Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Proper 15 (B)
Old Testament: 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14

BACKGROUND
We continue to remember Israel's leaders and how they strived to serve God. Each had their own challenges and gifts. The need for faithful leadership continues today and we seek wisdom from how these leaders sought the welfare of their people and showed their devotion to God.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING
As we move from King David's reign to King Solomon's, we see that Solomon had different gifts, tasks and leadership style. Each man sought to serve God, each in his own way.

THEME
Solomon Asks for Wisdom

BEFORE CLASS
Choose which riddles you will share. Gather the ingredients for Fortune Cookies, print proverbs onto small slips of paper, locate a copy of the song Day by Day for playing or singing.

BEGINNING
Begin with a few riddles.
Q: I'm tall when I'm young and I'm short when I'm old. What am I?
A: A candle.

Q: What has hands but cannot clap?
A: A clock.

Q: What starts with the letter "t", is filled with "t" and ends in "t"?
A: A teapot

Q: What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?
A: A Towel.

Tell them that today we learn about a different king, one who is remembered for being very wise.

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OPENING PRAYER

Generous God, there are so many things we could ask for. Help us to ask for the things that will make us better servants and that will bring peace and joy in the world. Amen.

THE STORY: 1 KINGS 2:10-12, 3:3-14

Tell the story of Solomon asking for and receiving the gift of wisdom from God. Use the adapted story below or another child-friendly translation.

David was King of Israel for forty years. When he died, his son, Solomon, became King. Now Solomon loved the Lord and followed the laws of his father David.

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream one night. God said, "Ask whatever you wish, and I'll give it to you."

Solomon responded, "You showed so much kindness to your servant my father David when he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and with a heart true to you. You've kept this great loyalty and kindness for him and have now given him a son to sit on his throne. And now, Lord my God, you have made me, your servant, king in my father David's place. But I'm young and inexperienced. I know next to nothing. But I'm here, your servant, in the middle of the people you have chosen, a large population that can't be numbered or counted due to its vast size. Please give your servant a discerning mind in order to govern your people and to distinguish good from evil, because no one is able to govern this important people of yours without your help."

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had made this request. God said to him, "Because you have asked for this instead of requesting long life, wealth, or victory over your enemies—asking for discernment so as to acquire good judgment— I will now do just what you said. Look, I hereby give you a wise and understanding mind. There has been no one like you before now, nor will there be anyone like you afterward. I now also give you what you didn't ask for: wealth and fame. There won't be a king like you as long as you live. And if you walk in my ways and obey my laws and commands, just as your father David did, then I will give you a very long life."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder why Solomon asked for wisdom?
- I wonder what else he could have asked for?
- I wonder what you would ask for?
- What would you ask for if you were King of Israel?

ACTIVITIES

Exploring Proverbs and Its Wisdom

Some of Solomon's wisdom is collected in the book of Proverbs. Read some Proverbs to the children and allow them to choose a favorite to illustrate.

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Make Proverb Cookies
Make the batter and cook the fortune cookies or buy fortune cookies and insert your own slips of paper with proverbs printed on them. Share these with others after class. (Recipe below)

"King/Queen for 3 Minutes"
Invite the children to take turns being the king or queen. Others can come with their problems and the King/Queen can help sort out a solution.

Breath Prayer
Some say wisdom comes from a close relationship with God, which Solomon certainly had. Invite the children to spend time in prayer using a simple breath prayer: Say "God is" when breathing in, and "with us" when breathing out.

GETTING CLOSURE

Invite the children to make up their own wise proverbs and list these on newsprint. Give thanks for their wisdom. Sing "Day by Day" (from Hymnal 1982 or from the Godspell soundtrack)

CLOSING PRAYER

Invite the children to use the breath prayer (see above). Then pray, "Wise and loving God, we give you thanks for Solomon. Help us to be as wise as Solomon and to serve you and your people. Amen."

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FORTUNE COOKIE RECIPE

3 egg whites
3/4 cup white sugar
1/2 cup butter, melted and cooled
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon almond extract
1 cup all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons water

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Grease cookie sheets, or line with parchment paper. Have fortunes ready to go on small strips of paper.

In a large glass or metal bowl, whip egg whites and sugar on high speed of an electric mixer until frothy, about 2 minutes. Reduce speed to low, and stir in melted butter, vanilla, almond extract, water and flour one at a time, mixing well after each. Consistency should resemble pancake batter. Spoon the batter into 3 inch circles on the prepared baking sheets. Leave room between for spreading.

Bake for 5 to 7 minutes in the preheated oven, or until the edges begin to brown slightly. Quickly remove one at a time, place a message in the center, and fold in half. Fold the ends of the half together into a horseshoe shape. If they spring open, place them in a muffin tin to cool until set.

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