Lesson

Engaging Introduction

Welcome, everyone! Today we are going to explore a story from the Bible about a very important king named Solomon. Have you heard of King Solomon before? He was known for being very wise. People came from far and wide to hear his wisdom. Isn't it amazing to think someone could be so wise that people travel just to listen to them?

Now, Solomon was the king of Israel, and God gave him wisdom because Solomon asked for it when he could have asked for anything else. But do you know that even wise people can make mistakes? Sometimes when we get older or become very successful, it's easy to forget the important lessons we learned. That's what happened to Solomon. Even he made mistakes!

Imagine if you built a magnificent sandcastle at the beach, but then you forgot to watch the tide. No matter how amazing your castle was, if you weren't careful, the tide could wash it away, right? Similarly, Solomon didn't remain careful to follow God's instructions. Today, as we dive into 1 Kings 11, we'll find out what went wrong and what lessons we can learn from Solomon's mistakes.

Let's get ready to learn how we can stay on the right path by holding onto the wisdom we gain and the teachings God gives us.

Main Teaching Points

1. Solomon's Heart Turned Away

Solomon started as a good king who loved God. The Bible tells us in 1 Kings 11 that Solomon had many wives who came from nations that did not worship God. In those times, marrying someone from a different nation was a way kings would make alliances. But God had told the Israelites not to marry from those nations because He knew they might lead the Israelites away from Him.

Think of it like when you're on a hike. If you keep looking at the beautiful scenery but don't watch the path, you might wander off the trail. Solomon, too, began to look away from God's path. His many wives worshiped other gods, and eventually, Solomon started worshipping them too. God is supposed to be first in our lives, like how the engine is the most important part of a train. If the engine doesn't work, the train won't take you to where you need to go.

2. Consequences of Disobedience

Because Solomon's heart turned away from God, consequences followed. God warned Solomon that his kingdom would be divided. Can you think of when you've gotten in trouble at home or school for not listening? Like forgetting to do your homework can mean no recess, not listening to God has consequences, too.

God told Solomon that because of his disobedience, the kingdom would be taken away from his family. But, out of respect for Solomon's father, King David, God said it wouldn't happen in Solomon's lifetime but after his son's. This was a very serious consequence! It's like if you broke a toy, and though you were upset, it became clear that your careless actions had lasting effects.

3. Importance of Obedience to God

Now, why do we listen to the rules? It's often to keep us safe and help us make good choices. God gave Solomon wisdom, and He also gave him commandments to guide him. God knew that by worshipping false gods, Solomon was stepping away from His protection. Imagine playing a game where you don't follow the rules. It can become confusing and unfair quickly, right? Similarly, God's commandments are there to help us live lives that are joyful and pleasing to Him.

Listening to God is like listening to a loving parent who knows what's best for us. God wanted Solomon to stay close to Him, just like a cozy blanket on a cold day keeps you warm.

4. God's Promise Kept

Despite Solomon's mistakes, God still kept His promise. He had promised that David's family line would continue to rule. God chose Solomon's servant, Jeroboam, to rule over ten tribes, but for David's sake, He left one tribe for Solomon's son. God's promise is like a rainbow that appears after a storm, showing us His faithfulness. Even when we make mistakes, God loves us and keeps His promises.

Personal Application for Elementary Students

So, what can we learn from Solomon's story? First, it teaches us the importance of keeping our hearts focused on God. Just like we need to wear our glasses if we want to see clearly, we need God's word to guide us and help us make the right decisions.

Solomon's story also reminds us that the choices we make can deeply affect not just ourselves but also others. Forgiving our friends when we’re upset means we can play happily together again. When we choose to follow God's ways, it blesses those around us and brings us closer to Him.

Additionally, it's crucial to be mindful of the influences around us. Have you ever copied something a friend did, only to realize later it wasn't a good idea? Like playing a game that's too rough or leaving your toys all over? Solomon's story shows us that who we spend time with can affect our actions. Let's choose friends who help us follow God's path.

Lastly, it’s about trusting in God's faithfulness. We can trust that God's promises are unbreakable, much like knowing the sun will rise each day. Even if we make a mistake (because we all do!), God is still there, encouraging us to follow Him and make better choices next time. Keeping God first, just as Solomon should have done, makes our lives much more joyful and meaningful.

Interactive Discussion Questions

To better understand today's lesson, let’s discuss some questions together:

1. Why is it important to put God first in our lives, just like what God wanted from Solomon?

- Encourage children to think about the importance of priorities. They might say putting God first is like putting on your seatbelt first in a car for safety. Explain that when God is first, everything else in our lives will be in order, just like when foods are in the right places in a picnic basket, nothing spills.

2. Do you think God's love for Solomon changed even when he made mistakes?

- Guide the discussion to remind children that God's love is constant. Share examples like how parents still love them even when they make mistakes. Emphasize that God always wants to bring

us back to Him, like holding a hand in the dark, no matter how many times we stumble.

3. How can we remember to follow God's rules even when it seems hard?

- Accept some suggestions and reinforce practical tools like reading Bible stories, praying, or asking a trusted adult for guidance. Mention how it's like studying for a test: the more you prepare, the more confident you feel. With God’s guidance, we can face any situation.

4. What are some ways we can influence our friends positively to stay on the right path?

- Prompt students to think of good habits like kindness, sharing, and honesty. Encourage ideas of how they can lead by example, like inviting a friend to church or showing kindness on the playground. It's like being a light when it gets dark: our actions can brighten someone else's path, too.

Great job, everyone! By listening and sharing, you've learned a lot about why it's important to follow God with a heart that is true and loving. Remember, even wise people like Solomon can lose their way, but God’s love and forgiveness can always bring us back.