

The Wisdom Of Solomon

1 Kings 3:16-28; 4:21-34

MEMORY VERSE

1 KINGS 4:30

“Thus Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Three paper bags, a few small plastic bugs, a few small prizes and marshmallows.

Enough small prizes (pencils, erasers, stickers, etc.) for the number of children in your class.

Blindfolds (4-5).

Enough “yield sign” templates as the number of children in your class, yellow or red construction paper, scissors, glue and large tongue depressors.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Watch Your Choices

The object of this activity is to show the class that sometimes we make choices a certain way for the wrong reasons. You will need three paper bags or small boxes. Decorate one bag beautifully, make it look very attractive, but put small plastic bugs inside. Make the next bag look ugly but put in some small prizes. Just leave the third bag plain and fill with marshmallows.

Have the children take a look at all three bags (but not inside!). Take a show of hands to indicate which bag as a whole the class wishes to choose. Choose a couple of volunteers to reach into the bag that was chosen at the same time (count to three and have them reach in).

Next ask the children what happened. When making decisions, we sometimes go with what looks best, but that is not always the best choice. Sometimes, the best choice may be the one that looks the worse on the outside or even the most plain on the outside. As we make important decisions, it is a good thing to seek wisdom from God and not rely on our own thoughts. When faced with choices, King Solomon relied on God's wisdom.

LESSON TIME!

Last week, we learned that King Solomon asked God for wisdom rather than riches or long life. Today, we will see how King Solomon used that wisdom to help people. **God gives us wisdom so we can help others.**

How does one get wisdom? According to James 1, we simply ask: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

Wisdom is valuable and necessary, not only for us, but also to help others and point them in the right direction. Solomon had to rely on God's wisdom to get at the truth of the matter in our lesson today.

1 KINGS 3:16-23

Now two women who were harlots came to the king, and stood before him.

And one woman said, "O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house.

"Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we were together; no one was with us in the house, except the two of us in the house.

"And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him.

"So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

"And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne."

Then the other woman said, "No! But the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." And the first woman said, "No! But the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son." Thus they spoke before the king.

And the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son, who lives, and your son is the dead one'; and the other says, 'No! But your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'"

These two women who came to Solomon had two very different stories. King Solomon needed God's wisdom to be the judge between them. Both stories could not be true. Who was lying? A good decision, the right decision, would make all the difference in the world to the real mother of the baby. **God gives us wisdom so we can help others.**

1 KINGS 3:24-28

Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king.

And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other."

Then the woman whose son was living spoke to the king, for she yearned with compassion for her son; and she said, "O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!" But the other said, "Let him be neither mine nor yours, but divide him."

So the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him; she is his mother."

And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

King Solomon asked for a sword. What do you suppose these two women thought about that? God had given Solomon the wisdom he needed to get to the bottom of the matter and find the truth. By using the threat of death for the child, King Solomon would draw out the true mother.

In the heart of one woman, Solomon found love and compassion--love that was so strong she was willing to give her baby up to another woman in order to see him live. Saving his life was the most important thing, even if saving his life meant not being able to raise him herself. She was taking the chance that she might not be able to ever see her baby boy again. But at least she knew that he would be alive. Did he find the mother?

The other woman's heart was full of covetousness—the strong desire to have what something someone else has. She wanted the baby boy so bad, she lied to try get him. She felt bad that she had lost her own child and thought that by stealing the other woman's baby, she would be happy again.

How did Solomon know that the first woman was really the baby's mother? He knew that a real mother would try to save her baby's life no matter what. She was willing to give up her baby in order to see him live. It was clear the other woman was lying because it was no problem for her to see him killed.

What can we do when we have to decide between two sides of an issue to determine which is right? Especially, when we have two very different and someone must be lying to us? We need to go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him for His wisdom so that we can make the right choices. How important it is that we not just look at what seems right or even feels right, but base our decisions on God's Word.

No Sight, No Shoes

The object of this game is to demonstrate how difficult it is to find your shoes while blindfolded. In the same manner, we can't live our lives in the right way without God's wisdom.

Have the children get into a big circle. Ask the children to take off their shoes. Have them place all of their shoes into a big pile. Next, you will need 4 or 5 blindfolds (only allow a small number to play at a time so that no children will get hurt trying to grab their shoes). After the 4 or 5 are blindfolded, tell them that they will have 1 minute to find their shoes and put them on (younger ages can just find their shoes). Tell the other children not to give them any help.

After everyone has had a chance to play, gather all of the children back together. Have them all put their own shoes back on. Discuss the game. Was it easy or hard to find your shoes in a big pile when you were blindfolded? Explain that there are so many choices in life. If we try to make those choices without God's wisdom it is kind of like trying to find shoes in that big pile with a blindfold.

1 KINGS 4:21-28

So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

Now Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour, sixty kors of meal,

ten fatted oxen, twenty oxen from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl.

For he had dominion over all the region on this side of the River from Tiphseh even to Gaza, namely over all the kings on this side of the River; and he had peace on every side all around him.

And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

And these governors, each man in his month, provided food for King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table. There was no lack in their supply.

They also brought barley and straw to the proper place, for the horses and steeds, each man according to his charge.

King Solomon ruled over a very large kingdom. The Euphrates River to the north was almost 400 miles from Jerusalem. The Bible says he ruled over all the kingdoms west of the Jordan River (located in the middle of Israel), and he had peace on all sides. It would take a very wise man to keep peace with all the rulers of all of these kingdoms that his father, King David, had fought with all his life (Philistines, Jebusites, Hivites, Ammonites, etc.).

In the middle of all that territory was Israel, from Dan to Beersheba! That area would be about 150 miles. “And every man had his own vine and fig tree.” This implies that each family had their own property. King Solomon used his wisdom to help his people have peace all the days of his life.

How about those daily provisions? Thirty kors of flour and 60 kors of meal translate into 185 and 375 bushels, respectively. In US measurements that equals 1,480 gallons + 3,000 gallons. It kind of makes you curious to know how many people King Solomon was feeding daily.

How many loaves of bread do you think 1 gallon of flour or meal makes...10? 12? 16? Multiply all those gallons and you get somewhere around 17,000 loaves of bread!!! That’s enough for 15,000 people to have bread at breakfast, lunch and dinner!

And what about all those cattle and sheep and deer and fowl, etc.? In a cookbook we found around 22 different cuts of beef on a cow. Thinking about how a rump roast can feed 4 or 5 people for one meal, one cow might feed 300 people and 30 will feed maybe 10,500. Add to that 100 sheep and goats along with all those other animals...maybe 15,000 people? That’s a lot of people!

Where did all those people live? Did they all eat together? Well, verses 26-28 talk about his district officers, and 2 Chronicles 9:25 talks about his chariot cities. Not only did King Solomon have a very huge household with wives and lots of children, but he also had a huge palace with lots of servants to feed and care for.

In addition, there are visitors, religious leaders, ambassadors, advisors and visiting dignitaries from other lands to feed and take care of. Many people were needed just to care for of all those horses in the chariot cities.

Solomon was greatly blessed. When we live by God's wisdom, we will be blessed too. We may not have all the chariots or servants that King Solomon had, but we will be blessed with the peace and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. In future lessons, we will see that Solomon did begin to stray away from God's wisdom; and he ended up with a lot of misery because of it. Let us keep following God's wisdom all of our lives.

Seeking For Treasure

By using some small prizes, illustrate how we need to search for wisdom like searching for a treasure. Before class you will need to take enough small prizes to have one for each child in your class. Hide them throughout the room by taping them under chairs, under the chalkboard/dry erase board tray or under desks (be creative). But make sure that they are out of sight.

When ready, explain to the class that there are several small hidden treasures throughout the class. When you say "go" let them search for the hidden treasure. When everyone is done, make sure that they all share so that everyone gets one.

Explain what Solomon talked about in Proverbs—when we find or are given wisdom, we have a great treasure. We need to value that

treasure and hang on to it because it will be very valuable in our lives. Wisdom is more valuable than all of the riches in the world.

1 KINGS 4:29-34

And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore.

Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt.

For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations.

He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five.

Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish.

And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

God gave King Solomon a very great gift--more wisdom than any other man in history. Who is the most famous man you have ever heard of? What was he or she famous for? A lot of people may be famous for only one thing, but Solomon knew music; he was a writer (verse 32); he was a scientist (verse 33, Proverbs 20:10); he was an engineer; and he was a businessman (2 Chronicles 2-8).

King Solomon used his wisdom to help other nations as well as his own. He was so wise that men of all nations (ambassadors) came to learn from him. He was a teacher. Think how much learning those ambassadors went home with. He taught them how to build better cities, have organized governments, healthier farms and gardens, and stronger families (Proverbs 3, 4:1-10). King Solomon used his wisdom to help other nations as well as his own.

King Solomon used his wisdom to help him judge, make decisions, and teach the people. In Proverbs 4, Solomon says he listened to his father's advice to "get wisdom and understanding." May we, while young, have a heart to pursue wisdom and understanding. Not only will our own lives be blessed, but God can use us as an instrument of blessing in the lives of others. **God gives us wisdom so we can help others.**

"Yield To God's Will" Sign

Using the enclosed "Yield to God's Will" template, make copies for all the children in your class. Next, tell the children to cut out a slightly larger triangle out of red or yellow construction paper. Glue the sign to the construction paper.

Then have the children color the letters and the sign. Glue a large tongue depressor to the bottom of the sign.

Explain to the children that we need to yield our lives to God's wisdom and His will.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer to ask the Lord for wisdom—wisdom for themselves and wisdom to bless those around them. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

