



LESSON 24

God gives Solomon wisdom

1 KINGS 2:1-4; 3:3-15



God gives success through obedience and wisdom.



“Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?” (1 Kgs 3:9).

Supporting Truths

1. Wisdom is more valuable than gold.
2. Obedience requires courage.
3. Obedience is the key to success.
4. Wisdom from God is necessary to live out His will successfully.
5. Godly wisdom is not the same thing as worldly wisdom.

Objectives

1. State the one thing Solomon asked from God.
2. Define obedience.
3. Give several examples from past lessons of the results of obedience and disobedience.
4. Define godly wisdom and state the reason Solomon asked for it.
5. List 3 differences between godly wisdom and worldly wisdom.

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives Solomon wisdom • 1 Kings 2:1–4; 3:3–15



Lesson Summary

David was about to die, but just as God promised, David's son Solomon became king in his place. Before David died, he told his son that the key to success as king was wholehearted obedience to God. God also prepared Solomon to be king by granting him one request. Solomon asked for wisdom instead of wealth or long life because Solomon knew that wisdom was most valuable. He knew that without wisdom he could not successfully serve God as the king of Israel.

Spotlight on the Gospel

Solomon, the wisest man to ever live, failed to perfectly keep God's law or provide lasting peace to Israel. But his descendant, Jesus Christ, succeeded where Solomon failed. Unlike Solomon, Jesus lived every moment of His life according to godly wisdom. He perfectly fulfilled God's will, even to the point of death. By His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus provides forgiveness and life to all who believe. Those who believe are then called to follow Jesus' wise example.

LAST WEEK



God forgives David
2 Samuel 11:1–12:25

THIS WEEK



God gives Solomon wisdom
1 Kings 2:1–4; 3:3–15

NEXT WEEK



God's glory fills the temple
1 Kings 8:1–9:9

UNITED KINGDOM

Lesson Commentary

God gives success through obedience and wisdom.

The book of Kings begins with God establishing Solomon as king, the first of the lasting dynasty promised to David. Solomon's reign was glorious, bringing peace and prosperity to Israel just as God had promised. But the glory didn't last. The kingdom quickly split in two, and the wicked kings far outnumbered the righteous ones. At the end of the book Israel is defeated, the temple destroyed, and the people exiled. How could this be? What about God's promises (2 Sam 7:9–16)?

Although the promise of an everlasting rule was certain, the success of any particular king depended on his obedience (7:14). And although the promise of Israel's security in the land was certain (7:10), the blessing upon any particular generation depended on their obedience (Deut 28). That is why much of the book of Kings describes God's righteous judgment against His people, for they rarely obeyed. So as Kings begins, David urged Solomon to obey God's law, and Solomon responded well by seeking the wisdom he needed in order to be a good king for God's people.

David commanded Solomon to be faithful to the LORD (2:1–4)

People's last words show what is most important to them. And as David was about to die, he told Solomon the one thing that would give him success as king: faithful obedience to all that God had commanded (1 Kgs 2:3). Through his obedience to the law of Moses, Solomon would enjoy the blessings of God's covenant with David.

This obedience would require fierce courage (2:1–2). Solomon had an important duty: to keep the charge of the LORD (2:3). Like a vigilant guard, Solomon was to diligently fulfill his duty. It was time for Solomon to think and act like a man, with boldness and initiative, just as God had commanded Joshua (Josh 1:8–9).

Although we may not be king like Solomon, all Christians have a holy duty to fulfill (1 Pet 2:9–12). All believers must grow into maturity, putting childish and immature ways behind them.

The way to fulfill this duty is by living out all of God's word—every statute, commandment, rule, and testimony (1 Kgs 2:3). **Obedience** was the duty of every Israelite (Deut 4:1), but especially of the king (17:18–20). No one, not even kings, is above God's law. Believers today, even though they are no longer under the law of Moses (Heb 8:13), are called to obey the law of Christ (1 Pet 1:2). This obedience is not just going through the motions, because the LORD searches the heart (1 Chr 28:9). True obedience is devotion to God with heart, soul, and might (1 Kgs 2:4; Deut 6:4–6). So David prayed the best prayer a father can pray for a son: “Grant to Solomon my son a whole heart that he may keep your commandments, your testimonies, and your statutes” (1 Chr 29:19).

David knew firsthand the importance of obedience. While Saul lost God's blessing through disobedience (1 Sam 15:22–23), David gained God's blessing through obedience (1 Sam 23:4; 2 Sam 2:1–2). But when David disobeyed, his family, as well as the nation of Israel, suffered greatly. David's disobedience led to death, rape, murder, and rebellion within his family, to David's temporary exile, and to the deaths of 70,000 Israelites (2 Sam 12–20; 24). David also knew what God had said about his descendant: “When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him” (7:14). So David urged Solomon to obey: “If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever” (1 Chr 28:9).

THINK ABOUT IT

Obedience is hard, so believers must face the challenges with courage (1 Cor 16:13).



THINK ABOUT IT

Only lives built on obedience to God's word will remain (Matt 7:24–27).



STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives Solomon wisdom • 1 Kings 2:1–4; 3:3–15



The LORD gave Solomon wisdom (3:3–15)

At first, Solomon listened to his father. He loved, obeyed, and worshiped the LORD (1 Kgs 3:3–4). In response, God offered to grant Solomon whatever he desired (3:5). Instead of blurting out a request, Solomon first paused to praise God for His steadfast love (3:6–7). Solomon's request grew out of an attitude of thankfulness and trust, which is exactly how we should pray—without anxiety and full of thanksgiving (Phil 4:6). Also, Solomon's request was motivated by a desire for the good of God's people, not selfish gain (1 Kgs 3:7–9). We also should pray for the sake of others (Phil 2:3; 1 Thess 5:11), not our own pleasures (Jas 4:3).

So with a heart of thankfulness, faith, and love, Solomon asked for wisdom. More precisely, Solomon asked for “an understanding mind,” or more literally, “a listening heart” (1 Kgs 3:9). True **wisdom** is a teachable, humble, obedient, repentant heart (Prov 1:23; 11:2; 13:10). It is keeping and doing God's commands (Deut 4:6). It is living in the fear of the LORD and accomplishing His will (Prov 9:10; Eph 5:15–17).

This godly wisdom is totally unlike worldly wisdom. Worldly wisdom tries to decide right and wrong apart from God (Gen 3:5–6), but Godly wisdom seeks to know and submit to His standard. Worldly wisdom is trusting one's own understanding, but godly wisdom depends on God (Prov 3:5–8). Worldly wisdom is jealous and selfishly ambitious (Jas 3:15–16), but godly wisdom is humble, gentle, pure, peaceable, teachable, merciful, beneficial, just, and sincere (Jas 3:17). Worldly

wisdom is foolish and boastful, but godly wisdom

boasts in the Lord (1 Cor 1:20–31; Jer 9:23–24). Worldly wisdom comes from the earth, our own flesh, and the devil (Jas 3:15), but godly wisdom comes from God (Prov 2:6) through Jesus Christ (Col 2:3). In the end, worldly wisdom is useless and sad (Eccl 1:17–18), but godly wisdom helps in our work (Eccl 10:10) and brings joy (Prov 15:20).

Solomon needed godly wisdom to rule over God's people, but every believer needs wisdom to successfully live out God's will (Eph 5:15–17). Every believer is to teach, admonish, and counsel other believers in all wisdom (Col 3:16). Every parent is to impart wisdom to their children through discipline (Prov 29:15), and children ought to receive that discipline with teachable hearts (Prov 15:32). All those who despise wisdom are foolish (Prov 1:7). Do you desire wisdom, to please God and do good for God's people? Ask God for it. God kept His promise to give wisdom to Solomon (1 Kgs 3:28; 4:29–34), and He will keep His promise to give wisdom to all who ask in faith (Jas 1:5–6).

THINK ABOUT IT
Seek wisdom like a miner mining for precious gems (Job 28).



Although Solomon first responded by worshiping God (1 Kgs 3:15), he later strayed from God's commands. Not even his unequalled wisdom could ensure lasting peace for Israel. But Solomon had a descendant who is greater than Solomon (Luke 11:31). He was filled with wisdom even as a child (Luke 2:40, 52), and all wisdom belongs to Him (Rev 5:12; 7:12). He has even become wisdom to all who believe (1 Cor 1:30). Solomon squandered the good gift God had given Him, but Jesus perfectly submitted to the Father to the point of death to provide everlasting life for all who believe. True wisdom is to trust in Christ alone for salvation and to follow His example of humble obedience (Phil 2:5–9).



THINK ABOUT IT
Godly wisdom is more valuable than great treasure (Prov 8:11; 16:16).

wisdom is foolish and boastful, but godly wisdom boasts in the Lord (1 Cor 1:20–31; Jer 9:23–24). Worldly wisdom comes from the earth, our own flesh, and the devil (Jas 3:15), but godly wisdom comes from God (Prov

Lesson Outline

God gives success through obedience and wisdom.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. David told his son Solomon to be brave (2:1–2).
2. David told his son Solomon to obey God with all his heart (2:3–4).
3. Solomon asked God for a wise heart to obey (3:3–15).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. David commanded Solomon to be faithful to the LORD (2:1–4).
 - Be strong and courageous (2:1–2).
 - Be responsible and obedient (2:3).
 - Be faithful to God with all your heart (2:4).
 - Trust God to give you success (2:3c–4).
2. The LORD gave Solomon wisdom (3:3–15).
 - Solomon loved, obeyed, and worshiped the LORD (3:3–4).
 - The LORD told Solomon to ask for whatever he desired (3:5).
 - Solomon asked for wisdom to be a good king (3:6–9).
 - God was pleased and promised wisdom, along with wealth and honor (3:10–14).
 - Solomon worshiped the LORD (3:15).



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives Solomon wisdom • 1 Kings 2:1–4; 3:3–15



Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **Who was going to be king after David?**
Solomon.
2. **What did David say was the key to Solomon's success?**
Obedience to God.
3. **What one thing did Solomon ask God for?**
Solomon asked God for wisdom.
4. **Why did Solomon ask God for wisdom?**
Solomon needed wisdom from God in order to be a good king for God's people.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **What did David instruct his son to be?**
Mature; manly; strong and courageous; responsible.
2. **What kind of obedience did David tell Solomon to have?**
Complete obedience; obedience from the heart.
3. **Did Solomon listen to David?**
Yes. When Solomon first became king, he loved God and worshiped Him.
4. **What did God tell Solomon to do?**
God told Solomon to ask for anything he desired.
5. **What did Solomon pray about before asking for anything?**
Solomon praised God for His love and trusted in God's faithfulness.
6. **What could Solomon have asked for? Why didn't he?**
He could have asked for wealth or long life. He didn't ask for these because he loved God's people more than himself. This pleased God.
7. **How does the Bible describe wisdom?**
Wisdom is a heart that listens carefully to God. It is fearing God, doing God's will, being humble and teachable, and skillfully living out God's commands.
8. **How is godly wisdom different from worldly wisdom?**
Godly wisdom seeks to understand good and evil by submitting to God's word. Worldly wisdom wants to decide what is good and evil without listening to God. Godly wisdom loves and serves others. Worldly wisdom loves and serves self.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

READY FOR THE JOB

Bring in items such as a plant, stuffed animal, and pan for a cake. If I told you today that I was going on a vacation and I needed you to water my plants while I was away, what would you need to do the job? What about watering and feeding my animal? Or what about baking a birthday cake? In today's lesson we will see that Solomon had a big job to do. He was the king and needed to lead a lot of people. What did Solomon need to do the job? He needed wisdom from God.

WHAT WOULD YOU ASK GOD FOR?

Bring a large bag containing various "gift" items—a dollar bill, some candy, toys, and a wrapped package (representing wisdom). Ask the children what they would ask God for if He told them they could have any one thing they wanted. Remove each item from the bag, and ask the children if this is what they would ask for. Save the wrapped package for last. When God asked Solomon what he wanted, Solomon asked God for wisdom. Share with children about the value of wisdom from Proverbs 16:16.



ILLUSTRATE

WHAT GOD GAVE

God gave Solomon a wise and discerning mind, riches, and honor. God also promised to give Solomon a long life if he obeyed His commandments like his father, David, had obeyed (1 Kgs 3:12–14). Bring in various items to represent the gifts God gave to Solomon: headset (wisdom; representing ability to hear and understand God's word), coins, dollar bills, piggy bank, safe (riches), step stool or ladder (honor; step on stool to be exalted above others), and birthday candles or measuring tape (long life).

WORDS FROM A FATHER

Invite a child's father to come to class and read David's admonition to his son Solomon in 1 Kings 2:1–4.



APPLY

GOD'S GIFT TO SOLOMON

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheet, glue or tape, scissors, and crayons.

Directions: Pre-cut the heart, half heart, and paper strips titled "A Wise and Understanding Heart," "Riches," and "Honor." Have children color all pieces. Glue or tape the sides and bottom of the half heart to the full heart to make a pocket. Insert the strips of paper into the heart pocket.



God's Gift to Solomon
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2

TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God gives Solomon wisdom • 1 Kings 2:1–4; 3:3–15



AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

IN SEARCH OF WISDOM

Ask the children to give you directions to different locations or landmarks. Finally, ask them where you can find wisdom. Explain that true wisdom can only be found in God (Prov 2:6; 3:5–8).

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR DAD?

Before class, ask the fathers of four children to come to class at a specific time to participate in a game. Set up eight chairs at the front of the classroom for the fathers and children to sit in. Ask the four children the following five questions about their fathers: (1) Where was your father born (city, state, and country)? (2) How old is your father? (3) What is your father's favorite sport? (4) Where does your father work? (5) What is the most important instruction your father has ever given you, something that he tells you over and over again? After each question, allow the fathers to tell the class if their child answered correctly. Use the fifth question to spark the children's interest in the Bible lesson (1 Kgs 2:1–4). Just as the children's fathers have given them important instructions, so David gave his son Solomon very important advice.



ILLUSTRATE

GIVEN TO THOSE WHO SEEK

Bring in an item used to search for precious metals (metal detector, pan for panning for gold, picture of sluice or rocker box). Explain that these precious metals are rarely found on accident. The same is true of wisdom. It is found by those who seek it (Prov 4:5, 7; Jas 1:5–6).

CAN YOU RECOGNIZE A WISE HEART?

Draw a large heart with a line down the center. Label the left side "Solomon Recognized about God," and label the right side "Solomon Recognized about Himself." While teaching through 1 Kings 3:6–9, pause after each verse to ask the children what things Solomon recognized about God or about himself in that verse. Record your findings on the heart. Some examples include: What Solomon Recognized about God (1) His great mercy (3:6); (2) His great kindness (3:6); (3) God gave David an heir to the throne (3:6); (4) God had multiplied His people, Israel, to a great number (3:8) and What Solomon Recognized about Himself (1) He was God's servant (3:7); (2) He lacked qualification and experience to be king (3:7); (3) He needed wisdom to discern between good and evil (3:9).



APPLY

STUDY, OBEY, AND PRAY

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheet, paper plates, craft sticks, scissors, tape, glue, and crayons.

Directions: Help the students to create a flip plate by taping two plates together, bottom sides out. Cut out the two circles and glue each one to a side of the plate. Cut out the picture of the Bible and glue it to the "Study and Obey God's Word" circle. Cut out the picture of praying-hands and glue it to the "Pray for Wisdom" circle. Tape a craft stick to the bottom of the plates for a handle.



Study, Obey, and Pray
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2

AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

PHONE A FRIEND

Imagine that you have to answer a very difficult riddle. Who would you call for help? The queen of Sheba (southwestern Arabia) traveled over a 1,000 miles to test Solomon's reputation for wisdom, and she was not disappointed (1 Kgs 10:1–10, 13). Solomon is the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kgs 3:12). People would come to him from far away and ask him for advice. Where do you think Solomon's wisdom came from? We'll find out in today's lesson.

WHAT DID YOU DO THIS WEEK?

Ask the children what activities they did throughout the week. Ask them what kinds of important decisions they had to make and how they decided to make them. Next, discuss decisions that the president of the United States would have to make each day. Explain that leaders need to make many important decisions that can affect many people's lives. Solomon realized that as a king he would have to make many decisions. He realized that he could not do it with his own wisdom and that he needed God's help. In today's lesson, we'll see what happens when Solomon asks God for wisdom.



ILLUSTRATE

ADVICE FROM OUR FATHER

When David was ready to pass on the kingship to his son Solomon, he gave Solomon some important advice. Many fathers today also give their children important advice about how to live godly lives. Ask the children if they can remember some wisdom that their parents have given them. We can confidently depend on our heavenly Father's wisdom, too. What wisdom has our heavenly Father given to us?

WISE IN OUR OWN EYES

In the book of Genesis we read that Eve, the first woman, "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise" (3:6). After she and her husband ate the forbidden fruit "the eyes of both were opened" (Gen 3:7). Adam and Eve became wise, but their newly acquired ability to see and know evil resulted in guilt and shame (Gen 3:8–10). Tell the children that worldly wisdom comes from the earth, our own flesh, and the devil (Jas 3:15), but godly wisdom comes from God (Prov 2:6) through Jesus Christ (Col 2:3).



APPLY

TRUE WISDOM

God's wisdom is not the same as the world's wisdom. In fact, God's wisdom looks like foolishness to people who do not know Him. God's wisdom is supremely demonstrated in the cross of Christ. The cross is a stumbling block for Jews and folly for Gentiles, but for those who believe, it is both the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:22–25). If the children want to be wise, they first have to embrace the wisdom of the cross, for Christ is our "wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor 1:30). God's wisdom provides a wonderful platform from which to share the gospel with the children.