King Solomon
?–928 BC

WHY HE MADE HISTORY King Solomon was one of the most revered kings in the history of Israel. During his reign, the Israelites enjoyed peace and prosperity in a time that is regarded as the peak of Jewish history.

As you read the biography below, think about how King Solomon’s wisdom benefited the Israelites.

King Solomon inherited the throne from his father, King David, when he was about twenty years old. Despite his youth, Solomon was very wise. Jews and Christians believe King Solomon received his wisdom from God. This wisdom enabled King Solomon to secure peace for Israel at the same time he built the largest empire in Israel’s history.

In order to gain peace, King Solomon married princesses of foreign nations. He reasoned that the leaders of those nations would not wage war against their own son-in-law. Solomon even married the daughter of the pharaoh, ruler of Egypt and Israel’s great enemy. These alliances with other nations brought peace through most of King Solomon’s reign. Peace also provided much-needed relief for the Israelites, who had fought great battles under King David’s rule.

Although they did not have to fight wars, the people of Israel worked hard for King Solomon. Some people were even enslaved. The growth of Israel meant hard labor was needed to mine the quarries and build new and larger buildings. Nonetheless, news spread of King Solomon’s prominence. The temple built in Jerusalem dedicated to God is considered by Jews and

VOCABULARY

alliance a confederation of nations by treaty

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Christians to be King Solomon’s crowning achievement. According to the Bible, the temple took seven years to build and had rooms lined in gold. This temple was a physical symbol of the Israelites’ faith in God.

King Solomon died around 931 BC after ruling for more than 40 years. A revolt at the end of Solomon’s reign eventually led to the fall of his great empire during his son, Rehoboam’s, reign.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

1. Compare and Contrast  How was being a king during King Solomon’s time different from being a leader in today’s world?

2. Make Judgments  Would you rather have lived under King David’s rule or King Solomon’s rule? Give reasons for your answer.

ACTIVITY

There are many stories of King Solomon’s wisdom. Research one of these stories and write a short essay telling why you think he was wise or unwise in his decisions.
Biography  King Solomon

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?
1. Possible response: King Solomon was able to bring peace to his land through the marriage of foreign princesses. Something like this seems not likely in today's world. Also, Solomon was able to ensure the growth of his kingdom with slave labor. Again, this seems unlikely today.
2. Answers will vary.

ACTIVITY
Answers will vary.

History and Geography

MAP ACTIVITY
1. The arrow should be drawn from Jerusalem out toward Europe, in a northwestern direction.
2. Students should color the shaded areas on the map around the Jewish communities.
3. Mediterranean Sea
4. Jerusalem
5. Colors on the legend should match the colors the students used on the map.

ANALYZING MAPS
1. Alexandria
2. Greece = approximately 1,200 miles; Italy = between 2,200 and 2,400 miles; Northern Europe = approximately 3,200 miles
3. A Jewish settlement in Italy may take on Italian customs and languages, whereas a settlement in Asia Minor may take on Asian customs and languages. Food, homes, and clothing would all be different to reflect the climate and new culture they are living in.
4. Some of the challenges the Jews may have faced during their migration may have been getting enough food and drink; finding shelter during storms; crossing hot deserts or large bodies of water; traveling with the elderly and small children; and fighting illness and disease.

extension activity
Journal entries will vary.

Social Studies Skills

PRACTICE THE SKILL
1. The pharaoh was frightened and the pharaoh set the Hebrews free.
2. The Hebrews wandered in the desert for 40 years, and enslaved people throughout history have found hope for their own freedom in the story.

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