



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

1 Kings 3:3-15

Proverbs 1:1-7

Session Theme:

Wisdom

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: Making Good Choices

Write the word WISE on the board in big letters, and ask kids to define it to the best of their ability. What does it mean to be wise? According to various dictionaries, it means “showing good judgment.” But how do we do that? How do we figure out what is good and right when there are so many choices and temptations around us?

When we are living our day-to-day lives, it's easy to forget about God and instead to make choices based on what feels right in the moment. Yet Proverbs 9:10 tells us, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Today's lesson is about a man who wanted to make good decisions. How did he do this? To whom did he look for help? Let's begin our lesson and find out!

c. Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we want to do the right thing, and to make wise decisions. Please help us in this. You are the source of true wisdom. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- “Be Thou My Vision” (hymn)
- “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” (hymn)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament
- Scripture Section: Monarchy

God's people settled in their own land and were united for the first time under the reign of three great kings: Saul, David, and Solomon.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level:

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help the students think about the events of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, and Questions)

Adults: Bible Study (Large or Small Group Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. Use the Bible Rhyme as a short review, or simply ask questions to help the students recall the events of the story.

Youth/Adult: Discuss “Reflection for the Week Ahead”

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format



Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: 1 Kings 3:3-15

1. Where was Solomon when he offered his sacrifices to God? According to Scripture, how many burnt offerings did Solomon sacrifice on that altar? Why was this a good way for Solomon to begin his reign?

There was no official Temple in those days. Scripture says that Solomon was at one of the “high places” in Gibeon. In the Bible, a “high place” refers to an area set aside for worship and sacrifice — in some cases, these were used by pagans as well. Solomon offered 1,000 burnt sacrifices here to the Lord. It was a public sign that he intended to be a king who was faithful to the Lord (Yahweh).

2. How, or through what means, did God appear to Solomon? What did God say to him? Is this the kind of thing that happened all the time, or was this a special case? Why?

Scripture says that God appeared to Solomon in a dream — but it doesn't tell us exactly what Solomon saw. We only hear what God said: “Ask what I shall give you.” This kind of direct divine intervention does not happen every day; Solomon was in a unique position.

However, we do believe that God listens to our prayers as well, and that he promises to respond (Matthew 7:7, John 14:14). But we realize that God's answer is not always “yes.” Sometimes what we ask for is not in harmony with God's plans and intentions, or God may have something better in store for us.

3. From whom did Solomon inherit the throne as king? From what you see in verses 7-8, do you think Solomon felt ready to be king? Why or why not?

When Solomon had taken the throne and become king after his father, King David, he expressed his uneasiness. He says: “I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in” (v. 7). Clearly, Solomon felt he was too young and inexperienced; he knew that ruling God's people was a big job! That's why he asked for God's help.

4. In verse 9, what exactly did Solomon ask for? Why was God pleased with Solomon's request?

Solomon asked for a “discerning mind” (ESV). In other words, he wanted God to make him “wise”

(CEV). God was pleased that Solomon did not make a selfish request, but was thinking about what was best for the kingdom. Solomon was thinking of others, not just himself.

5. In the end, what were the many other things that God gave to Solomon? How do you think God wanted Solomon to use these gifts?

God not only gave Solomon wisdom, but he also gave him riches, honor, and a long life of serving the Lord in faithfulness. As Jesus said:

“The Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Matthew 6:32–33).

Solomon was entrusted with all these blessings from God so that he could serve God's people and be a good ruler.

6. Read Proverbs 1:1-7. What does Solomon say here about the importance of wisdom? Read verse 8. To whom is Solomon speaking? How does this same encouragement apply to us as well?

Solomon is speaking here as a father to his son(s), but in a larger sense, he is speaking to all of us. When he says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,” he is saying that true wisdom comes from faith in God. We are able to overcome the challenges we face when we entrust our lives to God's care and guidance.

7. The Bible is a very old book about people who lived a long time ago. In what way(s) do the lessons we learn from Scripture still apply in our modern lives? In what sense does the Bible teach us the “timeless” truth of God?

Scripture teaches us the wisdom that comes from God himself and is not subject to human error and bias. The people of biblical times were not so different from us. Though our technology may be different, we share the same experiences and emotions and face the same struggles and pain. We are all sinners who fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). The same truth that God revealed back then still applies now — in our relationships with God and one another.

8. Why was it important that Solomon sought God's wisdom, rather than coming up with his own ideas? What wisdom can we gain from reading the Bible?

God knows more than we could ever know or imagine. We get to hear/read God's written Word in Scripture. This is a truth that comes from outside ourselves (an “external Word”), not our own human invention.

Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: Wisdom Word Pictures

Materials Needed:

- Copy paper
- Construction paper
- Stapler
- Markers
- Glitter glue



Instructions:

Give kids one piece of copy paper and several markers.

Invite everyone to write the word WISDOM in large, capital letters, filling up much of the copy paper. Make the word big and bold and colorful. Kids may like to trace around their letters with another color or two, in order to make everything stand out.

Encourage kids to decorate their word pictures however they want with markers or glitter glue. Symbols from today's story may be used — a crown, folded hands, etc. Or, kids could use graphic design elements (dots, wavy lines, etc.) to decorate their picture.

Next, have everyone choose a piece of construction paper in a color that matches their artwork. Center the artwork on the construction paper and staple it in place.

Using a thin marker, kids can write the words of Proverbs 9:10 going around their picture on the construction paper frame:

**“The fear of the Lord
is the beginning of knowledge.”**

Proverbs 9:10

Invite students to hang up their word pictures at home as a reminder of where they can look if they want to become wise like King Solomon.

Wisdom is not something that people speak about very much these days. Yet how important it is!

True wisdom doesn't come from blindly following our own desires and ideas, but from seeking God and his guidance in all we do.

Activity 2: Birthday Line Up Game

Materials Needed:

- Large area to play a game
- Timer



Instructions:

Tell kids that you are going to play a game based on their birthdays. But not only that, it will also involve thinking of their birthdays in the larger context of the months of the year.

Point to one side of the room and explain that this area will represent January, the first month of the year. The other side of the room will represent December, the last month of the year.

Explain that when you say, “Go,” everyone will have to silently figure out where to stand, between those two spots, based on their birthdays. There should be no talking — just guessing where their month of the year may be on the continuum.

Set a timer for a minute or two, depending on how many kids there are, and set the kids loose to find their places in the line.

Then, starting at the January spot, go down the line, asking kids to take turns calling out the months of their birthdays. See if they were able to figure out the right place to stand. If anyone is out of place, give the group another couple of minutes to get it right, and then have them call out their birthdays again and see if they were able to do it.

To have wisdom means to be able to figure something out, even if it is a little complicated. In this game, you had to figure out something rather simple — where your birthday falls in the span of a year.

In daily life, situations can be much more challenging than that. When you are faced with a difficult thing, remember to turn to God first and ask for direction and help. He will guide you where you need to go!

Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Secret Message

The sound of a person sleeping is often represented by a line of Z's. In this exercise, the children are asked to cross out all the Z's to reveal a message:

Statement: Solomon knew that being a faithful and obedient servant of God meant that he needed to:

Answer: WALK IN GOD'S WAYS.

This means we should trust and obey God, and seek to live our lives in a way that pleases him.

Map of Solomon's Kingdom



Vocabulary Word for the Week

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary.

Wisdom

the ability to tell right from wrong

King Solomon asked God for wisdom so he could be a good leader.

Reflection for the Week Ahead

If you were told to ask for anything you wanted, what might that be? A bigger home? Better electronic gadgets? A pet?

In today's Bible story, a young King Solomon asked for one thing: wisdom. He wanted to know how to tell what was good and right so he could make wise decisions for his people. This pleased God very much. Why? Solomon wasn't asking for something just for himself, but for a gift that would benefit others too. That showed true leadership.



Talk together about what it means to be wise. Why is this quality such a good thing? If you want to grow in wisdom, what should you do?

Turning to God for help, as Solomon did, is an excellent first step. Talking to faithful, trustworthy people and asking their advice is also helpful, as is studying the Bible, attending worship each week, and surrounding yourself with friends who share your Christian values.

By doing these things regularly over time, you will grow not just in years, but in true wisdom as well!

The Practice of Prayer

Write a prayer thanking God for his guidance and instruction. Ask him for a deeper faith to trust that he knows what he's doing when he chooses us for a purpose.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.