

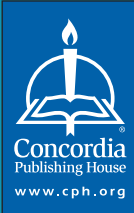
CROSS EXPLORATIONS®: GOD WORKS THROUGH PROPHETS AND KINGS		
LESSON	TITLE/SCRIPTURE	KEY POINT
1	The Wisdom of Solomon 1 Kings 3	Solomon, though wise, needed what we and all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings.
2	Solomon Builds the Temple 1 Kings 5–6	Though God resided within the Old Testament temple, He was hidden behind the veil in the Most Holy Place. Jesus is the unveiled Most Holy Place, accessible to all, enfolding believers in the arms of His Word and Sacraments.
3	God Provides for Elijah 1 Kings 17	Just as God provided food and life for Elijah, the widow, and her son, so He provides food, forgiveness, and life eternal for us in Christ.
4	Elijah and the Prophets of Baal 1 Kings 18:20–46	Just as the true God revealed Himself on the altar of Mount Carmel, so on the cross-shaped altar of Mount Calvary, Jesus revealed, once and for all, that He alone is the real God who loves us enough to die for us.
5	Elijah Is Taken to Heaven 2 Kings 2:1–15	Elijah, like Enoch before him, was taken into heaven alive. Jesus, who is our great Elijah, ascended alive into heaven for us and our salvation.
6	Naaman and Elisha 2 Kings 5:1–14	The Word of God spoken by the prophet was in and with the water of the Jordan to restore the flesh of Naaman. The Word of God spoken by the pastor is in and with the water of Baptism to cleanse us of our sin and restore us as children of the heavenly Father.
7	Jonah Book of Jonah	Just as Jonah was swallowed up in the belly of the fish for three days, so Jesus, in His crucifixion, was baptized into the sea of death, drowned in our sin, devoured by the grave, and spewed forth alive again on the third day so that He might save us all.
8	Hezekiah Prays 2 Kings 18–19	Hezekiah prayed in faith to God and was delivered. Jesus, our mediator and advocate with the Father, intercedes for us, granting us deliverance from sin, death, and the devil.
9	Jeremiah and God's New Covenant Jeremiah 1:4–10; 29:1–14; 31:31–34; 33:14–16	God promised to restore His wayward people, pointing them to a new covenant and a righteous Branch of David. Jesus, the promised Branch, fulfilled this covenant of righteousness for Jeremiah, Israel, and all believers.
10	The Three Men in the Fiery Furnace Daniel 3	Just as Jesus was with the three men in the fiery furnace and saved them, so our Savior is with us in His Word and Sacraments, sustaining us when we suffer for His name.
11	Daniel in the Lions' Den Daniel 6	Jesus, who saved Daniel, would Himself be given over to the satanic lion to save the world.
12	God's People Go Home Ezra 1–3; 7:11–28; Nehemiah 2:1–8; 12:27–43	God used unbelieving kings to restore His exiled people to Jerusalem according to His will. God sent Jesus, the King of kings, to Jerusalem to restore His wayward people to Himself forever.
13	Esther Book of Esther	In the actions of Esther, we see the pattern of deliverance that God sketches throughout the story of Israel, a pattern that finds its fulfillment in Jesus, our Savior.

Level
1

God Works through
Prophets and Kings
OLD TESTAMENT 4

EXPLORE





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Teacher Leaflets
Grades 1–3



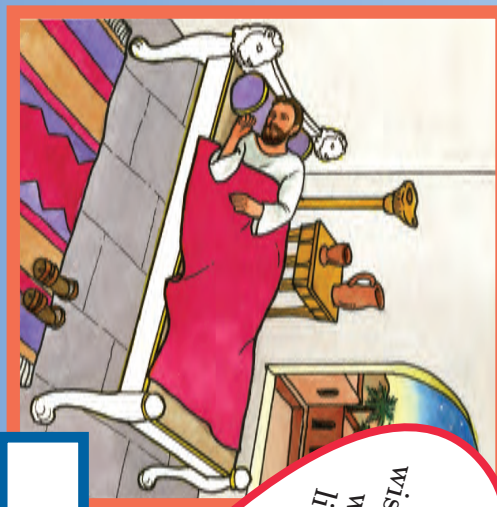
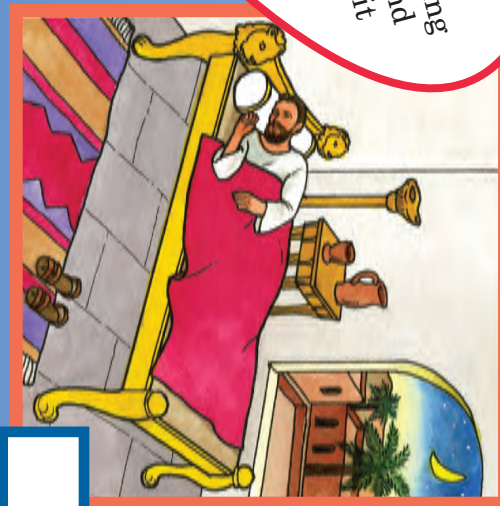
Faith Words



12 gold crowns, each with a cross and a blank label for writing faith words.



The LORD gives wisdom. Proverbs 2:6



Find the picture that shows what happened first in the Bible story. Put 1 in the box. Then find pictures 2, 3, and 4. Tell the story in your own words. Finish coloring the picture.

Review

Explore

Preparing the Lesson

The Wisdom of Solomon

1 Kings 3

Key Point

Solomon, though wise, needed what we and all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings.

Law/Gospel

The fear of the Lord—reverence for God and trust in Him—is the beginning of wisdom, yet, in my sin, I am unwise, failing to trust in the Lord above all things. **Jesus, Wisdom personified, gives to me and all who believe in Him a share of His wisdom, that is, Himself.**

Context

Solomon, the second child of David and Bathsheba, was Israel's third king. A "little child" when he assumed the throne (1 Kings 3:7), he reigned forty years (tenth century BC). Right after becoming king, he settled some old political scores from his father's reign (2:13–46); then "the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon" (v. 46).

The nation expanded its borders, there was money galore, the temple was built, and Israel was relatively at peace with its neighbors. But not all was well. Solomon, though "he was wiser than all other men" (4:31), foolishly overtaxed and overworked his citizens and contracted alliances with Gentile nations. Worst of all, his pagan wives "turned away his heart after other gods" so that he "did what was evil in the sight of the LORD" (11:4, 6). As a result, after his death the nation split into the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah).

Commentary

Wisdom has little to do with a person's IQ. There are high school dropouts with more true wisdom than the Ivy League intelligentsia. How can this be? Wisdom is not a human achievement but a divine endowment; it is received, not achieved. Wisdom is keeping one's thoughts, deeds, and words in sync with the divine will in all matters of life. The wise look down from heaven to earth; that is, they see life

through God's eyes. And this they do by having a listening heart.

Young Solomon prayed for an "understanding mind" (3:9), which in the Hebrew is literally a "listening heart." And what do the ears of the heart listen for? The voice of wisdom—that is, the voice of Christ Himself—verbalizing His will and ways through the Sacred Scriptures.

Moses preached that when Israel was given a king, the king was to "write for himself in a book a copy of this law" (Deuteronomy 17:18). This Scripture was to "be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God" (v. 19). The divine Word creates the fear of the Lord, which in turn is the beginning of wisdom. And that Word is heard only by those to whom Christ has given a listening heart.

Sadly, even those with such a heart also heed other voices, as did Solomon—voices of lust or greed or malice, voices that lead astray even the wisest of men. This king who so wisely decided the case of the two prostitutes would himself go whoring after other gods in his twilight years (1 Kings 11:4).

Solomon, though a wise man, needed what all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings. This One who is greater than Solomon gives us more than a listening heart—He gives us His own heart, pulsating with love and absolution that knows no bounds.

To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit cph.org/podcast and listen to our Seeds of Faith podcast each week.



Painting by Greg Copeland © CPH

Get Ready

To prepare, read the Bible story and page 1 of this Teacher Leaflet.

Then choose ideas from pages 2 and 3 that work best for you.

Look at the review activity on page 4.

Become familiar with the Bible Memory Verse and a way to teach it.

Bible Memory Verse

The LORD gives wisdom.
Proverbs 2:6

Start

Welcome students as they arrive, and organize them to work in partner groups. Have a Bible nearby.

Ask

Think of a wise person you know. Who is it? What makes that person wise?

Allow partners a brief amount of time to chat.

Say

Today's Faith Word is *wisdom*. What does it mean to have wisdom? You may think it means to know lots of information and get good grades in school. Point to your head. **Or you may think it means that you can speak another language** (point to your mouth) **or play a musical instrument** (wiggle your fingers).

The word *wisdom* means "to have understanding or knowledge." Wise people use their heads and hearts to make decisions. Point to your head and heart. **God's children use their heads, hearts, and His Word to gain wisdom.** Point to your head and then your heart. Hold a Bible close to your head and then your heart. **As you listen to today's Bible story, you will find out more about the wisdom of God.**

Write the word *wisdom* on the Faith Words Poster found on the inside cover of the Teacher Leaflets set.

Do

- ☐ Give the children the Student Leaflets. They can write their names at the bottom of page 1. Discuss the questions below the story picture.
- ☐ Look at the story picture on page 1. Identify the characters and the setting.

Read

The True Story

King David had a son named Solomon. God helped Solomon rule after David died.

One day, King Solomon burned a large number of offerings on an altar at Gibeon, a city near Jerusalem. * That night, God spoke to Solomon in a dream.

* He said, "Ask Me for whatever you want, and I will give it to you."

Solomon answered, "I'm just a young man, and I don't know how to be the best king for all Your people. Please help me be wise—to know right from wrong. Help me be a good leader, full of wisdom."

God was happy that Solomon had asked Him for wisdom! God saw what was in Solomon's heart.

God told Solomon, "You didn't ask for gold or silver, for a big castle or a golden throne, or for a shiny chariot with many horses. Your heart tells Me you will be a good king. I will give you the wisdom you asked for, and I'll also give you the riches too! I'll make you wiser than anyone who has ever lived or ever will live." *

God reminded Solomon, "Obey My commandments. Follow Me. I promise to give you a long life."

Then Solomon woke up! He was glad God had talked to him. He went to stand before the ark of the covenant—the special chest—and burned his offering to God. He lifted his arms in prayer and talked to God.

God made King Solomon the wisest man who ever lived. God makes us wise too. He gives us His Word. From it, we learn about salvation through Jesus.

Look

- ☐ Review the story, using the illustrations as a guide; or reread the story. Choose someone to be the narrator, someone to be Solomon, and someone to be God.

Find

- ☐ If you have students who can read, look up the verses. Students can work together.

1 Kings 3:9

What did King Solomon ask God to give him?

King Solomon asked God for an understanding mind so that he could rule wisely. He wanted to be able to tell between good and evil.

1 Kings 3:10–14

What did God give King Solomon?

God gave King Solomon the ability to discern between good and evil. He also gave him riches, honor, and a long life (if King Solomon followed His commands).

Share

Do

- ☐ Talk about the at-home activities on page 3 of the Student Leaflet. Read the Lily's Day cartoon.
- ☐ Review the lesson with the activity found on the back of the Student Leaflet.

Directions

Find the picture that shows what happened first in the Bible story. Put 1 in that box. Then find pictures 2, 3, and 4. Tell the story in your own words. Finish coloring the picture.

Answers: Top row: 2, 3

Bottom row: 1, 4

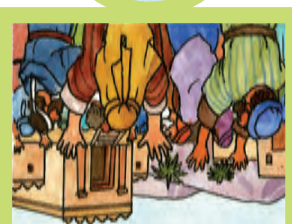
- ☐ Teach the Bible Memory Verse, using the cues at the bottom of the Review page. Ask the children to recite the words as they leave for the next part of today's lesson.
- ☐ Take time to reflect on the lesson. Write down notes to help you the next time you teach. Pray that God will bless the children through His Word.



It is good to be near God. Psalm 73:28



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people
praising
God

painters

those who
hammered
gold

weavers

carvers

woodcutters

stonecutters

King
Solomon

Draw a line to match the people with their jobs as they built the temple together. Tell the story in your own words.

Review

LESSON 2

Explore

Preparing the Lesson

Solomon Builds the Temple

1 Kings 5–6

Date of Use



Key Point

Though God resided within the Old Testament temple, He was hidden behind the veil in the Most Holy Place. Jesus is the unveiled Most Holy Place, accessible to all, enfolding believers in the arms of His Word and Sacraments.

Law/Gospel

In my sin, I want to keep God at a distance; I don't want Him to see who I really am. **God, in His love, draws me near to Him through His Son, Jesus, the Word made flesh. He tabernacles (dwells) with me and all believers through Word and Sacrament, forgiving my sin.**

Context

David desired to build a "house of cedar" for God, to replace the tent in which his Lord had been residing (2 Samuel 7). But the Lord declared that Solomon would be the one to build such a house. Work on the temple was begun 480 years after Israel left Egypt, around 967 BC (1 Kings 6:1), and was completed seven years later (v. 38). It consisted of two main parts: the Most Holy Place (Holy of Holies) and the Holy Place. It was a sight so dazzlingly beautiful that it was deemed an "exalted house" for the King of kings (8:13). Yet it was only temporary. The Babylonians destroyed it in 587 BC.

Commentary

In his prayer at the dedication of the temple, Solomon asked, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!" (8:27). The purpose of the temple was not to put a structural straitjacket on God. He would remain omnipresent, but at the temple, He would be omni-accessible, as it were. One might say there is a continuum of God's presence in the Old Testament.

At one end, He is "most present" in a theophany, or visible manifestation (as at Sinai; see Exodus 20). At the other end, He is "least present" in that He

is everywhere. Between these two extremes lies His presence in the temple. He is more readily accessible there, and more constantly present in an explicit manner, than in the rest of creation.

The temple was God's earthly palace. Most important for Israel, it was also a hospital of sorts. Those sick with sin or ill with uncleanness would come there to be healed by their Doctor. His medicine was the sacrificial blood of animals, the benedictions of priests, the oil of anointing, the incense of prayers, the hymns of the Levitical choirs. The divine Word was in, with, and under each of these, working healing for those impaired in body or soul.

But, gift of God though it was, the temple was too little, too early. It was too little because something greater than the temple was still needed. And it was too early, for on the horizon was a new and better temple in which God would be even more present than in the sanctuary of old.

"Will God indeed dwell on the earth?" Solomon asks. "Yes," we respond, as we gaze at the swaddled infant lying in the manger. For Jesus is our sanctuary—not merely the place in which God dwells, but God Himself dwelling as a flesh-and-blood man. Though God resided within the Old Testament temple, He was hidden behind the veil in the Most Holy Place. But not Jesus. He is our unveiled, human Most Holy Place, truly accessible to all, enfolding us in the arms of His Word and Sacraments.

To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit cph.org/ podcast and listen to our Seeds of Faith podcast each week.

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Get Ready

To prepare, read the Bible story and page 1 of this Teacher Leaflet.

Then choose ideas from pages 2 and 3 that work best for you.

Look at the review activity on page 4.

Become familiar with the Bible Memory Verse and a way to teach it.

Bible Memory Verse

It is good to be near God.
Psalm 73:28

Start

Before class, use a camera or an electronic device to take pictures of the inside and outside of your church. Organize the students to work with a partner in the following “think, pair, and share” activity.

Say

In your mind, picture what our church looks like on the outside and on the inside. When I say go, you will have ten seconds to think of three different materials used to build our church. When I say stop, find a partner and share your ideas.

On the board, write a list of the materials the children name. If you have taken pictures, share them now. During the lesson, compare that list with the materials used to build the temple.

Say

Long ago, King Solomon organized many workers to build the temple—a place where God could dwell with His people. Our Faith Word for today is temple. Let’s find out how the temple was built.

Write the word *temple* on the Faith Words Poster found on the inside cover of the Teacher Leaflets set. Display the poster.

Do

- ☐ Give the children the Student Leaflets. They can write their names at the bottom of page 1. Discuss the questions below the story picture.
- ☐ Look at the story picture on page 1. Identify the characters and the setting.

Read

The True Story

For many years, God’s people **traveled from place to place**, living in tents. God dwelt with them in a special tent called the tabernacle. Later, during the time of King Solomon, the people lived in houses. So King Solomon said, “Let’s build a beautiful temple for God.”

Many people worked hard. Some **cut stone blocks** to make the outside walls. * Others **cut cedar and cypress trees** to make the walls and doors. * Some **carved beautiful angels, palm trees, and flowers** into the walls. Some **hammered gold into thin sheets** and put it on the floors and walls. * Others **spun yarn** into fabric.

There were two special rooms—the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place—in the temple. The ark of the covenant was in the Most Holy Place. The ark held special objects that reminded the people that God was with them.

After seven years, the temple was finally finished! Then, King Solomon and the people **brought offerings** to dedicate the temple. They **brought offerings** to praise God. *

King Solomon **knelt** in front of the altar and said, “God, You are so wonderful! You love us and are good to us. Watch over Your temple. Bless the people, hear our prayers, and forgive our sins. Help us love and obey You. Amen.”

Solomon and the people **praised and thanked God** as they celebrated for seven days!

Where do you praise God? Where do you bring your offerings for Jesus? Where do you hear God’s Word?

Look

- ☐ Review the story, using the illustrations as a guide; or act out the story, using the words shown in red as cues.

Find

- ☐ If you have students who can read, look up the verses. Students can work together.

1 Kings 5:10–11

King Hiram provided King Solomon with cedar and cypress. What did King Solomon give King Hiram?

King Solomon gave him wheat and oil year by year.

1 Kings 6:29

What was carved into the walls of the temple?

Pictures of cherubim (angels), palm trees, and open flowers were carved into the walls of the temple.

Share

Do

- ☐ Talk about the at-home activities on page 3 of the Student Leaflet. Read the Lily’s Day cartoon. Lily is letting her friend know exactly where he can go to hear about Jesus. She is giving him an invitation to attend church.
- ☐ Review the lesson with the activity found on the back of the Student Leaflet.

Directions

Draw a line to match the people with their jobs as they built the temple together. Tell the story in your own words.

Answers top to bottom: painters, people praising God, stonecutters, King Solomon, carvers, weavers, woodcutters, those who hammered on gold

- ☐ Teach the Bible Memory Verse, using the cues at the bottom of the Review page. Ask the children to recite the words as they leave for the next part of today’s lesson.
- ☐ Reflect on the lesson you just taught. What worked well? What didn’t? Pray that God will bless the children through His Word.