



# God Gives Solomon Wisdom

*1 Kings 2:1–4; 3:1–15*



## LESSON GOAL

Students will recognize their inability to obey God's Law, will turn to Christ, and will ask the Lord for wisdom to obey.

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Describe how David commanded his son Solomon to live.
- Explain why Solomon asked for wisdom from God.
- Tell how God answered Solomon's prayer.
- Analyze why God was pleased with Solomon's prayer.

## 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 your requests to God be motivated by His glory.

## NEXT WEEK

God's Glory Fills the Temple  
Read 1 Kings 8:1–9:9.

### Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level



## 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.



2  
3

### How Well Do You Know Your Dad?

Materials: 20 sheets of cardstock

Directions: Before class time, ask the fathers of four students in your class to come to class at a specific time to participate in a game, but do not tell them the questions you will be asking. Set up four chairs at the front of the classroom, and place five sheets of cardstock (labeled 1-5 in the upper corner) and one black marker in front of each chair. During class, ask the four students whose fathers are participating to sit in the four chairs. Introduce the fathers to the class, and then ask them to wait outside the classroom. Close the door, and make sure they cannot hear what is being said inside the classroom. Ask the four students the following five questions about their fathers:

1. Where was your father born (city, state, and country)?
2. How old is your father?
3. What is your father's favorite sport?
4. Where does your father work? (Name the company.)
5. What is the most important instruction your father has ever given you, something that he tells you over and over again?

Pause between each question to give the students time to write their answers on each piece of cardstock. When they are done, have them place the pieces of card-

stock face-down on the floor. Then invite the fathers back inside, and have each one stand behind his child's chair. Ask each father the first question, and have his child hold up his cardstock #1 to see whether his answer corresponds, or is close enough to be counted as correct. Have a volunteer keep track of the number of correct answers each father/child team gets. Continue asking the fathers the questions in this same manner. Use the fifth question to spark the students' interest in the Bible lesson (1 Kings 2:1–4). Just as the students' fathers have given them important instructions, so David gave his son Solomon very important advice.



### Equipped for the Task

Ask the students what tools they would need if you asked them to do various tasks—for instance, making a dress, watering plants, or writing a letter. Show them some of these tools, such as scissors, a watering can, and a pen. You could also have a few students attempt to do a task without the necessary tools, to demonstrate how difficult it is. Tell the students that in today's lesson, they will learn about a very important task that God gave Solomon to do. They will also learn what important thing he needed in order to be able to do the task.



### King to King

In today's lesson we will meet the third king of Israel, Solomon. The first kings of Israel were specifically selected by God. This usually was done through a prophet, who would anoint the king as a sign of God's choice (Deut. 17:14–15; 1 Sam. 9:16–17; 16:12). God promised to establish David's kingdom on a permanent basis through his seed (2 Sam. 7:12–16; Psalm 89:35–37). The line of kings therefore began to progress naturally from the father to the eldest son. This can be illustrated by selecting a number of students to line up in the front of the class, one behind the other. Ask the class who they would like to be king, and then select one. This was how God selected the first kings. Then explain that God promised that the future kings would come from this line of David's descendants only. Have the first student come forward as King David. The next in line is David's son Solomon; the next in line is Solomon's son Rehoboam; the next in line is Rehoboam's son Abijam; and so on. This long line represents the long succession of Israel's kings.



### What Did You Do This Week?

Ask the students what activities they did throughout the week. Ask them what kinds of important decisions they had to make and how they decided to make them. Next, discuss decisions that the president of the United States would have to make each day. Explain that leaders need to make many important decisions that can affect many people's lives. Solomon realized that as a king, he would have to make many decisions. He realized that he could not do it with his own wisdom and that he needed God's help. Just like Solomon, we should ask God for 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

### Reading of the Text

Read 1 Kings 2:1–4 and 3:1–15.

### Introduction

Solomon had been king for only a short time. He loved the Lord and was obedient to Him, trying to follow in the ways of his father, David. David had been king for many years and had been successful. Solomon quickly realized that he did not have his father’s experiences to make wise decisions for the nation. He knew he was going to need help to be a good king.



### Leadoff Questions (LOQs)

**LOQ:** What did King David tell Solomon as he became king?

**Answer:** David told Solomon to obey God’s Law. David had learned the terrible consequences of sin and did not want Solomon to experience them. Knowing that he was close to death, David repeatedly encouraged Solomon to follow God’s commands and to “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 intent of the thoughts” (1 Chron. 28:9). With both promise and warning, David told his Solomon, “If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off” (28:9). David’s prayers reveal his great desire for Solomon to remain obedient. David prayed, “Give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes.” (1 Chron. 29:19).

**LOQ:** What does 1 Kings 3:3 tell us about Solomon?

**Answer:** It tells us that Solomon loved the Lord. He walked (behaved) in the way that his father David had taught him. It also says that he used to sacrifice and burn incense in the high places. Although it was right to offer sacrifices to God, it was not right to sacrifice in the high places. These were the places the Canaanites used to worship their own gods.

**LOQ:** What did Solomon do at Gibeon?

**Answer:** Solomon went to Gibeon to sacrifice and offered a thousand burnt offerings. Second Chronicles 1:2–3 tells us that Solomon did not go to Gibeon alone. All the leaders in Israel went with Solomon. A thousand burnt offerings were sacrificed because it was a special occasion for the new king.

**LOQ:** What special event happened to Solomon in Gibeon?

**Answer:** The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, "Ask what you wish me to give you." This was a very special thing.

**LOQ:** What was Solomon speaking about in 1 Kings 3:6?

**Answer:** Solomon thanked the Lord for all that He had done for his father, David, who had been king. David had been a man who followed the Lord.

**LOQ:** What was Solomon speaking of in 1 Kings 3:7?

**Answer:** Solomon told the Lord that he was like a child who did not know how to be king over a nation.

**LOQ:** What was Solomon speaking of in verse 8?

**Answer:** Solomon spoke about how great and numerous were God's people.

**LOQ:** What did Solomon ask God for?

**Answer:** Solomon asked for understanding to be able to judge God's people Israel. Another word used to describe what Solomon asked for is "wisdom." Since Solomon knew that he did not have experience or knowledge about how to be a good king, he asked God for help to be able to do so.

**LOQ:** How did the Lord respond when Solomon told Him what he wanted?

**Answer:** The Lord was pleased. Solomon had asked for a very good thing.

**LOQ:** What are some things that Solomon could have asked for but did not?

**Answer:** Solomon could have asked for long life, riches, or for the death of his enemies. These are selfish things that many people would have asked for. But Solomon did not ask for any of them. Solomon asked to be able to know how to serve God's people wisely as their king. To be able serve someone not selfish, but is unselfish (selfless).

**LOQ:** How did the Lord answer Solomon?

**Answer:** The Lord gave Solomon so much wisdom that there never was or has been anyone wiser than him (except Jesus). The Lord also gave Solomon great riches and honor like no one else who lived in Solomon's time. God gave all these things to Solomon freely.

**LOQ:** There was one thing that the Lord made conditional ("if"). What was it, and what did Solomon have to do to receive it?

**Answer:** The Lord said that if Solomon would follow Him all his life and be obedient, he would live a long life. For a man to live a long life was a blessing.

**LOQ:** What did Solomon do after he woke from his dream?

**Answer:** Solomon went to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. He offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to God and made a feast for all his servants. Solomon knew that the Lord had appeared to him and that he had been granted his wish. Solomon was very joyful and very thankful to God and wanted to celebrate what the Lord had given him.

### Summary

Solomon loved the Lord, but he was not perfect. One day, God appeared to Solomon in a dream and asked him what he wanted. Before Solomon told God,



though, he thanked Him for what He had done for David, he confessed to God that he did not know how to be king over Israel, and he spoke of the greatness and number of God's people Israel. Then Solomon asked God for wisdom to be able to judge His people well. God was very pleased with Solomon's answer and gave him even more than he had asked for. God also promised Solomon that if he would be obedient to God during his whole life, he would have a long life. When Solomon woke from his dream, he was very joyful. He expressed his joy and thankfulness to God by offering many, many sacrifices in celebration.

### Application

Have you ever asked God for something? Why? Was it for yourself, or was it for someone else? Were you being selfish? It is okay to ask God for things, even for ourselves, because God has told us to ask Him for such things. But God is interested in your heart. Do you always ask Him for things because you are selfish? God asked Solomon what he wanted, and Solomon asked to have wisdom so that he could be a good king over God's people. When you ask for things, think about Solomon. Remember that Solomon asked for what God thought was good, and God blessed him with even more than he had asked for. This week, ask God to work in your heart so that you can serve and obey Him the way that He has told you in the Bible. By doing this, you will please God, and He will help you.

### 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.



#### Gifts from God

Materials: gift bag; five pieces of paper with the following phrases written on them in large, bold print: (1) understanding heart to judge Your people, (2) discernment between good and evil, (3) wise and understanding heart, (4) riches, and (5) honor  
Directions: Before class time, place the gift bag on a table at the front of the class. Place papers 1 and 2 on the table, and place papers 3–5 inside the bag. During class, use this object lesson to introduce 1 Kings 3:1–15. Tell the students that God allowed Solomon to ask Him for anything he wanted. Hold up papers 1 and 2, and read them to the class to show them what Solomon requested. Then reach into the bag and pull out the other three papers. Read paper 3 to the class, and explain that God granted Solomon his requests. God was pleased that Solomon had not asked for selfish things, and so He even gave him two more things, which he had not asked for. Read papers 4 and 5 to the students.



#### Graphic Organizer: 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*

## **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.



### **Wear a Wise Heart**

Materials: red construction paper, cardboard hearts (to trace), string, crayons, scissors, hole puncher

Directions: Give the students construction paper, and instruct them to take turns tracing the cardboard heart. Then they can cut out their red paper hearts and punch a hole in the top center. Around the outer edge of the heart, have the students write the key verse (1 Kings 3:9). In the center, they can write “Wise Heart.” Last, give each student a piece of string to thread through the hole and tie to create a necklace. The students can wear their “Wise Hearts” close to their hearts.



## True Wisdom

God's wisdom is not the same as the world's wisdom. In fact, God's wisdom looks like foolishness to people who do not know Him. God's wisdom is supremely demonstrated in the cross of Christ. The cross is a stumbling block for Jews and folly for Gentiles, but for those who believe, it is both the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:22–25). If the students want to be wise, they first have to embrace the wisdom of the cross, for Christ is our "wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). God's wisdom provides a wonderful platform from which to share the gospel with the students.



## "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.



## "God Gives Solomon Wisdom"

Use this work sheet to reinforce the key truths of today's lesson. The work sheet is located at the back of the lesson.



## Journal Page: "Wisdom"

Give each student a copy of the journal page at the back of this lesson. The students can complete the page individually, in small groups, or at home.

## Coloring Sheets

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



## MEMORY 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).



# Can You Recognize a Wise Heart?

Solomon Recognized  
about God:

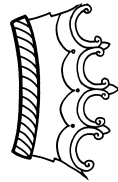
Solomon Recognized  
about Himself:



# God's Gifts to Solomon

God Gave Solomon...

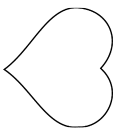
Honor



Riches



A Wise and Understanding Heart







# God *Gives* Solomon *Wisdom*



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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. David told Solomon to walk in God's ways and to keep His \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
  
2. If Solomon kept God's commandments, he would \_\_\_\_\_.
  
3. True or False: 1 Kings 3:3 says Solomon was disobedient and did not love the Lord.  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Who came to Solomon in a dream? \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What did Solomon ask for? \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. True or False: Solomon also asked for riches and a long life. \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. How did Solomon respond to God's answer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Wisdom

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What if I told you that today you would become the president of the United States? That would be a big responsibility for a young person to have. As the president, you would have to make a lot of very important decisions.

Even as a child, you have many important decisions to make each day. What will you wear? How will you treat others? Will you obey your parents? It takes wisdom to make the right decisions. Whether you are the president or only a student, you need wisdom to make the right decisions each day.

Solomon knew how hard it is to follow through with the right decision, so he asked God for **W**\_\_\_\_\_ to help him make the right choice.

How does wisdom help to keep you from sinning? Finish the following statement from Proverbs 2:5:

Wisdom helps you discern \_\_\_\_\_ and to discover the \_\_\_\_\_.

Did God give Solomon wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_

You can ask God for wisdom so you can bring God glory as Solomon did. James 1:5 says if you lack wisdom, ask God. Write the verse here:

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# Wisdom

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What do you need wisdom for this week? \_\_\_\_\_

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According to James 1:5, if you ask God for wisdom, He will

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You can find God's wisdom in His \_\_\_\_\_.

Now that you have learned about wisdom, what can you do the next time you have a difficult decision to make?

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That is right—ask God!

**PRAYER**

Thank God that His wisdom is available for you so that you can glorify Him.

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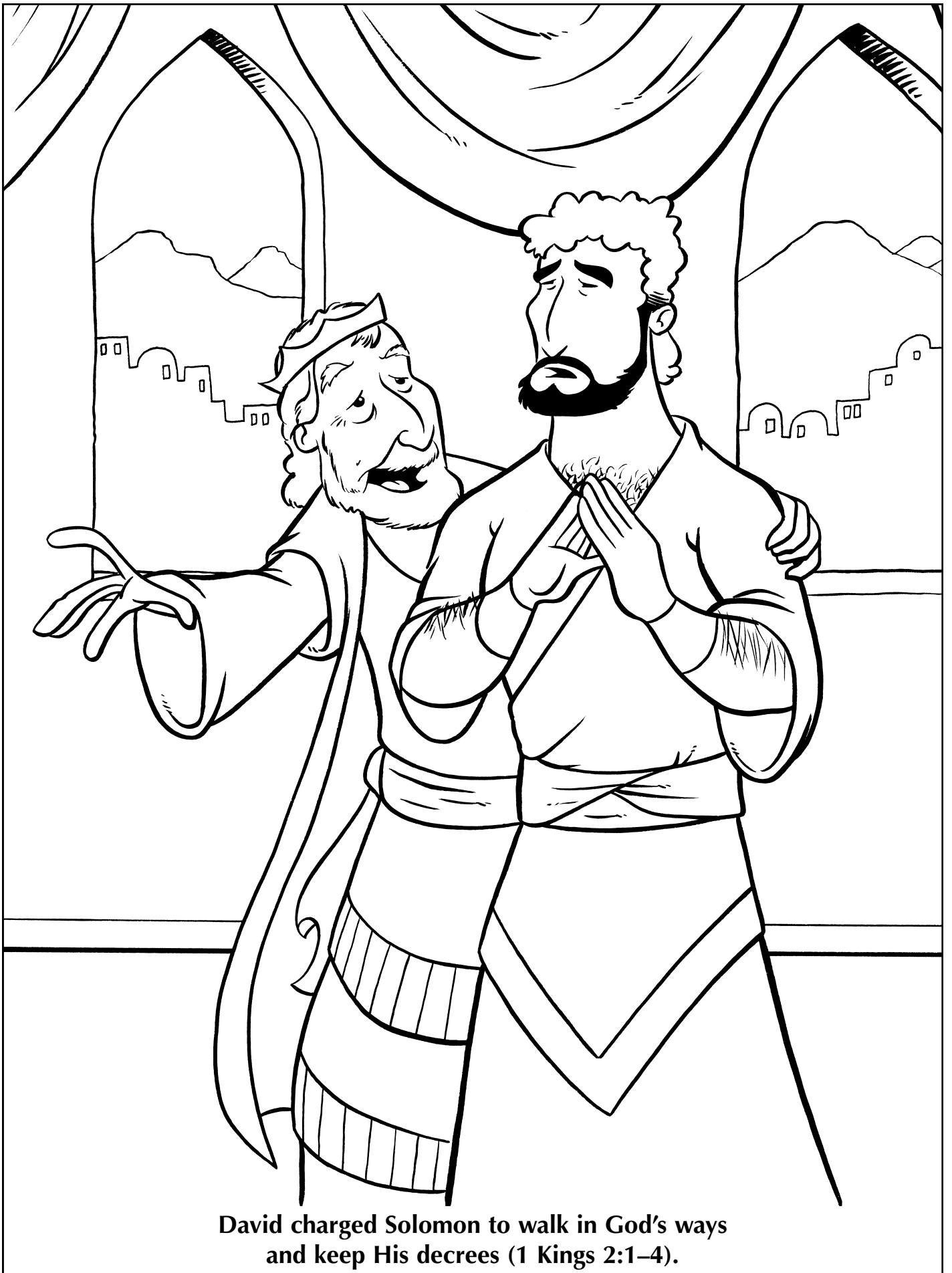
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**PRAYER**

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**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).**

