Lesson

Engaging Introduction

Hello, everyone! Today, we are going to dive into an exciting story from the Bible found in 1 Kings 12. It's a story filled with choices, advice, and important lessons about leadership and listening to God's wisdom. Have you ever had to make a big decision or asked someone for advice? Perhaps you had to choose between two kinds of cereal for breakfast or deciding who to sit beside during lunch. Even small decisions can sometimes feel big, right?

In our story, we will meet two kings: Solomon, a wise king, has just passed away, and his son Rehoboam is about to become king. However, not everything is simple for Rehoboam. He faces a tough choice that could either keep the kingdom together or tear it apart! We are going to explore how listening to good advice helped or hurt Rehoboam, and what we can learn from his choices.

As we go through the story, let's imagine ourselves in his shoes. What would you do if you had to make a choice that affected many people? We will also think about how we can seek wisdom and help from God in our own lives. So, are you ready? Let’s venture back in time to the land of Israel and discover what happens when Rehoboam has to make one of the most important decisions of his life!

Main Teaching Points

Point 1: The Transition of Power

Our story begins at a time of change. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, is about to be crowned as the new king of Israel. Solomon was known for his wisdom, and many people respected him. However, as years passed by, the people were growing tired because Solomon had put heavy burdens on them, like hard work and taxes. When Solomon died, the people saw a chance for things to change and gathered to ask Rehoboam for relief.

Example: Imagine if you had a teacher who always gave a ton of homework every day, and finally, a new teacher came along and asked the class how they would like things to be. That’s a little like what happened when Rehoboam became king.

Point 2: Seeking Advice

The people, led by someone named Jeroboam, asked Rehoboam to lighten their load. Rehoboam had a big decision to make. So, like anyone faced with a challenging choice, he sought advice. First, the wise older men who had advised his father suggested he should listen to the people. If he treated them kindly and met their requests, they said, the people would always serve him loyally.

Illustration: Think about when you ask your parents for advice on how to solve a problem with a friend. Often, they give you a solution based on experience because they’ve been through similar things before.

Point 3: Ignoring Wise Advice

However, Rehoboam wasn’t quite convinced. He also went to speak with his friends—young men he had grown up with. These friends advised him to be tougher and even harsher than his father,

thinking that would command more respect and fear.

Analogy: Picture if, instead of helping a friend who needed help with their chores, you decided to make more mess just to show you could. Your friend might not want to hold your hand the next time you need something.

Rehoboam liked the sound of being strong and powerful. So, when the people returned to hear his decision, he followed his friends' advice and told them he would make life even harder for them.

Point 4: The Consequence of the Decision

The people were very upset with Rehoboam's harsh decision. They felt unheard and hurt, and this decision led to the division of the kingdom. Ten tribes of Israel chose to follow Jeroboam and form their own kingdom, leaving Rehoboam with only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Example: Imagine breaking a toy because you pulled it too hard instead of playing gently. Now, it's broken, and the pieces are scattered. This is like what happened to the kingdom.

Point 5: What We Learn About Advice

From Rehoboam's story, we learn an important lesson about choosing our advisors wisely and listening to good counsel. Rehoboam had a choice between wise, experienced advice and advice that seemed powerful but lacked wisdom. His choice led to a divided nation.

Illustration: Think about how important it is to listen when a coach tells you how to play a game better. If you choose to ignore them, you might play by yourself while your other teammates win because they listened.

Personal Application for Elementary Students

Now that we've journeyed through Rehoboam's story, let's talk about what this means for us today. Sometimes, we make decisions that can impact other people around us. Maybe it's deciding whether to share your toys or include someone in a game during recess.

One of the key takeaways from Rehoboam's story is the importance of listening to wise advice. So how can you apply this to your life? First, when you're faced with a choice, think about who you can ask for advice. This could be your parents, teachers, or even older siblings. They can offer helpful insights based on their experiences.

Example: If you're not sure whether you should stay up late or go to bed early for school, a parent might remind you of how good you feel after a full night's sleep.

We also learn that it's okay to step back and think about a decision. Rather than just doing what sounds powerful or impressive, consider what might be kind and helpful to others. By doing so, you make decisions that not only help you but those around you, too.

As young learners of God's wisdom, this story encourages you to seek God's guidance through prayer. When you ask for His help, you're inviting Him into your world decisions, which can make everyday challenges easier to navigate.

Interactive Discussion Questions with Explanation and Teaching Guidance

Now, let's discuss some questions to help us understand the story better. Remember to think deeply and be honest with your answers. There's no right or wrong—just opportunities to learn.

1. Why did the people of Israel want Rehoboam to change the way things were done?
Teaching Guidance: Encourage students to think about fairness and kindness. The Israelites felt overburdened by Solomon's rules and wanted Rehoboam to provide relief. Discuss fairness and why it is important in leadership.

2. How did Rehoboam’s choice in advisors impact his decision and the kingdom?
Teaching Guidance: Guide the students to see the difference in advice given by the elders versus the younger friends. Ask them to consider times they received advice and its outcomes.

3. Can you think of a time when you listened to good advice and it helped you?
Teaching Guidance: This is a personal reflection question. Encourage students to share stories about when they or someone else benefited from good advice.

4. What are some ways we can seek God’s wisdom when making decisions?
Teaching Guidance: Discuss prayer, reading the Bible, and seeking guidance from wise individuals as ways to seek divine wisdom. Encourage them to see God as a friend and helper in their life.

5. Why do you think it’s important to listen to both God and wise people before making important decisions?
Teaching Guidance: Help students consider the balance between faith and practical wisdom, and how both can lead to better outcomes.

Now that we've talked about these questions, remember that God always invites us to seek His wisdom. Next time you face a big decision, think about Rehoboam and make choices that honor God and help others.