

THE KING WHO HAD IT ALL

Bible Basis: 1 Kings 3:1–15; 4:29–34; 2 Chronicles 9:1–9

Key Verse: Don't be wise in your own eyes. Have respect for the Lord. —Proverbs 3:7, NIV

Bible Point: God made Solomon a wise leader. God can make me wise, too.

Resource: *The Story for Kids*: Chapter 13, "The King Who Had It All"

STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

Stuff You Need: advertisements, such as store flyers that come in the Sunday paper, or catalogs

Open up some ads and begin commenting on items you see. Talk about something you'd really like to have. Get excited about one item after another. If your group is small enough, let the children look through ads and say what they'd like to have.

- If you could have anything you see in these advertisements, what would it be?
- If you could have anything in the world, what would it be?

Say, **In our Bible story today, we'll find out what one king said when God asked him this question.**

STEP 2: HEAR THE STORY

Stuff You Need: copies of *The Story for Kids*, Bibles, *The Story Elementary Trading Card 13*, "yes" and "no" signs

Tell the story from *The Story for Kids*, Chapter 13. You can also have children find 1 Kings 3 and mark it in their Bibles. Either you or a child in your class can read the Scripture passages listed throughout the story.

Wise in God's Eyes

Ahead of time, make two signs; one that says "yes" and one that says "no." You'll need two strong readers to be narrators, and two volunteers to be sign holders—one will hold the "yes" sign and the other will hold the "no" sign. Whenever the narrators pause to ask a question about Solomon, the sign holders should parade with the signs and encourage the rest of the children to call out answers.

Narrator 1: Saul was the first king of Israel. Then came David, a famous king who ruled for 40 years. Then came King Solomon, one of David's sons.

Narrator 2: From the start, Solomon was a very different king than David. No battles and bloodshed for him. Solomon wanted to make his kingdom great by using his brain.

Narrator 1: *Read 1 Kings 3:5.* Now, that's an incredible question, isn't it? Solomon could really have anything he wanted!

Narrator 2: Do you think Solomon made a careful choice? *Pause for sign holders to wave signs.*

Narrator 1: Solomon thought long and hard about this question. He definitely wanted to make a good choice.

Narrator 2: He could have asked to live a long life. He could have asked to be wealthy. He could have asked for God to kill his enemies.

Narrator 1: But he didn't ask for any of that. Instead, he asked God to give him a wise heart, to know the difference between right and wrong. *Read 1 Kings 3:10–12.* Now Solomon had reason to boast about how smart he was and how wise he was.

Narrator 2: Do you think Solomon bragged to his friends? *Pause for sign holders to wave signs.*

Narrator 1: Solomon didn't get all proud and boastful. Instead, he was grateful for what God had done for him. He made the wise choice to go to Jerusalem and stand in front of the Ark of the Covenant. That was where God met with his people. Solomon made sacrifices to God, because he knew his wisdom came from God.

Narrator 2: Solomon became very famous for his wisdom. He knew about all kinds of things, from what rock badgers do in their free time to how to be truly happy in life. He solved arguments and figured out the best time to plant crops.

Narrator 1: Solomon could have kept his wisdom to himself. He could have made sure no one else ever learned how to be wise. But did he? *Pause for sign holders to wave signs.*

Narrator 2: Solomon didn't keep his wisdom to himself. He was constantly thinking of wise things that people needed to know, and he wrote a lot of those things down in a book called Proverbs.

Narrator 1: Proverbs teach you wisdom and train you. They help you understand wise sayings. Solomon's advice was, "Don't be wise in your own eyes. Have respect for the LORD."

Narrator 2: The queen of Sheba heard about how famous and wise Solomon was. She also heard about how he served and worshiped the Lord. So she traveled from far away to test Solomon with hard questions.

Narrator 1: Solomon didn't have to answer her questions. After all, he was the one who was smart, not her. Do you think he answered her questions? *Pause for sign holders.*

Narrator 2: The queen of Sheba asked Solomon about everything she wanted to know, and Solomon answered all of her questions. There wasn't anything that was too hard for the king to explain to her.

Narrator 1: So the queen of Sheba saw how very wise Solomon was. She said, “Back in my country I heard a report about you. I heard how wise you are. But I didn’t believe those things. So I came to see for myself. You are twice as wise as people say you are.”

Narrator 2: God made Solomon a wise leader who could rule the people with choices that were fair and right. God wants to help us be wise, too. All we have to do is ask.

After you have told the Bible story, give each child a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 13*. Ask children to look at the picture and tell you about Solomon’s wisdom. As a class, read the key verse from the back of the card or from the Bible. Ask:

- **What have you learned about wisdom from the story of Solomon?**
- **Tell me about some times when you would have liked to have God’s wisdom to know what to do.**

Say, **God made Solomon into a wise leader, and thousands of years later he’s still famous for being wise. But God has enough wisdom for us, too, and will share it with us if we ask.**

Collect the cards for now. You’ll send them home with the children later.

STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

Choose any or all of these activity options to help your class explore the lesson further.

OPTION 1: PROVERBS FOR TODAY

Stuff You Need: copies of Proverbs for Today Activity Sheet, pencils

Give an activity sheet to each child. **The Bible tells us that Solomon wrote over 3,000 proverbs.** Find out if the children know what a proverb is (a wise saying that many people use). **The book of Proverbs in the Bible records many of these.** Read the proverbs aloud together. Then have children work in pairs or trios to rewrite the proverbs in contemporary terms. Share the results with the whole group. Then talk about:

- **Which of these proverbs do you think is the wisest?**
- **How does having respect for the Lord help us to be wiser?**

Say, **We can learn from Solomon. When you face a tough decision, remember how much Solomon wanted to make wise decisions that pleased God.**

OPTION 2: WISE OR UNWISE?

Stuff You Need: prepared index cards

Before class, write wise and unwise choices on index cards, such as reading your Bible, obeying your parents, eating ice cream before dinner, or cheating on a test. In class, gather the children in

the middle of the room. Explain that when you read a card, they must decide if it is a wise or unwise thing to do. If it is wise, they should go to the right side of your room. If it is unwise, they should move to the left side. For a less active option, have children stand for a wise option and sit down for an unwise option.

OPTION 3: SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Stuff You Need: pictures and descriptions of Solomon's temple (you can find pictures online or in books at your local library)

Optional: construction paper, scissors, pencils, ruler

In Chapter 13 of *The Story for Kids*, Solomon builds a temple for God. Let the children learn about this temple by looking at its description in the Bible (2 Chronicles 3–4) and looking at pictures of what people think it might have looked like. Children may like to construct a class model of Solomon's Temple.

OPTION 4: CHOOSE WISDOM

Talk to the large group about Solomon. Why did he choose wisdom over anything else in the world? Brainstorm what types of things the group would ask for if they had the opportunity and knew that whatever they wanted would be granted.

- **Is there a difference between being wise and being smart?**
- **Which would be better to be in today's world?**
- **Why would you go to a wise person? A smart person?**

Break the large group into smaller groups. Have these groups write a list of proverbs (wise sayings) that are appropriate for today. Allow them to use the Bible and Solomon's advice as no more than two of the five they should have. Design a poster of the sayings and share them with the rest of the class. Talk about the sources of the wise sayings. How did those people get their wisdom?

STEP 4: GOING HOME

Pray in small groups asking for God's wisdom. Encourage children to pray for a specific situation in which they need wisdom. Make sure each child takes home a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 13*, Activity Sheet(s)/Crafts, and the Parents' Page.