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Wisdom Rules

Key References: 1 Kings 3:16-28; *Prophets and Kings*, chap. 3, pp. 51-60; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 4, pp. 134-136; Our Beliefs nos. 17, 22, 7



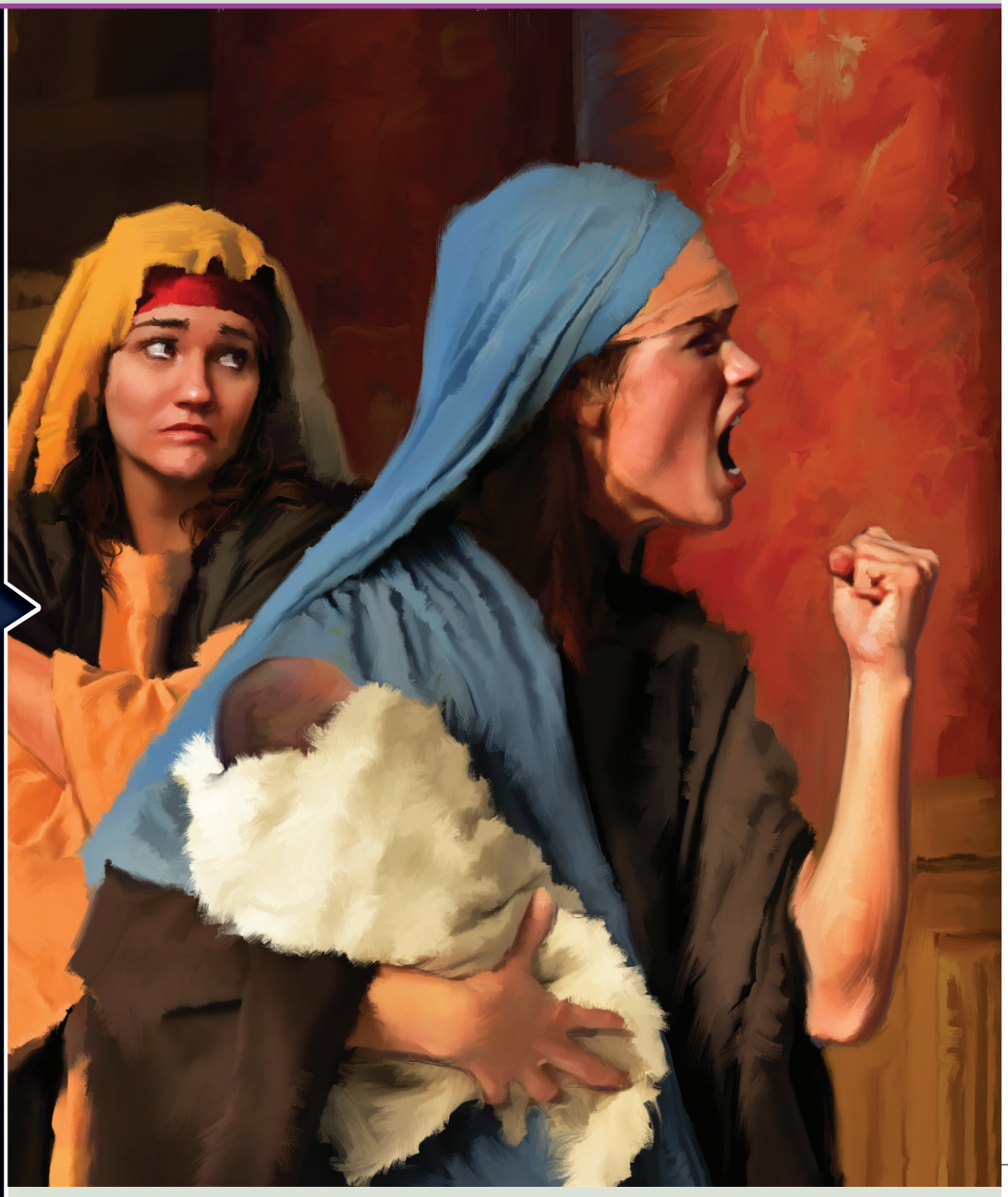












powertext

"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love" (Galatians 5:13).

powerpoint

God's love leads us to serve others fairly.

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 32.

Have you ever said, "It's not fair," only to have someone answer, "Life isn't fair"? This week's story is about how God's servant, King Solomon, ruled with fairness. Try to picture the story from the viewpoint of the king's palace workers.



What was all the commotion about earlier?" the cook asked the king's steward as he walked into the kitchen.

"You heard it back here?" the steward asked.

"I think everyone in the palace must have heard it," the cook replied.

"Two women were fighting over a baby," the steward said.

"Really?" the cook chuckled. "Only two? It sounded like a crowd of people. What happened?"

"Two women with a baby showed up at the gate this morning, demanding to see the king. The officers didn't want to deal with them."

"'I'm not leaving until I see the king,' the woman with the baby in her arms shouted. I asked her what was so urgent. She told me the most amazing story. I thought, *This is perfect. We have here people who have come to listen to King Solomon's wisdom. Having him rule on this case could be a good opportunity to demonstrate it.*"

"So what was their story?" interrupted the cook.

"They lived together in the same place and had babies three days apart. One of the babies died. Apparently the mother had fallen asleep and smothered it. She covered up her baby's death by switching her baby with the other woman's live child."

"That was pretty bold!" retorted the cook.

"What's worse is that the mother of the dead baby insisted that she hadn't switched babies. Of course, the other mother knew her own baby. They fought over it for several hours.

"They got their neighbors involved, then the local authorities. Of course, everyone had opinions. People took sides. They were getting nowhere fast. Finally the real mother said they were going to have to get someone else to decide. Everyone knows that King Solomon asked God to give him wisdom to rule fairly. So the mothers came here, trailed by curious people who were interested in the king's verdict.

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Sunday

READ Read 1 Kings 3:9, 10 and this week's story, "Wisdom Rules."

THINK Why did Solomon test the two mothers that way?

REVIEW Review this week's power text, Galatians 5:13.

PRAY Ask God to help you be fair with your friends.

Monday

READ Read 1 Kings 3:11, 12.

THINK In what ways did Solomon prove that he had a wise and discerning heart?

SERVE In what ways can you serve in love those who are in such great need of care?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Praise God for the privilege to share His love.

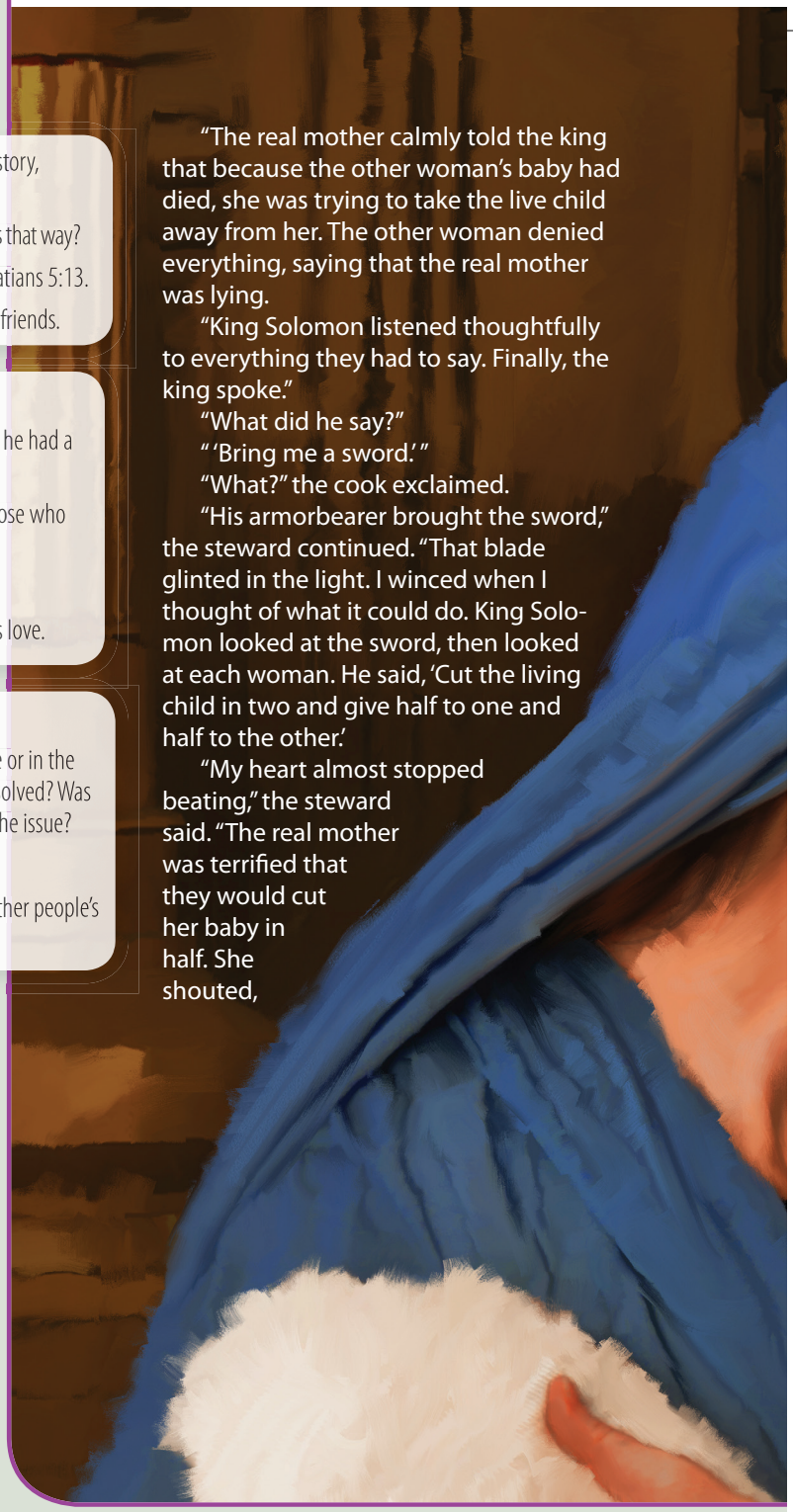
Tuesday

READ Read 1 Kings 3:16-21.

THINK Think of a recent situation in your life or in the news that resembles this one. How was it resolved? Was the ruling fair? How would you have solved the issue?

REVIEW Review this week's power text.

PRAY Praise God for teaching us, through other people's experiences, how to serve Him better.



"The real mother calmly told the king that because the other woman's baby had died, she was trying to take the live child away from her. The other woman denied everything, saying that the real mother was lying.

"King Solomon listened thoughtfully to everything they had to say. Finally, the king spoke."

"What did he say?"

" 'Bring me a sword.' "

"What?" the cook exclaimed.

"His armorbearer brought the sword," the steward continued. "That blade glinted in the light. I winced when I thought of what it could do. King Solomon looked at the sword, then looked at each woman. He said, 'Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other.'

"My heart almost stopped beating," the steward said. "The real mother was terrified that they would cut her baby in half. She shouted,



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Wednesday

READ Read 1 Kings 3:22, 23.

THINK How would you solve a dispute between two of your friends?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God for wisdom to make correct decisions in difficult circumstances.

Thursday

READ Read 1 Kings 3:24-27.

THINK Why do you think the real mother was willing to give up her baby?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you be unselfish in the difficult things in life.

Friday

READ Read 1 Kings 3:28.

REMEMBER God's love leads us to serve others fairly.

THINK When have you acted unfairly to someone else? What could you have done differently? What can you do now to make things right with the person whom you have treated unfairly?

SAY Repeat the power text aloud.

PRAY Ask God for the wisdom to know how to make amends to someone and do it.





'Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Don't kill him!'

"Standing beside her, the other mother shouted, 'Neither I nor you shall have him! Cut him in two!'

"The room grew deathly silent. I saw the real mother shiver. The other woman's face looked like stone. All eyes turned to the king. Would he really do it? The king pointed to the real mother and said, 'Give the living baby to the first woman. Do not kill him; she is his mother' (see 1 Kings 3:24-27). I exhaled and realized that I had been holding my breath. The court attendant placed the baby in the arms of his mother. She buried her face in the baby's clothes and started crying. She left the courtroom thanking the king, praising his judgment."

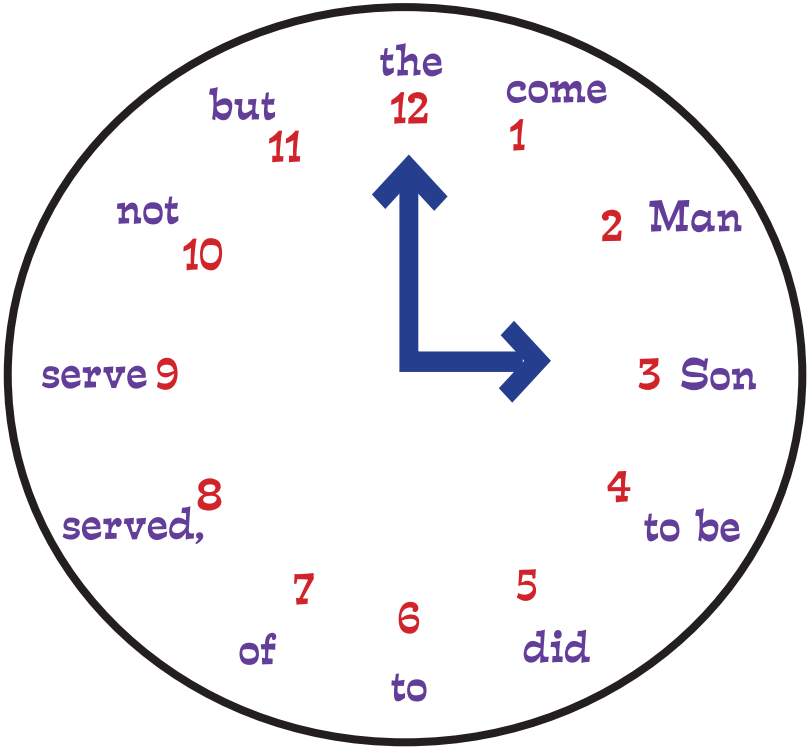
"Wow! What an incredible man!"

"God has blessed our king with great wisdom," the cook said, stirring the pot. "What's best of all, King Solomon does not use sparingly the wisdom God has given him. Anyone can benefit from his wise judgment and discerning spirit!"

PUZZLE 3

A TIME TO SERVE

Instructions: Jesus did not have to die for us, but Jesus loves us, so He went to the cross willingly. To find out why, solve these simple math problems and find each word from the clock to read the verse.



4x3	7-4	5+2	8-6	7-2	5x2
9-8	2+2	4x2	6+5	3x2	3x3