Preschool–Grade 6

King Solomon Asks for Wisdom

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Solomon asked God for an understanding heart, and God gave him wisdom. When we need wisdom, we can ask God too.
Bible passage: 1 Kings 3. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." *James 1:5 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, a small box or gift bag with a paper heart inside, 6 paper hearts and a marker for the verse game, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a paper heart in the box or bag and close it. Write the memory verse on the 6 paper hearts (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at 1 Kings 3:5 and James 1:5.

1. Opening game: What's in the Box? (5 minutes)

Hold up the closed box or bag. Kids take turns asking yes-or-no questions to guess what's inside: "Is it something to eat?" "Is it red?" "Is it a toy?" After a few guesses, open it and hold up the paper heart. Say: "Today we will hear a true story about a king. God told him he could ask for anything, and the king asked for a heart! Not a paper heart. He asked for an understanding heart. Let's find out why."

2. Bible story: Ask What I Shall Give Thee (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 1 Kings 3, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

King David had a son named **Solomon**. After David, Solomon became king of Israel (1 Kings 3:7). Solomon loved the LORD (3:3).

One day King Solomon went to a place called **Gibeon**. It was the great **high place**, a hilltop where people gave offerings to God. Solomon gave a thousand burnt offerings on the altar there. That is a lot of offerings (3:4)!

Then, by night, Solomon had a **dream**. "In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee" (3:5). God told Solomon he could ask for anything!

What would you ask for? Solomon thanked God for being so good to his father David (3:6). Then he said, "I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in." He meant, "I am young, and I don't know how to lead" (3:7). God's people were so many that no one could count them (3:8).

So Solomon asked God for an **understanding heart**. He wanted to know how to **judge** God's people, which means to decide what is right, and to **discern**, to tell the difference, between good and bad (3:9).

The story continues: "And the speech pleased the Lord" (3:10). God was happy with what Solomon asked! God said, "You didn't ask for a long life. You didn't ask to be rich. You didn't ask for your enemies to be beaten. You asked for understanding" (3:11). So God said, "I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart." There would be no one as wise as Solomon, before him or after him (3:12)! And God gave him even more: "both riches, and honour," things Solomon had not asked for (3:13). God said that if Solomon walked in His ways, like David did, God would give him a long life (3:14).

Then Solomon woke up. It was a dream (3:15)! He went to Jerusalem and gave offerings to the LORD, and he made a big dinner for all his servants (3:15).

Soon Solomon needed that wisdom. Two women came to the king (3:16). They lived in the same house, and each one had a baby boy (3:17–18). In the night, one of the babies died (3:19). One mother told the king that the other woman got up at midnight, took her living baby, and put the baby who had died next to her. In the morning she looked closely and saw that it was not her son (3:20–21). But the other woman said, "No! The living baby is mine!" (3:22).

How could the king know who the real mother was? King Solomon said, "Bring me a sword" (3:24). He said to divide the living baby in two and give half to each woman (3:25). That sounds scary! But watch what happened. The real mother loved her son so much. She cried out, "O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it." That means, "Give her the baby, but please don't hurt him at all!" (3:26).

Then King Solomon knew who the real mother was! He said, "Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof." That means, "Give the baby to this woman, and don't hurt him. She is his mother" (3:27). The baby was safe with his real mother. All Israel heard about it, and they saw that "the wisdom of God was in him" (3:28). God had given Solomon wisdom, just like He promised!

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3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What did God say to Solomon in the dream? *("Ask what I shall give thee," 1 Kings 3:5)*
2. What did Solomon ask for? *(An understanding heart, to tell good from bad, 3:9)*
3. Was God happy with what Solomon asked? *(Yes. "The speech pleased the Lord," 3:10)*
4. What did God give Solomon that he did not ask for? *(Riches and honour, 3:13)*
5. How did Solomon know who the real mother was? *(She loved her baby and asked the king not to hurt him, 3:26–27)*

4. Memory verse: Heart Hunt (5 minutes)

Write one part on each paper heart: *If any of you lack wisdom, / let him ask of God, / that giveth to all men liberally, / and upbraideth not; / and it shall be given him. / James 1:5.* Explain the old words: **lack** means you don't have enough; **wisdom** means knowing the right thing to do; **liberally** means freely, with lots to give; **upbraideth not** means He won't scold you for asking. Hide the hearts around the room. Kids find them and put them in order on the floor or wall. Read the verse together. Then turn one heart over and read it again. Keep turning hearts over until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God gave Solomon wisdom when he asked. God loves you very much too, and you can ask Him for help. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). He was born in the family of King David, Solomon's father (Matthew 1:1). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when you don't know the right thing to do, stop and ask God to help you, like Solomon did.

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6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Solomon word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/solomon-word-search), the crossword, maze or worksheet, the Solomon coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/solomon), or **Good or Bad?** Solomon asked God to help him "discern between good and bad" (1 Kings 3:9). Read a choice out loud. If it is a good choice, kids stand up tall. If it is a bad choice, they sit down. Examples: "Sharing your snack with a friend." "Telling a lie so you don't get in trouble." "Helping pick up toys." "Pushing to be first in line." "Saying sorry when you are wrong." "Praying when you don't know what to do." After each one, ask: "How do you know?" Say: "God helps us know what is right when we ask Him."

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for giving Solomon an understanding heart. Please help us know what is right and do it. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: The story of the two women (1 Kings 3:16–28) is told gently on purpose. Call them "two women," and keep the part about the baby who died short. If a child is upset about the sword, say: "The baby was not hurt. The king gave him to his real mother, and he was safe" (3:27). If a child has lost a baby brother or sister, be gentle, and point to how God cares for us.

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