and read them in class.
- Read 1 Chronicles 28:9 and discuss David's advice to his son, Solomon.
- Discuss James 1:5 and then pray.

- Set up a courtroom scene and act out the story of the two women. You could use a crown and a doll as props.



- ([Costumed Bible Characters](#)) A little play-acting is often a fun way to tell the story or review what has been learned. Here are some ways you might use the idea:
 - After telling the story guide the children in dressing up in costumes and acting it out.
 - Or, you can dress up in a simple costume to act the part of one of the Bible characters. As you begin to speak “get into character” as if you were actually the person in the story visiting the class today to tell them what has happened to you.
 - Or, later in the class session, as a review, the teacher can also use the same method to ask the children review questions as if you are one of the characters in the story talking to the children.

Crafts:

- Make a poster of a Proverb. Decorate it with paints.
- Draw a large crown and write “SOLOMON” on it. Write words on the crown that describe Solomon (wise, dream, son of David, son of Bathsheba, etc.). Add to this next week.
- [Make a scroll. Click here for instructions.](#) Write this verse on it: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Psalm 111:10a, NIV

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "King Solomon's Wisdom" printables to print on A4 size paper](#)
[Click here for "King Solomon's Wisdom" printables \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Solomon made king \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Solomon asks God for wisdom \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets- Solomon's wisdom judging between two mothers \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Craft: Instructions for a simple paper crown at http://www.dltk-kids.com/](http://www.dltk-kids.com/)
- [Craft: Doorknob hanger from http://www.sundayschoolcrafts.net/](http://www.sundayschoolcrafts.net/)
- [Worksheets: There are a number of Old Testament worksheets on the following link. You will need to scroll down quite far to "Samuel/Kings/Chronicles Sunday School Worksheets" and then scroll down to the next one- "King Solomon". The link is http://www.squidoo.com/](#)
- [Online activities and games at http://gardenofpraise.com/](http://gardenofpraise.com/)

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