

## Bible background

1 Kings 8:1-5; 10:1-13, 1 Kings 4:20-34; 5; 6; and 10:14-29.

## Aim of lesson

To show how the magnificence of Solomon's reign demonstrated to all nations the greatness of God.

## Preparation required

Colouring materials (gold and silver crayons would be useful but not essential).

Also a shoe box containing a selection of the following: toy birds, animals and trees (or pictures cut from a magazine), coins and jewellery, a small piece of wood, a stone, a toy boat, a small bag of flour and a suitable quotation from Proverbs, e.g. Proverbs 15:17.

## Suggested outline of lesson

1. Ask the children to try to remember what gift from God Solomon chose, and the other gifts God promised him. Talk about how these promises were fulfilled, making Solomon famous for his wealth and wisdom. Mention that his people were well fed and content (1 Kings 4:20); he wrote songs, poems and proverbs (1 Kings 4:33). Tell how there was peace in the land and that men came from all nations to hear Solomon's wisdom.
2. Discuss with your class what they would do with great wealth; then tell how Solomon decided to build a temple with his. Ensure that they know what a temple is and explain that God had given David plans which he had passed on to Solomon. Describe the preparations; fetching wood from overseas, quarrying stone and finding craftsmen and labourers. There is no need to go into the details of the building, just describe how the walls were stone, lined with wood and overlaid with gold and mention that all the work was done by hand.
3. Tell how the Temple took seven years to build, and that Solomon went on to build a palace and other magnificent buildings. Remind the class of the lesson a fortnight ago when David brought the Ark to Jerusalem and ask them where would be a good place to keep it now. Describe the excitement of bringing the Ark to the Temple.
4. Get out your shoe box and let each child in turn pick out an item and say how it relates to Solomon's reign.
5. Describe the visit of the Queen of Sheba explaining why she came, the sort of journey she undertook, the preparations that would have been made in Jerusalem and the splendour of her arrival. Suitable pictures would help the children imagine the scene. Discuss the sort of questions she may have asked and let the children say what they would like to have asked Solomon. Emphasise that her amazement at Solomon's wisdom and riches led her to praise the God of Israel. Talk about the exchange of gifts and tell how people came year after year bearing gifts for Solomon.
6. Do the activity sheet.
7. Teach the song 'The Great King Solomon' if you wish.

## Alternative activities

1. Decorate small boxes with shiny paper and foil to make treasure chests, then put lots of treasure inside. You could use a few foreign or old coins, Plasticine or cardboard coins covered in foil, old curtain rings and beads etc.
2. Mark out the shape of a treasure casket on paper and make a flap of the same shape to fit over it so that it can be lifted up to reveal the treasure inside. Let the children draw or stick treasure inside and decorate the lid.
3. Make some coin rubbings using wax crayons or push them into Plasticine to make prints.
4. Help the children to dress up in royal robes. Throws and curtains make good cloaks. Make some cardboard crowns. Use old beads for jewels, or help the children thread large wooden or plastic beads. Always ensure young children are carefully supervised if they are putting anything around their necks.
5. Build a temple and a palace from blocks, boxes, Lego or Plasticine.

## Relevance to the children's lives

Solomon was famous for his wisdom. What would you like to be famous for? What do you think God would like you to be known for? Does coming to Sunday School make you behave any differently?

## Prayer

Thank God for all the good things we have that come from him; and ask him to help us be known for qualities like kindness, rather than naughtiness.

## Verse

'A good name is more desirable than great riches.' Proverbs 22:1.

## Song

### The Great King Solomon (Tune: The Grand Old Duke of York)

Oh, the great king Solomon  
God made him rich and wise  
The Queen of Sheba came to see  
And could not believe her eyes.  
The tables were piled high with food,  
The palace was so grand.  
All people could see that God was good  
He was praised throughout the land.

*Music: Traditional.*