

# Year 4, Rotation 4

## Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors

### Overall Objective

Children will learn the story of Joseph and be able to find it in Genesis. They will learn that God has sovereign and long-range plans both for individuals and for His people. They will also learn that God uses our life circumstances to develop our faith and our character, and that God is present with them and loves them at all times and at all places.

### Biblical References

Genesis 37:2-11, 16-36, 45:14 & 15

### Memory Verse

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:21  
Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:18

### Biblical Background

The life of Joseph has often been compared to the life of Christ. Just like Jesus, Joseph was beloved of his father and obedient to his father. Just as Joseph's brothers rejected him, the Jewish people (for the most part) rejected Jesus. Joseph's brothers conspired against him and sold him for twenty pieces of silver (the price of a slave was thirty pieces of silver). Jesus also was the victim of a conspiracy, albeit a willing victim, and he was sold for thirty pieces of silver. Both Joseph and Jesus suffered great humiliation, suffered unjustly, and each was highly exalted after suffering. Both Joseph and Jesus forgave their tormentors, returned good for evil, and provided salvation from death. God uses strange tools sometimes to accomplish His purposes. "...we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." (Romans 5:3,4)

Joseph was Jacob's eleventh son, the firstborn of his beloved wife, Rachel. Jacob had six sons by his wife Leah: Reuben (firstborn of all), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. He had two sons by Zilpah (Leah's handmaid): Gad and Asher, and he had two sons by Bilhah (Rachel's handmaid): Dan and Naphtali. His last son, Benjamin, was also born to Rachel, and she died in childbirth. Jacob's family seems to resemble some families today with many half-brothers and step-children, although it came about in a slightly different manner. Jacob was tricked into marrying Leah first; he thought he was marrying Rachel. Then, after more work for his father-in-law, Laban, he was able to marry Rachel. The wives somehow felt they got "credit" for the children born to their handmaids

through their husbands, and Rachel, obviously, was last to conceive and bear children. For some time there was jealousy and strife between the women in Jacob's household, so it is no wonder there was jealousy and strife among his sons as well.

Genesis 37:2 starts out the story of Joseph with an account his "tattling" on the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah (Gad, Asher, Dan and Naphtali), as if Joseph was the "good boy" and the other brothers were less trustworthy. And if tattling wasn't enough, there was more fuel for his brothers' hatred. Joseph's famous "richly ornamented" ankle-length, long-sleeved robe, a gift from his father, was a garment that might be worn by a superior or an overseer on the family ranch, so his brothers were rather rankled by it. They "hated him and could not speak a kind word to him"(Genesis 37:4). Joseph loved and obeyed Jacob, and indeed, much of his character of faith and uncomplaining perseverance during suffering is like Jacob's.

God gave Joseph two dreams, and both of them seem to be prophetic of his future as second-to-Pharaoh in Egypt. However, like an innocent but somewhat rash seventeen year-old boy, Joseph also told his father and brothers about the dreams, and the brothers now had more reason to gripe. One dream showed their bundles of wheat bowing down to his bundle of wheat. Another dream had the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowing to his star. To the brothers, this sounded like Joseph was trying to take over the whole family. "Do you really think you are going to be king and rule over us," they asked? "Now they hated Joseph more than ever because of what he had said about his dream" (verse 8).

The brothers may have also feared that Joseph was first in line for the family birthright or inheritance. He was the firstborn of Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel, and the other firstborn, Reuben (of Leah), was disqualified by his previous sin of incest with Bilhah (Genesis 35:22). Simeon and Levi had shown their character defects in violence done at Shechem (Genesis 34:25 – 30). Judah might have been favored, and in fact Christ comes from Judah's line, but Judah had sinned in his treatment of his daughter-in-law, Tamar.

Joseph, next to the youngest son, and old enough to take some responsibility, obeyed his father's request to check on his brothers at Shechem, fifty miles from Hebron where they lived. His brothers had gone on to Dothan, another twenty miles, so Joseph obediently went there. At Dothan, his brothers saw their opportunity to dispose of Joseph and perhaps "get even" with Jacob for favoring Joseph. They plotted to kill Joseph, and to throw him into a pit (a dry well or cistern). Reuben, who might be held most responsible as the eldest, succeeded in convincing them to just throw the protesting Joseph into the pit to die of thirst or starvation, although he planned to rescue him later. As the brothers ate lunch beside poor Joseph's pit, opportunity came again, and they sold Joseph, by Judah's suggestion and without Reuben's knowledge, for twenty pieces of silver to traders going south to Egypt. Then, to cover their sin and to torment Jacob,

they dipped Joseph's robe in goat's blood and made up a story about how Joseph had been killed by wild animals.

Meanwhile Joseph is in fact, not dead. The traders have sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard. Again, it is part of God's plan that Joseph should end up where he did. Years will pass (and several chapters in Genesis) before God' purposes would be fully known. As Joseph will say to his brothers years later:

You tried to harm me, but God made it turn out for the best, so that he could save all these people, as he is now doing. (Genesis 50:20)

# Workshop Overview

## The Garden of Eatin’

### OVERVIEW

Children will hear the story of Joseph and identify “crushing times” in Joseph’s life. They also discover the ways Joseph reacted to the bad situations. They learn that Joseph responded to “crushing times” in his life with faith, trust, and a God-like attitude. Through a hands-on cooking activity, children learn from their own disappointments to respond with God-like attitudes as they make Dirt Pudding from crushed Oreo cookies.

### MATERIAL LIST

- Food ingredients (Workshop Coordinator)
  1. instant chocolate pudding (1 small box per 4 children)
  2. chocolate wafer cookies
  3. gummy worms
  4. milk (2 cups per 4 children)
- Wooden spoon, mixing bowls, whisks (Workshop Coordinator)
- Plastic cups (Workshop Coordinator)
- Plastic flowers (workshop Coordinator)

### ROOM SET-UP

Kitchen

## Thou Art

### OVERVIEW

As children hear the story of Joseph’s multi colored coat, they learn of the conflicting emotions, feelings, and actions present in Joseph’s family. They see how these negative actions by the main characters caused brokenness and separation. Using Joseph’s coat as a model, they examine a variety of colored streamers and identify the feelings and emotions in their families that the colors evoke. While making a “Windsock of Many Colors,” children unite the separate colors to illustrate the beauty present in their families.

### MATERIAL LIST

- Construction paper sheets and strips (Workshop Coordinator)
- Yarn or pipe cleaners (Workshop Coordinator)
- Glue or tape (Workshop Coordinator)
- Markers or colored pencils (Workshop Coordinator)

### ROOM SET-UP

Thou Art room

## Pray-per-View

### OVERVIEW

The children will watch a movie and discuss how God used an evil deed (Joseph's brothers selling him into slavery) to bring about something good (Joseph being able to save the lives of his father and brothers).

### MATERIAL LIST

- Veggie Tales movie, *Ballad of Little Joe* (Workshop Coordinator)
- Popcorn

### ROOM SET-UP

Pray-per-View room

## Our Acts

### OVERVIEW

The children will act out the main component of the Coat with Many colors story. The children will see how Joseph's complete trust in God helped him face evil and understand God's overall plan for him.

### MATERIAL LIST

- Coat with Many Colors (Workshop Coordinator)
- Scripts (Workshop Coordinator)

### ROOM SET-UP

Our Acts room

## The Tabernacle

### OVERVIEW

The children will learn the story of Joseph and his Coat of Many Colors.

### MATERIAL LIST

- Story script (Workshop Coordinator)
- Response signs (Workshop Coordinator)
- Word Search (Workshop Coordinator)

### ROOM SET-UP

The Tabernacle room

### **Special Workshop Rotation feature:**

In each workshop the children will collect a different colored bead to add to their "Pin of Many Colors." Each bead is a special faith reminder for traveling the stepping-stones of their lives. They can wear these on their clothes or backpacks. The children need to remember to wear their faith pins to church each Sunday of this rotation.

