

General Church Education



Joseph Grows Up

Genesis 39:1-20

Lesson 14

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 2: The Lord Is Our Shepherd

For ages 7-8 years

Joseph Grows Up

Genesis 39:1-20

Ideas for Parents & Teachers

This lesson reviews the early life of Joseph, beloved son of Jacob. Through the ups and downs of Joseph's life, children can see Divine Providence in action. It is vital for young children to feel safe and secure. But everyone experiences times of sadness, feeling hurt by others and feelings of being alone. Joseph's story shows how the Lord is continually with a person, bringing good out of bad events, protecting and guiding in the happy as well as the sad times of life.

This story is also one of jealousy and all of its implications. It shows how envy and lies are destructive and bring sadness. It presents many wonderful opportunities for instruction in moral virtues.

Ideas for Children

- The Lord leads and protects us in good times and times of trouble.
- The Lord cares for people and watches over them even though they may not see it immediately (Divine Providence).
- Jealousy is against the Lord's ninth and tenth commandments about coveting.

From the Writings

The practices of a moral life and a charitable one are the same. Charity is willing good to the neighbor and as a result dealing well with him; and this too is the concern of a moral life. The spiritual law is the one prescribed by the Lord: "Everything you wish people to do to you, do the same to them; this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12). This same law applies to moral life, but it would take many pages to list all charitable deeds and compare them with the deeds prescribed by a moral life. It is plain to anyone that the commandments of the second table of the Ten Commandments are the commandments of moral life, and that they also contain everything to do with love toward the neighbor. Charity fulfils all these commandments. See *True Christian Religion* 444

In so far as a person shuns evils, so far they will good actions. The reason is that evil and good are opposites; for evil comes from hell, and what is good from heaven. So to the extent that hell, that is, evil, is removed, to that extent does heaven approach and so far does a person have good in view.

The truth of this is made quite plain by considering the Ten Commandments in light of this. In so far as anyone does not take the name of God in vain, so far does he love what comes from God. In so far as anyone does not wish to commit murder and act out of hatred or revenge, so far does he wish his neighbor well. In so far as anyone does not wish to steal, so far does he practice honest conduct. In so far as anyone does not wish to bear false witness, so far does he wish to think the truth and speak it. See *True Christian Religion* 330

Joseph Grows Up

Jacob returned to Canaan with his large family and many possessions and made his home there. The older sons were already grown up. They lived in tents and all helped the family take care of the sheep, goats, cattle and camels. Wool from the sheep and hair from the goats was woven into clothing and also used to make the tents they lived in.

Have you ever heard the story of Joseph and his brothers? His older brothers were jealous of Joseph because he was their father Israel's favorite son. Joseph was good and kind. He was the son of Rachel. When Joseph was about seventeen years old, his father gave him a beautiful coat made of many colors.

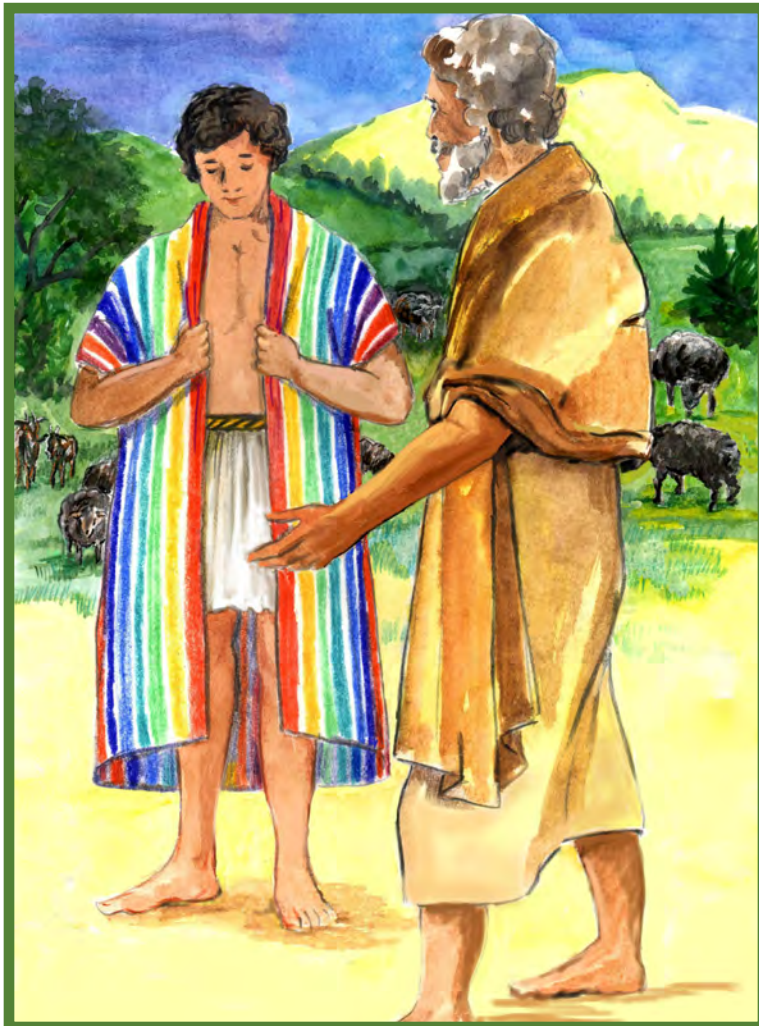
Then Joseph had two dreams that he told his family. In the first dream the other brothers' eleven sheaves of grain stood in a circle and bowed down to Joseph's sheaf as if he were their master. In the second dream the sun, moon and eleven stars bowed down to Joseph, as if his father, mother and brothers were serving him. These dreams seemed to say that Joseph would

some day be in charge of the rest of his family.

Joseph's older brothers were very angry with him because he was younger than they were and yet his dreams put Joseph as master of the family. You remember that the oldest son of the family would usually become the head and inherit all of his father's possessions when the father died. So you can see why the older brothers were so angry with Joseph.

Joseph Is Sold into Slavery

Joseph's brothers were so angry with him that some of them wanted to kill him. They had the chance one day when he came to see them out in the field. However, one of his brothers convinced the others to sell him as a slave to a group of Ishmaelites who were traveling to Egypt.



The brothers told their father that Joseph was dead. They dipped his coat of many colors in animal's blood and tore it in pieces as if a wild animal had killed the boy. Then they showed it to Israel. Israel was deeply sad when he thought that his favorite son had been killed, and no one could make him feel better. He did not know that Joseph was on his way to Egypt where he would be sold to someone as a slave. Do you know what a slave is? (Someone who has to work for another without any choice or any pay.) Read now to find out what happened next.

Read Genesis 39:1-6. What was the name of the man who bought Joseph as a slave? (Potiphar.) Who was he? (Captain of the guard for Pharaoh.)

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, ruled over a great country. Potiphar's job was important. He was responsible for Pharaoh's life. Potiphar probably had a big house with many slaves and belongings.



Joseph grew up serving in Potiphar's house. It seemed as if everyone had forgotten him. But the Lord remembered him, just as He remembers and watches over everyone. The Lord helped Joseph succeed with everything. When Potiphar noticed that the Lord was with Joseph and all that Joseph did was done well, Potiphar put Joseph in charge of all his house. It says that Potiphar put all that he had in Joseph's care. Do you think Potiphar trusted Joseph to give him so much responsibility? Yes, because Joseph was a wise manager. But once again, someone became jealous of Joseph and plotted against him. Read on to find out what Potiphar's wife did.

Read Genesis 39:7-20. Potiphar's wife wanted Joseph to do something that would hurt her marriage, but Joseph refused. Potiphar trusted Joseph, and Joseph was loyal to him. But Potiphar's wife was so jealous that she told lies about Joseph to get him into trouble.

How did Potiphar feel when he heard the lies about Joseph? (He believed his wife and was angry, so he put Joseph in prison.)

Do you know what a prison is? It is a strong building where people who do bad things are locked up so that they can no longer hurt others. However, sometimes mistakes are made and good people get locked away in prison. This is what happened with Joseph. Do you think the Lord will forget Joseph in prison? No, the Lord is always watching over us even though we cannot see Him. Even when bad things happen, the Lord can bring good out of it, as we will find out in the next story.

Jealousy and Lies

Telling lies about someone means saying something that is not true about a person, usually in order to hurt them or get them in trouble. We know this is wrong because one of the Ten Commandments reminds us not to “bear false witness” against our neighbor. Much harm and unhappiness can come from a lie.

Jealousy means wanting something that someone else has. Everyone feels jealous or envious of others at times. Sometimes you might feel that another person looks nicer than you or has more friends than you. You might feel that a brother or sister seems to get more attention in the family. Sometimes people are jealous of another’s house or clothes or car. Some people spend so much time feeling jealous that they aren’t happy with the good things that they have!

It is natural to want the good things that we see around us. However, it is important to remember that the Lord is always taking care of us, giving us the things that we truly need. He knows what we need better than we do. We can avoid suffering the unhappiness of being jealous of others if we concentrate on enjoying the good things we have.



Discussion Questions

- What is a lie? (A lie is telling something that is not true about someone, usually in order to hurt them or get them in trouble.)
- Why is lying wrong? (Lying is against the Lord’s commandment not to bear false witness.)
- Who told lies about Joseph? (Potiphar’s wife.)
- Can you think of a time when you were jealous of someone? Describe how you felt.
- Tell about some of the blessings or good things in your life.

Activity Overview | Joseph Grows Up

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

The steps of a good person are ordered by the Lord,
And He delights in his way.
Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down,
For the Lord upholds him with His hand. Psalm 37:23, 24

Songs

Joseph's Coat

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-josephs-coat/>

Wait on the Lord

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-wait-on-the-lord-2/>

Activities

Choose one or two.

- Activity 1 | Sun Moon and Stars Diorama
- Activity 2 | Joseph Grows Up Word Scramble
- Picture to color

Additional Activity Ideas

- Try to memorize the twelve tribes of Israel by watching *The Twelve Sons of Jacob* video at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-the-twelve-sons-of-jacob-song/>

Activity 1 | Sun, Moon and Stars Diorama

Create a diorama showing Joseph's dream of the sun, moon and eleven stars bowing down to him. Joseph represents the Lord. Our love, faith and knowledge are like the sun, moon and stars. They should bow down to the Lord because He is more important than anything else.

Materials

a copy of Sun, Moon and Stars pages 1 and 2 on separate pages

scissors

pencil or marker

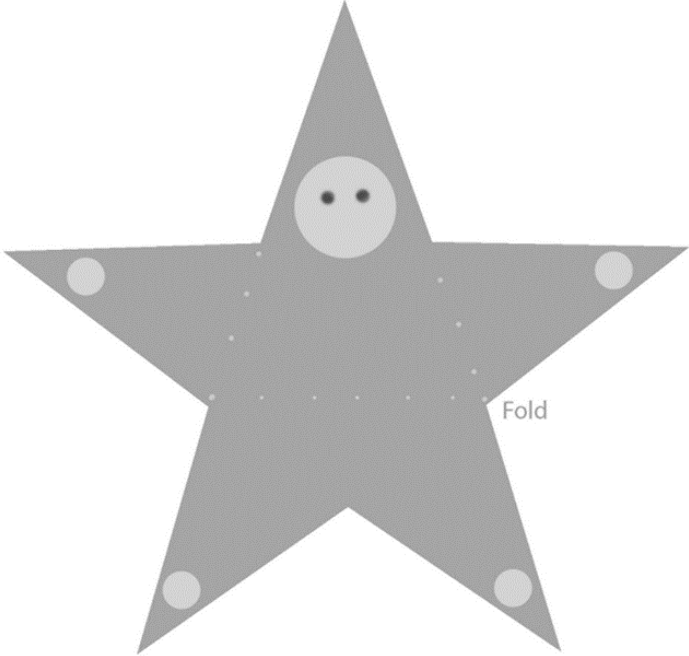
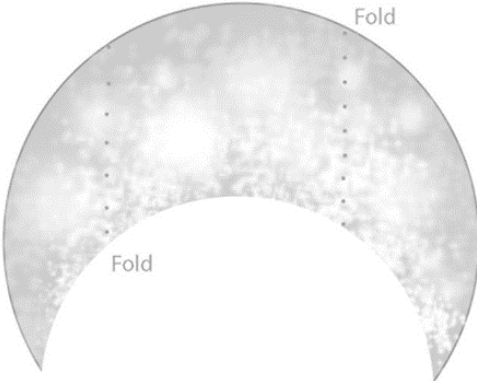
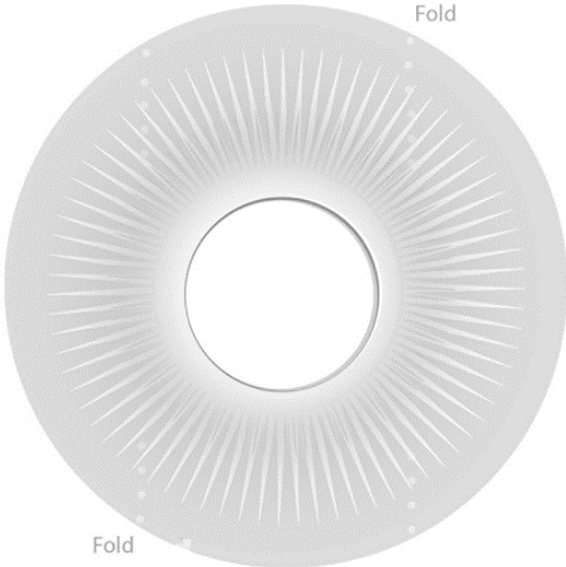
optional: glue, gold and silver glitter to decorate the sun, moon and stars

Instructions

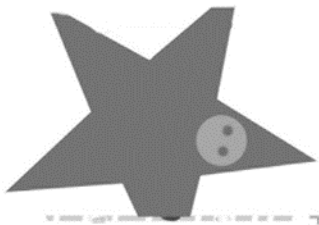
1. Using scissors, cut along the solid vertical lines on the *Sun, Moon and Stars Page 2* to create a long strip of paper. Help children fold the strip along the dotted lines accordion fashion with the printed star on top.
2. Cut around the edges of the printed star, being careful not to cut the folds.
3. Open the folds to see a string of eight stars.
4. Draw a face on each star with a pencil or marker.
5. Cut out Joseph, the sun, the moon, and the three large stars.
6. *Optional:* decorate the sun, moon and stars with gold and silver glitter.
7. Fold Joseph in half along the dotted line, with the printed side showing.
8. Make 2 folds in the sun and moon along the dotted lines. Fold one line one direction, and one the opposite way, to make the figures stand. (See picture below.)
9. Fold the three large stars along the dotted line across the middle with the printed side facing out. The other two folds should be made so the blank side shows on top. These stars will now "kneel".
10. Set up a diorama as shown below.



Sun Moon and Stars Page 1



Sun Moon and Stars Page 2

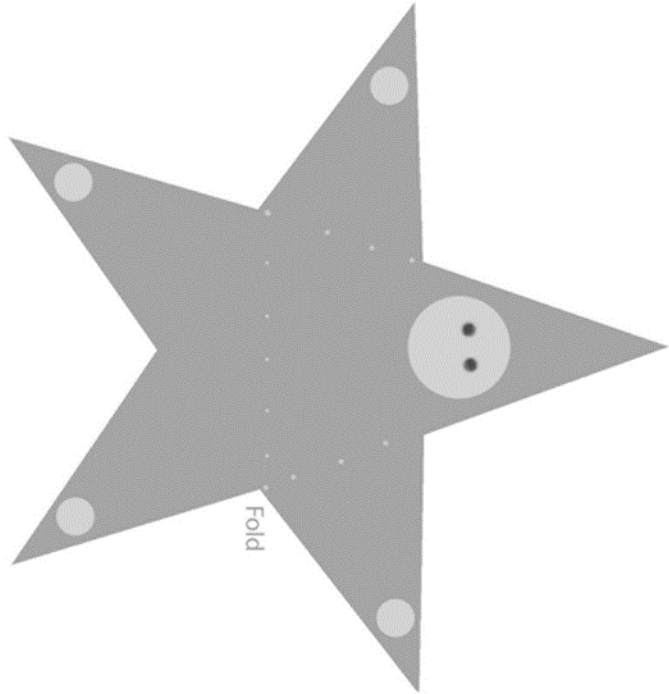


Fold here

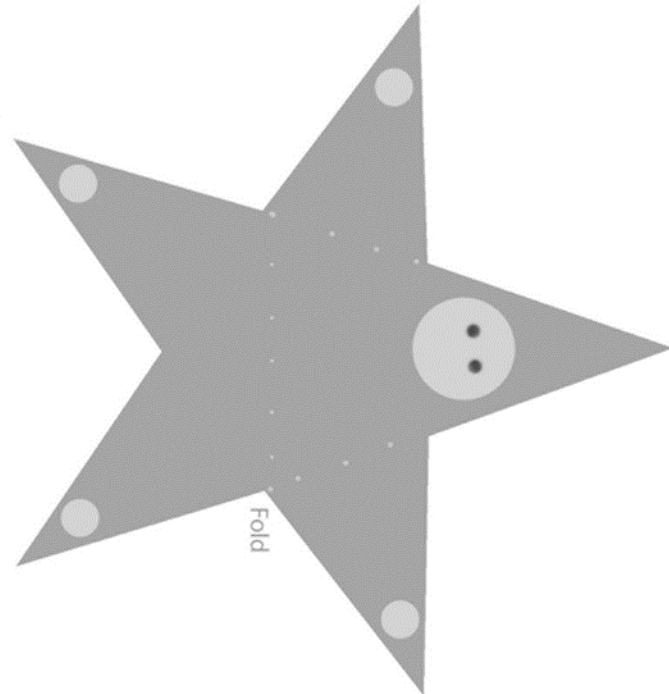
Cut straight across this line →



Do NOT cut where the star touches the fold



Fold



Fold

Activity 2 | Joseph Grows Up Word Scramble

Can you unscramble these words?

Joseph
Benjamin

Jacob
Canaan

Rachel
Egypt

Look at each group of letters below and match it with one of the words above. Write the correctly spelled word on the line.

ptegy _____

nimajneb _____

helrac _____

aaannc _____

cobaj _____

sohjep _____

