



God Gives Solomon Wisdom

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



LESSON GOAL

Students will ask God for wisdom to obey.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- David told Solomon how to live.
- Solomon needed help, so he asked God for wisdom.
- God gave Solomon wisdom to lead the people.
- God was glad that Solomon asked for wisdom.

KEY VERSE

“Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?”
(1 Kings 3:9).

APPLICATION

- Search your heart to see if you love God.
- Ask God for wisdom to obey Him.
- Let everything you do be for God’s glory.

NEXT WEEK

God’s Glory Fills the Temple
Read 1 Kings 8:1-9:9.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

By the time Solomon became king of Israel, he had often heard his father, King David, command him to obey God’s Law. David’s urging his son to follow the Law had the right effect on Solomon’s heart. Solomon was committed to be a godly king, but he also recognized his inability to do so. When the Lord asked Solomon to make any request of Him, Solomon humbly asked for wisdom to rule the people. Solomon understood that he could not rule unless the Lord granted him wisdom. God’s commands need to be responded to with humility. Every person must recognize that he is incapable of obeying God’s commands, must place his faith in Christ, and must ask God for wisdom.

David Admonishes Solomon to Obey God’s Commands (1 Kings 2:1–4)

King David had learned that a king’s success depended on his obedience to God’s commands. Having seen the disastrous reign of King Saul, David began his reign with a strong example of what not to do. Instead of emulating King Saul, he modeled his life after the description of a godly king in Deuteronomy 17:18–20, a king who continually meditated on and obeyed God’s Word. David had also learned from personal experience the devastating effects of ignoring God’s commands. His adultery with Bathsheba had led to the death of his infant, the rape of his daughter, the murder of his sons, and his temporary exile from his own capital when Absalom usurped his throne (2 Sam. 12–20). David was again reminded of the importance of obeying God’s commands when near the end of his reign, 70,000 people died after he had sinned (2 Sam. 24). God taught David that it was important to the Davidic dynasty that his descendants obey the Lord’s commands. God promised David that his sons would be punished when they sinned (2 Sam. 7:14). David knew that whether the Davidic family enjoyed a king reigning upon the throne in Jerusalem depended upon his descendants’ obedience to God’s Law (1 Kings 2:4). From God’s Word and his personal experience, David realized that his descendants would be successful kings only as long as they submitted to God’s Law.

Knowing that he was approaching death, David repeatedly admonished Solomon to follow God’s commands. Earlier in David’s life, the Lord had revealed to him that he had chosen Solomon to be the next king over Israel (1 Chron. 22:8–10). God told David that Solomon would build a temple for the Lord and that the kingdom would continue through Solomon’s line. While Solomon was still “young and inexperienced” (1 Chron. 22:5), David told him, “May the LORD give you wisdom and understanding, and give you charge concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the LORD your God” (22:12). Much as God told Joshua, David told Solomon to “be strong and of good courage” (22:13). David promised Solomon success if he would obey God.

After Solomon was declared king (1 Chron. 23:1; 1 Kings 1), David continued to encourage him. He challenged Solomon, “Know the God of your father, and serve

Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts" (1 Chron. 28:9). With both promise and warning, David admonished his son, "If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever" (28:9). David's prayers reveal his passion for his son's obedience. He prayed, "Give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes." (1 Chron. 29:19).

Before David's death, Solomon was again anointed king of Israel (this time in a more public ceremony) and "sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father" (1 Chron. 29:23). The transition was complete. All Israel obeyed King Solomon (29:23–24). Before David died, he again charged Solomon to be strong and prove himself a man by keeping the Lord's charge "to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies" (1 Kings 2:2–3). If Solomon would obey God's commands (as David had prayed he would), he would prosper. David reminded Solomon that one of his descendants would remain on the throne only so long as they walked before God "in truth with all their heart and with all their soul" (2:4). Solomon's success as king would depend on his obedience to God.

God Commands Solomon to Present His Request (1 Kings 3:1–15)

After reigning for 40 years, King David died and was buried in Jerusalem, the city of David (1 Kings 2:10–12). In the beginning of his reign, Solomon remembered his father's admonitions. First Kings 3:3 says that "Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David." Out of devotion and love for the Lord, Solomon and the Israelites offered a thousand sacrifices at Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4), the resting place of the bronze altar from the tabernacle (2 Chron. 1:5). The Lord spoke to Solomon in a dream that night, telling Solomon to make a request of Him (1 Kings 3:5).

Solomon's response to the Lord indicates much about his heart. He understood that it was only because of God's mercy and kindness that He had blessed David and had given him a son to reign upon the throne of Israel (1 Kings 3:6). Solomon's high view of God did not lead him to diminish human responsibility. Solomon realized that David had walked before God in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart, just as he had commanded Solomon to do. Solomon's humility is seen in his acknowledging that it was God alone who had made him king over the people whom God had chosen (3:7–8). Solomon meekly admitted that he was a "little child" without the ability to lead the people (3:7). Because of the task that God had given him, Solomon asked Him for "an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil" (3:9). David had successfully laid upon his son the tremendous task of leading God's people. Solomon's response to God's call was to humbly admit his inability.

The Lord was pleased and granted Solomon's request. Solomon's goal was the people's good and God's glory. He was motivated by what the Lord willed, but he needed God's strength to accomplish His will. Solomon had the right desire, the right appreciation of God's grace and mercy, and the right humility over his own inability and unworthiness. Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or victory over enemies, the Lord granted Solomon's request. Besides giving him a "wise and understanding heart" (his wisdom exceeding those before or after him), the Lord also gave him riches and honor greater than any king of his time (1 Kings 3:12–13). (The extent of Solomon's wisdom and wealth can be read about in 1 Kings 4:29–34 and 10:1–25; an example of Solomon's wisdom in ruling is seen in 1 Kings 3:16–28.) The Lord also promised Solomon a long life if he would walk in God's ways and keep His commandments (3:14). In response to God's grace, Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the ark of the covenant in Jerusalem and made a feast for his servants (3:15).

Conclusion

King Solomon began his reign by wisely remembering his father David's charge. Solomon loved the Lord and kept His commands. His desire to know and please God did not lead him to boast about his ability or success. Instead, a right knowledge of God led Solomon to humbly admit his inability to lead God's people. He pleased the Lord by wisely admitting his need for wisdom from Him.

Although David's charge to Solomon had a special weight because of his being king, all people are called to the same obedience before God. Seeking to know God, to obey His will, and to serve Him will lead all those who will be (or are) saved to the humble evaluation that they are incapable of pleasing God. A knowledge of unworthiness and inability will cause the repentant sinner to turn to the Father in desperation and accept the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. Having seen his hopelessness without Christ, the humble believer will understand that he is unable to obey God on his own and that he must continue to depend on Christ. In order to live for God's glory, the believer must ask for wisdom from God. James 1:5 says, "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." God blessed Solomon with an extraordinary amount of wisdom in order that He might glorify Himself, and He will also give every believer sufficient wisdom in the humble application of His commands.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



I Spy

Tape up a picture of a crown, a mule, praying hands, and a Bible. With the students seated, say, "I spy a crown." The first student to see this picture should raise his hand; then he can go and get the picture and bring it to you. Discuss how it pertains to the Bible lesson today. Repeat with each picture.

Bible—This king wrote part of the Bible. He was a king who was called a man after God's heart.

Crown—A son of King David was God's choice for the next king of Israel.

Mule—The new king rode into town on a mule.

Praying Hands—The new king asked God for wisdom.



Ready for the Job

Bring in items such as a plant, a watering bucket, a dress, needle and thread, and ingredients and a 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 if I had a rip in my clothes that needed to be fixed? What would you need to do the job? Or what if I was having a birthday and needed a cake made? What would you need to do the job? In today's lesson we will see that Solomon had a big job. 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 Does God Want You to Do?

In today's lesson, King Solomon asks God for wisdom so he can help the people do what is right. The Bible tells us what is right to do. We get God's wisdom from the Bible. What does the Bible tell us is right to do in each of the following situations?

You keep playing after you are told to get ready for bed.

You ignore a sick neighbor.

You lie rather than admitting that you did not brush your teeth.

You complain when asked to take a bath.

You roll your eyes when Grandma needs help in her yard.

You get mad and hit your sister.

You break a toy but blame your brother.



"Be Strong and of Good Courage"

Play this game like "Follow the Leader." The difference is that the leader should change frequently. Each time the leader changes, he should pass on his crown to the next leader and say, "Be strong and of good courage" as David said to his son Solomon as he passed on the kingship to him.



Kingly Crown

Materials: cardboard or tag board; tape; colored paper, gift wrap, or foil cut into jewel shapes (triangles, circles, etc.); gold glitter glue; gold ribbon

Directions: Cut a large piece of cardboard or tag board into the shape of a crown, and tape the crown to the classroom wall. Give the students the paper "jewels" to tape to the crown. You could use glitter glue for more decorations, or frame the crown with gold ribbon. Tell the students that in coming weeks, they will be learning about the kings of Israel.



What Would You Ask God For?

Bring to class a large paper bag containing various "gift" items—a dollar bill, some candy, toys, and a wrapped package (representing wisdom). Ask the students 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 students if this is what they would ask for. Save the wrapped package for last. Explain that Solomon had a big job and realized that there was only one thing he really needed. When God asked him what he wanted, Solomon asked God for wisdom. Read Proverbs 16:16 to the students, and discuss with them what Solomon understood about wisdom.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

By the time Solomon became king of Israel, his father, King David, had told him many times to obey God’s Law. Solomon listened to his father and followed the Law; he was committed to being a godly king. But he knew that he would not be able to follow God’s Law without God’s help. God told him to make a request, so Solomon asked Him for wisdom to know how to be a good king. Solomon knew that he could not be a godly king without God’s wisdom. Just like Solomon, every person must realize that he cannot obey God’s law without God’s help, and he should place his faith in Christ and ask God for wisdom.

King David had learned a lot about being a godly king from experience. He had learned how not to be a godly king from observing King Saul. He knew that to be a godly king, he had to always be thinking about and obeying God’s Word. He also knew how awful things turned out when he disobeyed God, like when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. King David had faced many terrible consequences from that one sin. Near the end of his reign, God reminded him of that lesson when, once again, he made a decision that disobeyed God’s Word, and 70,000 people died because of it. David wanted Solomon to learn from his mistakes. Also, God had promised David that he would punish his sons if they disobeyed His law. David knew that it was very important that his son Solomon, as the next king, obey God’s Law. From God’s Word and from personal experience, David knew that his descendants would only be successful if they obeyed God.

David was dying, and he knew it. He wanted to do everything he could to prepare Solomon to be king. Over and over again, he instructed Solomon to obey God’s law. It was especially important that Solomon understand this now that David was dying. God had told David many years ago that Solomon would be the next king. David told Solomon to “be strong and of good courage” (1 Chron. 22:13). David promised Solomon success if he would obey God. He passed on a lot of advice. He said to Solomon, “Know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intents of the thoughts” (1 Chron. 28:9). He also said, about God: “If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off” (28:9). David also prayed for Solomon. He asked God, “Give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes” (1 Chron. 29:19).

Before David died, Solomon was anointed the king of Israel again, but this time it was a public ceremony, and Solomon was now the king instead of his father David. Now all of Israel was to obey King Solomon. But David did not stop instructing Solomon just because he was not the king anymore! He told Solomon to be strong and prove himself a man by keeping the Lord’s command to him—“to walk in His

ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies" (1 Kings 2:2–3). David also reminded Solomon that the only way one of Solomon's sons would become king after him was if he would obey God, too. He said they must walk before God "in truth with all their heart and with all their soul" (2:4). Solomon would be successful as king only if he obeyed God.

After reigning for more than 40 years, David died and was buried in Jerusalem, the City of David. In the beginning of his reign, King Solomon followed his father's advice and obeyed God's Law. First Kings 3:3 says that, "Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David." Out of devotion and love for the Lord, Solomon and the Israelites offered a thousand sacrifices at Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4), the resting place of the bronze altar from the tabernacle (2 Chron. 1:5). That night, the Lord spoke to Solomon in a dream. He told him to make a request of Him.

Solomon responded to God in a right way, showing that his heart desired to obey God. He knew that he was the king because God had been kind and merciful to him and to his father David. He knew that his father had obeyed the Lord and that he needed to also. Solomon was very humble before the Lord and knew that he was not able to lead God's people without God's blessing and help. Solomon made his request before God and asked Him to give him wisdom. He asked for "an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil" (1 Kings 3:9).

The Lord was pleased and granted Solomon his request. Solomon's goal was the people's good and God's glory. He was motivated by the Lord's will but needed God's strength to accomplish His will. Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or victory over enemies, God granted his request. He gave Solomon a "wise and understanding heart," but He also gave him riches and wealth and promised him a long life if he would walk in God's ways and keep His commandments. In response to God's grace, Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the ark of the covenant in Jerusalem and made a feast for his servants.

King Solomon began his reign by wisely listening to David's charge. Solomon loved the Lord and kept his commands. His desire to know and please God did not lead him to boast about his ability or success. Instead, a right knowledge of God led Solomon to humbly admit that he was not able to follow through with God's call. He pleased the Lord by wisely admitting his need for wisdom from Him.

Although David's instruction to Solomon was special because he was the king, all people are commanded to the same obedience to God. As we serve God, we should realize that it is impossible to do so on our own. We should ask God for wisdom to know how to love and serve Him. James 1:5 says, "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."



Lesson Questions

Who became king after David?
David's son Solomon.

What did David tell Solomon before he died?
David told Solomon to keep God's commands and to walk in His ways.

What did Solomon ask God for?
Solomon asked God for wisdom.

Was God pleased with Solomon's request?

Yes. God was pleased and promised to give Solomon a “wise and understanding heart.”

Did God promise Solomon anything else?

Yes. *In addition to wisdom, God promised Solomon riches, honor, and a long life.*

Should you be obedient to God’s commands?

Yes.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



Words from a Father

Invite a student’s father to come to class and read David’s admonition to Solomon in 1 Kings 2:1–4.



The Source of Solomon’s Wisdom

Begin the lesson by reading phrases from Solomon’s proverbs. Explain to the students that Solomon was a very wise man. People would come to him from far away and ask him for advice. Where do you think Solomon’s wisdom came from? His wisdom came from God.



Words from a Father

Invite one or more of the children’s fathers to come to class and read David’s admonition to Solomon in 1 Kings 2:1–4.



Can You Recognize a Wise Heart?

Before class time, draw a large heart on the board, and draw a line down the center to divide it into two halves. Label the left side “Solomon Recognized about God,” and label the right side “Solomon Recognized about Himself.” (Or you could photocopy the work sheet onto a transparency to use on an overhead projector.) During class, give each student a copy of the “Can You Recognize a Wise Heart?” work sheet (at the back of the lesson). While teaching through 1 Kings 3:6–9, pause after each verse to ask the students what things Solomon recognized about God or about himself in that verse. Record the phrases (and their verse references) on the appropriate sides of the heart. Some examples are below.

Solomon Recognized about God

His great mercy (3:6)

His great kindness (3:6)

God gave David an heir to the throne (3:6)

God had multiplied His people, Israel, to a great number (3:8)

Solomon Recognized about Himself

He was God’s servant (3:7)

He lacked qualification and experience to be king (3:7)
He needed wisdom to discern between good and evil (3:9)

Praise and Worship

Battle Hymn of the Republic

Cleanse Me

Glorify Thy Name

I Love You, Lord

In My Life, Lord, Be Glorified

Micah 6:8

Seek Ye First

Trust and Obey



God Gives Solomon Wisdom

David soon would reign no more; his time as king was done.
(Pretend to remove crown from head.)

He passed the throne of Israel to Solomon, his son.
(Holds hands out, palms up, as if handing something over.)

David told him what to do for a successful reign:
(Cup hands at mouth; nod head.)

The Law of God he must observe and its commands obey.
(Place hand over heart; point up.)

King Solomon remembered this; he heeded David's word.
(Point to temple; nod.)

So he could govern well, he asked for wisdom from the Lord.
(Point outward; clasp hands as though pleading.)

We should listen to God's words and pray for wisdom, too.
(Cup hand at ear; clasp hands in prayer.)

The Bible tells us right from wrong so we know what to do.
(Holds hands like an open book; point to temple.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section that review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



“Study, Obey, and Pray”

Materials: copies of “Study, Obey, and Pray” craft page, paper plates, construction paper cut into Bible and praying-hands shapes, craft sticks, scissors, glue

Directions: Help the students to create a flip plate by gluing two plates together, bottom to bottom. Cut out the two circles and glue each one to a side of the plate. Glue a Bible cutout to the “Study and Obey God’s Word” circle and a praying-hands cutout to the “Pray for Wisdom” circle. Glue a craft stick to the bottom of the plates for a handle.



“God’s Gifts to Solomon”

Materials: copies of the “God’s Gifts to Solomon” craft page, six-inch pieces of ribbon or string, hole puncher, glue, scissors

Directions: Cut out the heart, half heart, and paper strips titled “Wise and Understanding Heart,” “Riches,” and “Honor.” Glue the sides and bottom of the half heart to the full heart to make a pocket. Punch a hole in the top of the heart. Insert the ribbon through the hole and tie a knot, forming a loop. Insert the strips of paper into the heart pocket. The students can pull the strips out when they want to review the gifts God gave to Solomon.



Crown of Wisdom

Create a crown for each student from construction paper or cardstock. Staple a strip of paper to each side of the crown, and fit the crown to the student’s head. Let the students decorate their crowns with trim, pieces of old jewelry, foil, stickers, stars, etc. Glue the memory verse on one side. Say the verse together while working on the crowns. Review the story about Solomon becoming king of Israel.



A Letter from the King

Materials: copies of the “A Letter from the King” work sheet, crayons or pencils, crown stickers (or wax seal)

Directions: Give each student a copy of the “A Letter from the King” work sheet. The students should trace each letter and then address the sheet to “my son, Solomon” and sign it “David.” Finally, the students should roll up the letter and seal it with either a sticker or a wax seal. Students can take home the letter and give it to their father to read as a family.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student the coloring sheets from the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.



More than Coloring

In addition to coloring the coloring pages, the students can add feet stickers around the border of the first page to symbolize walking in God’s ways. They can add heart stickers to Solomon on the second page.



MEMORY VERSE

“Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil.” (1 Kings 3:9).



Pass the Crown

Just as David passed the king’s crown down to Solomon, the students can pass a crown around the room. This is a great way to learn a Bible verse. Teach the students the first phrase, then as each student gets the crown, he says the phrase. Keep adding phrases until you go around the room and everyone says the verse.

Study, Obey, and Pray

Study
and Obey
God's Word

1 Kings 2:1–4

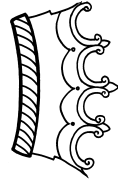
Pray
for Wisdom

1 Kings 2:1–4

God's Gifts to Solomon

God Gave Solomon...

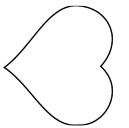
Honor



Riches



A Wise and Understanding Heart



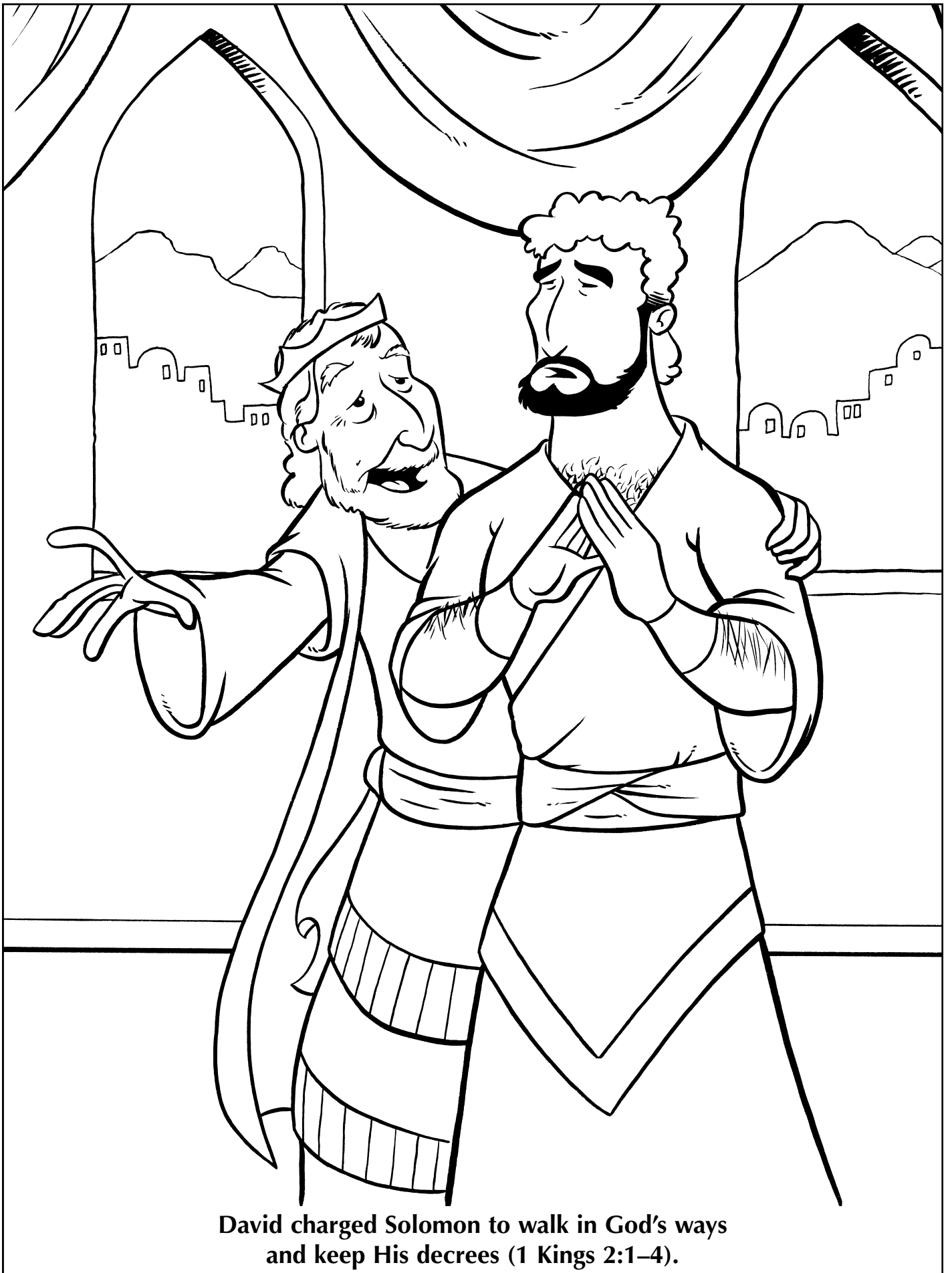
A Letter from the King

To:

“You will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed” (1 Chron. 22:13).

From:





**David charged Solomon to walk in God's ways
and keep His decrees (1 Kings 2:1-4).**



“Therefore give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?” (1 Kings 3:9).

