



Solomon Becomes King

5

Key Theme

- God demands obedience and trust.

Key Passages

- 1 Kings 1:28–37, 2:10–12, 3:1–15, 4:20–34

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe wisdom from a biblical perspective.
- Identify the source of Solomon's wisdom.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

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Write on the board, "Where does wisdom come from?"

Students will place bookmarks at 1 Kings 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Students will practice the memory verse by unscrambling the words on the activity sheet and then reciting the verse to each other or to the class.



Studying God's Word

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David's son Solomon was anointed king. In a dream, God asked Solomon, "What shall I give you?" (1 Kings 3:5). Solomon responded humbly by asking the Lord for an understanding heart to rule the people. God was pleased and granted Solomon's request, plus far more. God confirmed to Solomon that he would be blessed and have a long life if he followed His commandments.

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Read through 1 Kings 1–4.



Activity: True Wisdom

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Students will study various passages of Scripture to develop a biblical definition of wisdom.

- Student Guides

- Pencils



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

Time marches on. That is true in our lives, and it was true for King David. After ruling over Israel for 40 years (1 Kings 2:10–11), David died, and his son by Bathsheba, Solomon, became the next king (1 Kings 2:12). This was according to God's perfect purpose and plan. David knew that the Lord had ordained this son to be the next king, that this son would have rest from his enemies, and that he would be the one to build a house for God's name (1 Chronicles 22:7–11).

This transition to the new king was not without drama. In opposition to God's will and David's desires, another son of David, Adonijah, presumed to be king. He took over the role without his father's knowledge—through treacherous means (1 Kings 1:18–19).

In response to Adonijah's attempted coup, David commanded that Solomon be taken away and anointed the next king (1 Kings 1:32–35). Because we know God had appointed Solomon as the next king, we know that Adonijah's attempt to overthrow God's plan was ultimately futile and absolutely selfish. He was not considering God's will or God's glory, but the glory he himself would receive as king. Before we judge too harshly, however, how often do we follow the same pattern—devising plans to please our own desires rather than God's?

After Solomon had become king, God appeared to him in a dream and asked Solomon, "Ask! What shall I give you?" (1 Kings 3:5). Solomon's reply reflected his humility and dependence on God. As a young king, Solomon requested wisdom from the Lord (1 Kings 3:7, 3:9). He knew that in order to judge the people according to God's will, he must be able to discern between

good and evil. Only godly wisdom could accomplish that. God was pleased to give Solomon a wise and understanding heart such that he was the wisest man who ever lived (1 Kings 3:12).

God blessed Solomon with wisdom and blessed him way beyond that. In fact, Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches, honor, and wisdom (1 Kings 3:13). Solomon's blessings from God came with a condition—he was to walk in God's ways, keeping His commands and statutes as David his father had (1 Kings 3:14). God demanded obedience from Solomon. God demands obedience from us. And we have the perfect example in Jesus, who stands as the model of humble obedience to God's will—even being obedient to the point of death on a Cross in order to redeem sinners (Philippians 2:3–8).

How would we answer God if asked, "What shall I give to you?" How would we respond? Is there a financial burden or disease that we would like to have relieved? Would our request be set first on accomplishing God's will for our lives? Or would we seek our own comfort and relief? Be encouraged. As the Lord renews our mind through His Word, our desires will be transformed. His Word, through the working of His Holy Spirit, will mature us to desire the things of God and trust His perfect plan for us regardless of the circumstances.

We serve the same God as the one who abundantly blessed Solomon. And He promises to give us the desires of our hearts as we align our hearts with His (Psalm 37:4).

God has blessed all His children with abundant gifts. You may not have the material wealth or immense wisdom of Solomon, but you can use what you have been given to bless your students. As you do this, remember that you are seeking to follow the example of Christ—the perfect servant.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Have you ever told someone that he or she had the wisdom of Solomon, or have you ever been given that compliment? This is only one of a multitude of phrases in our language drawn from the Bible, and one of several related to Solomon. These phrases, adopted by the world and incorporated into our everyday conversations, illustrate the influence God's Word has had on the cultures of the past and today.

Solomon's wisdom was a blessing from God and not the sole product of his own efforts to learn. As such, he was wiser than all of the men of the East or Egypt (1 Kings 4:30). Hearing of the fame of Solomon's wisdom from the Lord, the Queen of Sheba visited him:

Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions. She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her. (1 Kings 10:1–5)

In 1 Kings 4:29–34, we also learn that Solomon spoke proverbs, wrote many songs, and studied the natural world. God's gift of wisdom to him was applied to these areas, much of which was recorded in

Scripture for our benefit. Solomon's writings (much of the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and some of the psalms) remain an abundant source of wisdom and instruction. Although Solomon failed to heed much of his own advice, it seems that at the end of his life he had come to understand that chasing after anything but God was to chase a vain thing (see the book of Ecclesiastes).

Solomon ruled Israel for 40 years, but after his death, the kingdom would be torn in two. Solomon had wisdom to know what God commanded and desired for his life, but he often failed to do what he knew was right. We can learn a valuable lesson from Solomon's life and seek, by God's grace, to be doers of the words recorded in Scripture and not just learn about them in a superficial way that, in the end, will only lead to vanity.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Lord, you are perfect in all your ways. You are wise. Thank you for this lesson's reminder that wisdom only comes from you. You've revealed your wisdom to us in your Word. Give me that perfect wisdom and the strength to follow all your ways. And thank you for reminding me that wisdom and humility are necessary to lead and teach others well. I humbly ask you for the ability to teach today's lesson clearly and accurately. Your Word is exciting. It is truth. It is life changing. Help me express that passion and pass it on to the students in my class. Fill me and use me for your honor and glory.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





COME ON IN

As students arrive ...

- They will mark their Bibles at 1 Kings 1, 2, 3, and 4 with strips of paper.
- They will recite the memory verse after they unscramble the words on the Memory Verse Review Sheet.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. Students should unscramble the letters of the missing words and then recite the verse to you or another student. Each week the verse will get harder to unscramble. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



Review

Last week, we had a lesson describing the book of Psalms. We talked about the poetic structures found in the various psalms and how they are a great source of worship and praise to God.

? Does anyone have any discoveries to share after our lesson last week? Did you find something new in Psalms in the past week that was a blessing? *Discuss various answers.*

We are moving on from David today, though he is still in the picture. As we think about where we are in history, David began his rule in 1055 BC. We know from a verse we will read later that David ruled for 40 years. That means the events we are discussing today happened in 1015 BC. *Refer to the History of Israel Timeline.*

We have skipped over many of the events in David's life, so let me give you a few details that will be important as we look at the lesson today.

God had told David that his son Solomon would inherit the throne (2 Samuel 7:12–16). David had explained this to Solomon and told him about building the Temple (1 Chronicles 22:7–13). David had also told Bathsheba at some earlier time (1 Kings 1:13).

Now, as David was dying, his son Adonijah was trying to take the throne by installing himself as king (1 Kings 1:1, 1:5–10). Adonijah was Solomon's older brother by another wife. This is where we pick up the storyline today as Bathsheba and Nathan informed David of the treachery of Adonijah. And people say the Bible is boring?





Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Let's read 1 Kings 1:28–37 together and find out what happens next. Have someone read the passage aloud.

► Write on the board, "Where does wisdom come from?"

1 Kings 1:28–37

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What did David promise to Bathsheba? *That Solomon would take the throne after David.*
- ? Who was called to anoint Solomon? *Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah.*
- ? How was Solomon taken to Gihon? *Riding on David's mule.*
- ? Does anyone know where Gihon is? *It is a spring on the eastern edge of Jerusalem that was the main water supply for the city.*
- ? Does anyone know what is significant about riding on David's mule? *Some may connect this to the triumphal entry of Jesus when He rode into Jerusalem. Having Solomon ride on David's mule was a symbol of David's favor on Solomon. A similar honor was offered to Mordecai by the king of Persia in the book of Esther.*

Discover the Truth

As David recognized his death would come soon, he had Solomon anointed as his successor. Adonijah had presumed to take the throne and had assembled a group at a feast to celebrate his new kingship . . . or so he thought. As Solomon was anointed and the people raised a wild cheer, the people who had gathered to serve Adonijah got wind of David's choice of Solomon as king and abandoned him!

- ? What do you suppose Adonijah did after he heard that Solomon had been anointed as the new king? *He was afraid Solomon would kill him, so he fled to the altar of the Lord and sought Solomon's favor. Solomon was gracious to him (1 Kings 1:50–53).*



READ THE WORD

David offered a charge to Solomon and called him to follow God and obey His commands, as well as giving some other instructions for dealing with individual people (1 Kings 2:1–9).

Here is how the end of David's reign is described. Read 1 Kings 2:10–12 aloud.

1 Kings 2:10–12

After this, Solomon had Adonijah executed after another attempt to take the throne, and several others were either exiled or executed to secure

1 Kings 3:1–15

the kingdom (1 Kings 2:13–46). “Thus the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon” (1 Kings 2:46).

Let’s read 1 Kings 3:1–15 and learn some more about Solomon. Have someone read the passage aloud.

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? How is Solomon described in the first part of verse three? *He loved the Lord and walked in the statutes of David—who walked in the statutes of God.*
- ? According to the end of verse three, in what way was Solomon not following God? *He sacrificed and offered incense at the high places—the former altars of false gods.*
- ? How did God appear to Solomon at Gibeon? *The Lord appeared to him in a dream.*
- ? What was God’s question to Solomon? *“What shall I give you?”*
- ? What did Solomon do before he answered God and made his request? *Solomon offered God praise and thanks for all He had done for him.*
- ? Why did God grant Solomon’s request and bless him beyond what he asked? *Since Solomon asked for a blessing that would benefit others and not for long life or riches, God was pleased to give him more than he asked for. Verse 13 says that God granted Solomon great riches and honor.*
- ? What was the conditional promise (If you...then...) God made to Solomon? *If Solomon would obey God, he would live a long life.*

In the following chapters, there are several examples of Solomon applying the wisdom God had given him to judge the Israelites. The queen of Sheba paid Solomon a visit and was greatly impressed by Solomon’s wisdom.

We also hear about Solomon’s wealth and prosperity. Eventually, Solomon would use this wealth to build a glorious temple for the Lord, but we will save that for another lesson.

We aren’t going to take too much time looking in detail at Solomon’s wealth, but turn to 1 Kings 4 and we will look at a couple of examples.

Verse 21 talks about Solomon reigning from the Euphrates (the River) to Egypt.

1 Kings 4:20–34

Verses 22 and 23 talk about how much food it took to sustain his court for a day.

Verse 26 tells us that he had thousands of horses and chariots.

Verses 29 to 34 talk more about his wisdom, generosity, and learning.

If time allows, have students list other ways God blessed Solomon in these verses

Discover the Truth

Solomon walked in the statutes of God, just as his father David had done. He obeyed God and served Him as the king over God's chosen nation. Solomon had many shortcomings, but as a young king, his character shone through as God presented him with the opportunity to have whatever he desired.

- ?
- How do you think you would have responded to that question?** We might hope that we would respond without selfish motives, but our hearts might be deceiving us. We cannot forget that we are sinful and have sinful motives. Our first thoughts will typically run to financial problems or health problems, but by God's grace we can ask for those things that would honor God and serve others, rather than exalting and serving ourselves.

As we look to trust and obey God, our minds can be renewed and the desires of our hearts will be in line with God's desires. As a young king, Solomon knew this as he walked in God's way and followed His statutes. True wisdom does not focus on our worldly desires, but on that which is from God and will bring Him glory.

This is the same truth Jesus communicated to His disciples in John 14. When we ask for things from God in faith, He is pleased to do them to bring glory to Himself. "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13). This is not a "name-it-and-claim-it" promise, but rather to ask in Jesus's name means to ask according to His will. Praying in Jesus's name means the same thing as praying according to the will of God, as we read in 1 John 5:14–15: "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." Praying in Jesus's name is praying for things that will honor and glorify Jesus.

John 14:9–21





True Wisdom

MATERIALS

- Student Guides
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

If time is short, have each member of the group look up a few of the passages and share what they have found with the group.

Our activity today is going to send you on a chase for wisdom. In your Student Guides, you will find the activity called True Wisdom. There are 10 passages that all deal with wisdom. As you might imagine, the Bible is filled with passages on wisdom. Your job is to come up with a definition for wisdom based on these passages. We will come back together in a few minutes and see what you have come up with. Have the students work in groups to complete the activity. The students will be looking at the following passages: Proverbs 2:6, 4:7, 9:10; Psalm 19:7; James 3:13–17; 2 Timothy 3:15; Romans 11:33; Colossians 2:3, 4:5–6; 1 Corinthians 2:4–5, 2:14.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Even though you have not tackled the subject exhaustively, you can see that Scripture has much to say about wisdom. To

understand what wisdom is, we need to look at the whole counsel of God. If we looked at just one of these passages, we would wind up with a definition that is too small.

After examining these passages, what did you come up with for a biblical definition? Discuss various definitions. Here is a suggested definition based on these passages: Wisdom is a gift from God given to those who seek for it so that they might apply the truths found in Scripture to live a life obedient to the commands of Christ—to be imitators of Christ.

When we seek wisdom, we seek to be like God. We know that one of God's attributes is that He is wise. He does everything perfectly and without mistakes. He always does what is best and what will bring glory to Himself.

When we seek to be wise, we seek to bring glory to God by acting as He would act. Paul called the Corinthian church to imitate his actions, just as Paul was imitating Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). To be wise is to be like Jesus. Even Solomon did not live up to the wisdom he knew; he made some very foolish decisions later in his life. But Jesus offers us a perfect example of wisdom and obedience—a model we can surely follow.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Despite Adonijah's treachery, Solomon ascended to take David's throne, just as God had intended. God's wisdom brought about the end He had intended, and Solomon was blessed by God with wisdom to judge and rule the people of Israel. Solomon's wisdom allowed him to be known

throughout the world, to write many proverbs, and to offer insight into many areas of the natural world.

As Solomon sought to follow God, his wisdom increased and he continued to follow God's commands, at least in his early days. The same should be said of us as we seek to follow Christ, trusting that God will bless us with wisdom to apply the truths He has revealed to us in His Word and in the life of Jesus.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

- ?
- Why is it important to remember that wisdom only comes from God? *If we forget that it is God who determines what is wise, we can get caught up in the wisdom of the world.*
- ?
- What are some practical ways that we can seek wisdom? *Ultimately, wisdom comes from God. We must be engaged in activities that will help us understand God and His ways more fully. Prayer, study, discipleship, sitting under sound teaching, and other activities can increase our godly wisdom. Any of these activities must be firmly grounded in Scripture, especially in the light of the person and work of Jesus (Colossians 2:3).*
- ?
- In what ways has the account of Solomon influenced Western society? *We have several common phrases that come from the account: the wisdom of Solomon, the riches of Solomon, the mines of Solomon. Many people know of Solomon and his wisdom, so this could be an excellent way to start a discussion about the truthfulness and authority of Scripture.*
- ?
- Part of Solomon's blessing was conditioned upon his obedience to God. What relationship between wisdom and obedience can we draw from this lesson? *God promises wisdom to those who will ask for it in faith, and wisdom will help us to be obedient to God's commands. Also, we cannot expect God to grant us wisdom if we are not walking in obedience to Him. There is a strong connection between wisdom and obedience in this sense. However, we must not forget that we are fully accepted in Christ; our salvation is not earned by our obedience. But, according to Scripture, a believer will live a life characterized by obedience to the Lord (1 John 2:4, 3:9).*



MEMORY VERSE

2 Samuel 7:22 Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for revealing wisdom to us in the Scriptures.
- Praise God for offering Jesus as a perfect example of wisdom.
- Ask God for wisdom in sharing the gospel with others.

Notes