

General Church Education



Family Lesson: Genesis 37
Joseph and His
Brothers

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Family Lesson 1-M

Joseph and His Brothers
Genesis 37

Family Talk:
JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

Rev. Donald Rose

The beautiful story of Joseph is filled with meaning. Think now of the meaning of more good things to come in your life.

The name “Joseph” was chosen because of the hope of more to come. When he was born his mother Rachel said, “**The Lord shall add to me another son,**” and that is why she named him Joseph (*Genesis 30:24*). The name is taken from the word that means “add” or “adding” something more (*Arcana Coelestia 3969*).

That nice idea of *adding* is in the Lord's saying to us, “**Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**” (*Matthew 6:33*)

The story of Joseph's life has a looking to the future. His two dreams of the sheaves and of the stars were about good things that would happen to him at a future time.

At any time in our life we can be thankful for what the Lord has already given us, and we can also have a good feeling that there are yet many things to come. Once a disciple of the Lord was thrilled at what he had heard and seen, and the Lord said, “**You will see greater things than these**” (*John 1:50*).

Think of Joseph when he was seventeen years old. He had the love of his parents, and he had the treasured gift of a coat of many colors. In addition to that, he was given dreams — dreams that held a promise of things yet to come.

In his life he was to become a “gatherer” or one who adds more. It is said that everything he did succeeded. Where he worked, things got better. This was true when he worked for a man named Potiphar, and it was true when he was made ruler of Egypt. Years of plenty came, and he kept gathering up the food, adding and adding to the supply of food, so that Egypt would be ready for a time of famine.

A child is content to be a child. There are things that the child is not yet ready for. Does a child have a husband or wife? Of course not, but a child can have the thought of the future, like a dream when marriage will

come, and the Lord will add something to life that was not there before. The Lord's promise of conjugal love should be something happy in our minds even when we are young. He says that He will add this to your life, if not in this life, surely in the life to come.

Every child should know that one day he or she is destined to become an angel. An angel is so much wiser, and has so much more love than people on earth do. The promise of becoming an angel, then, is a promise of much more to be given by the Lord. Once, when newcomers to the other world learned of angelic love, they wondered if they could ever have it, but they were comforted and told that “**every good increases immeasurable in the other life...and finally becomes angelic.**” (*Heaven and Hell* 406)

When you think of Joseph and his dreams, think of a promise. The promise of more to come is a promise that should give us a very good feeling inside. It should make us want to try all the harder to do what is right and to resist what is wrong. For if a person, by fighting against evil, has obtained in the world anything spiritual “**although it be a very little, he is saved; and his uses afterwards grow like the grain of mustard seed into a tree**” (*Divine Love* XVIII).

*Enclosed is one of Lori Odhner's songs about the coat of many colors.
Lori's songs are designed to teach children the stories of the Word.*

*Some of Lori and John Odhner's Songs from the Word are available on tape and in a binder of sheet music
from the New Church Book Center, Cairncrest, P.O. Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009.
Or go online to <http://store.newchurch.org/home.php>.*

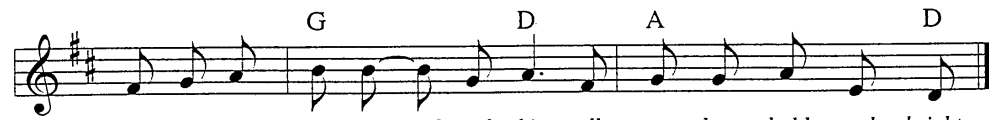
Joseph's Coat

Based on Genesis 37

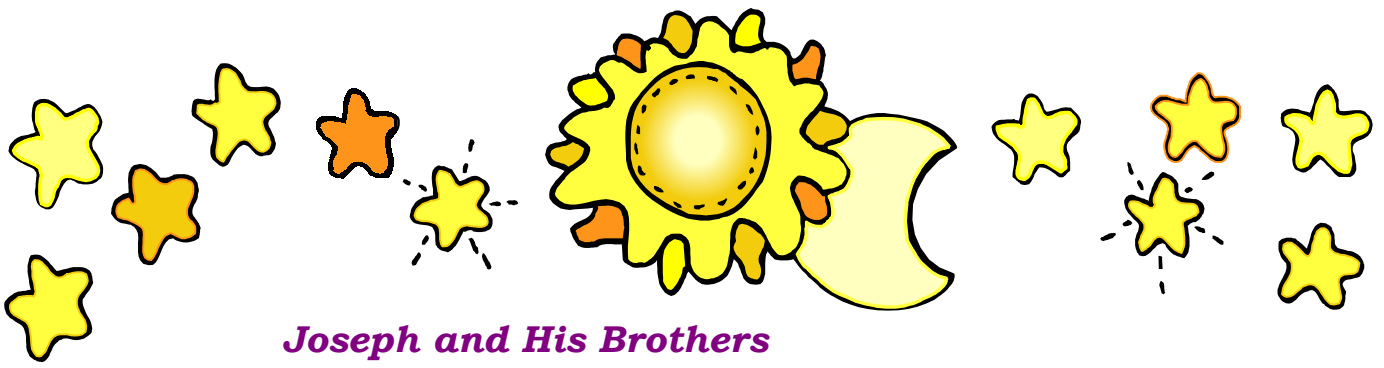
Lori Odhner



Chorus: The coat was o - range, red and blue, and green and pur - ple, too.
1. Now Jo - seph's Fa - ther Is - ra - el loved Jo - seph ve - ry well,
2. Now Jo - seph's bro - thers, they saw, their fa - ther loved them all,



The coat was yel - low, pink and white, all co - lours bold and bright.
so he made for him to wear a coat be - yond com - pare.
but he loved Jo - seph his son, he was his fav' - rite one.



Joseph and His Brothers
Genesis 37

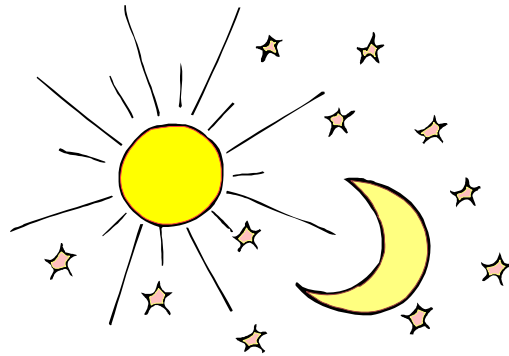
LEVEL 1 – JOSEPH’S SECOND DREAM

MATERIALS NEEDED

Stickers of the sun, moon
Crayons

JOSEPH’S SECOND DREAM

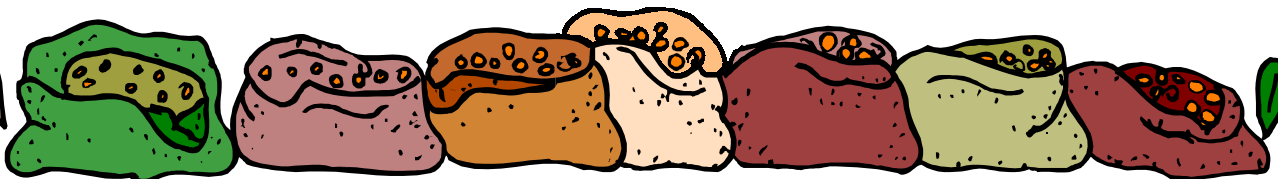
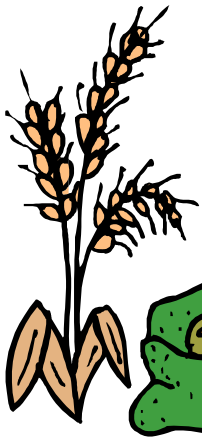
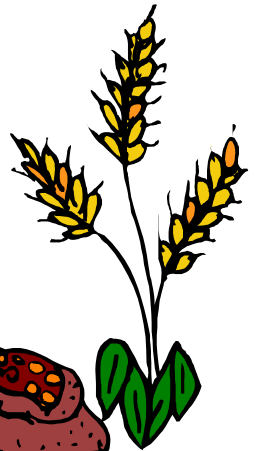
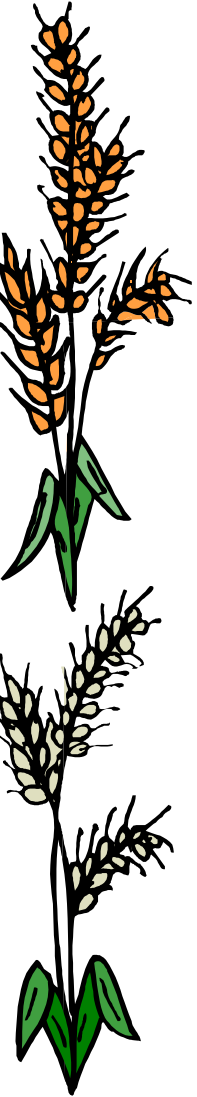
Joseph dreamed
that the sun, the moon, and eleven stars
bowed down to him



Directions for project:

You are going to do your project on the next page.

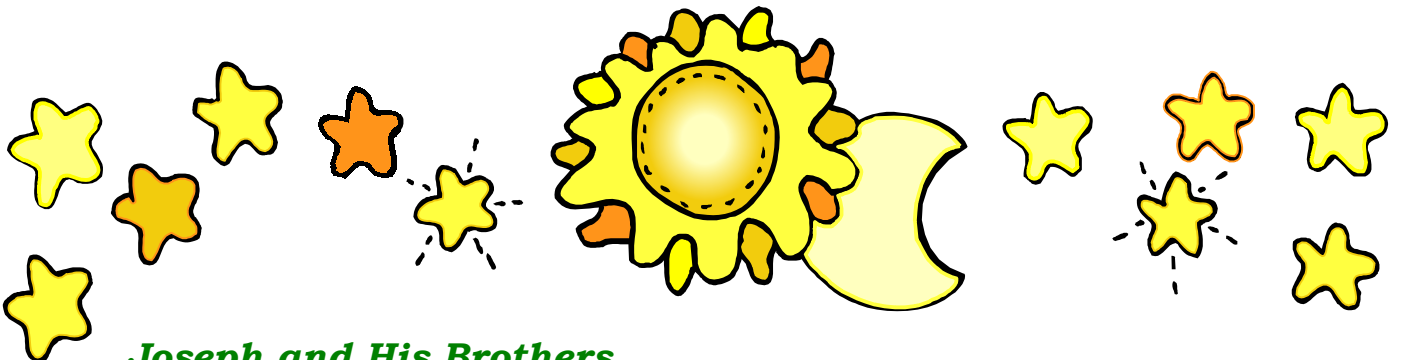
1. Color the picture of Joseph sleeping.
2. You may like to color in some background.
3. Draw in images of the sun, moon and stars (or use stickers).



JOSEPH'S SECOND DREAM

Joseph dreamed that the sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down to him.





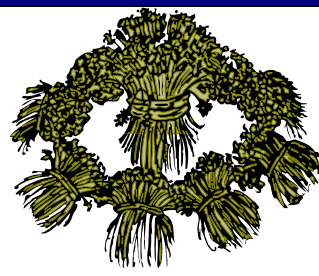
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LEVEL 2 – JOSEPH’S FIRST DREAM

MATERIALS NEEDED

Dried grass, colored paper
Glue, Scissors, and Crayons

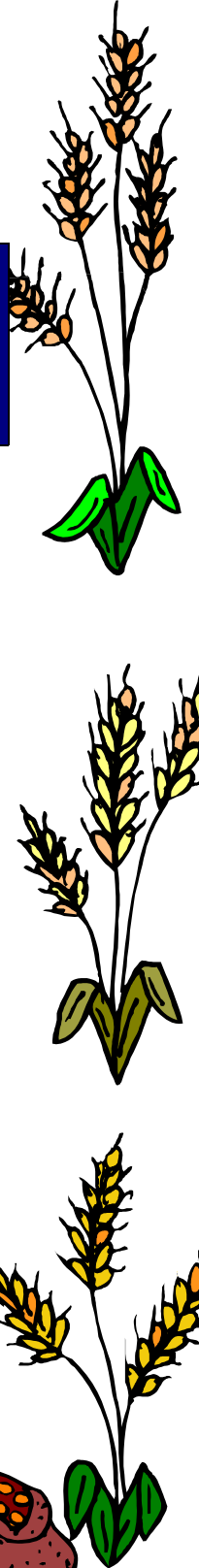
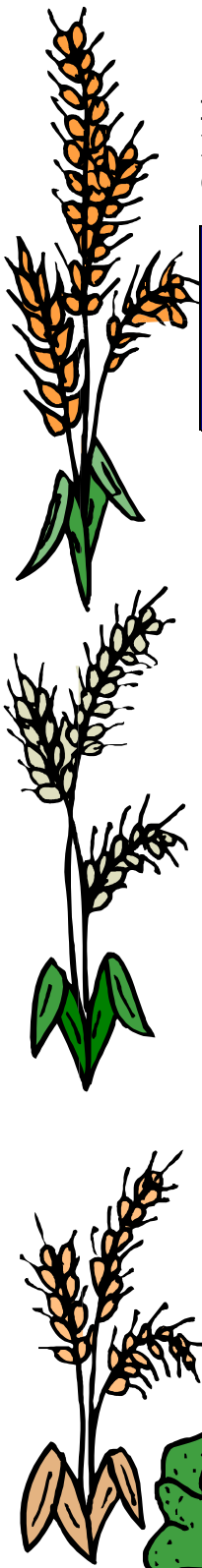
Joseph dreamed that he and his eleven brothers were in a field binding sheaves of wheat. Suddenly his brothers sheaves all bowed down to his.



Directions for project:

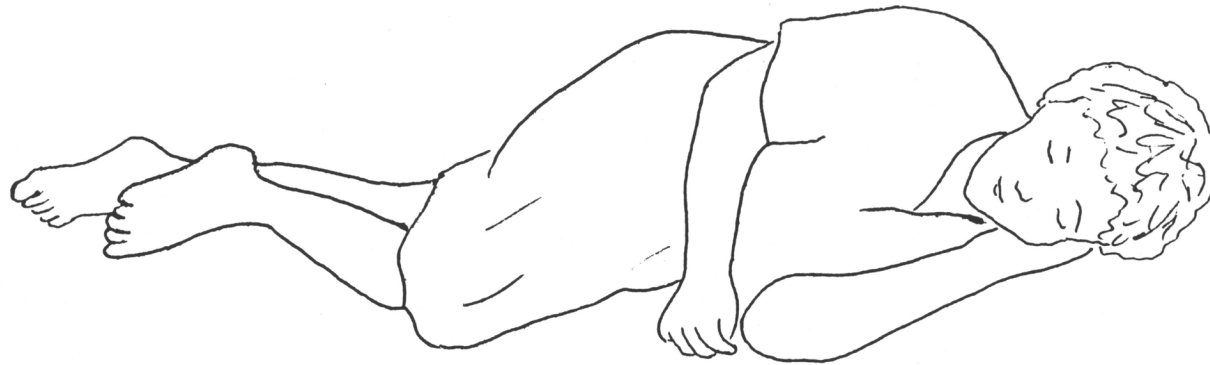
You are going to do your project on the next page.

1. Color the picture of Joseph sleeping. Cut it out
2. Glue it on a piece of dark blue paper
3. Cut out the quote, and glue it onto the blue page (or write it yourself!)
4. Now go outside and find lots of pieces of dried grass or straw.
5. Break them into pieces about 1½ inches long.
6. Put three or four pieces together and wind another piece around them to tie a sheaf. *(look at the picture above)*
7. Then you can glue or tape all twelve sheaves above the sleeping Joseph so that eleven sheaves are bowing down to one sheaf.

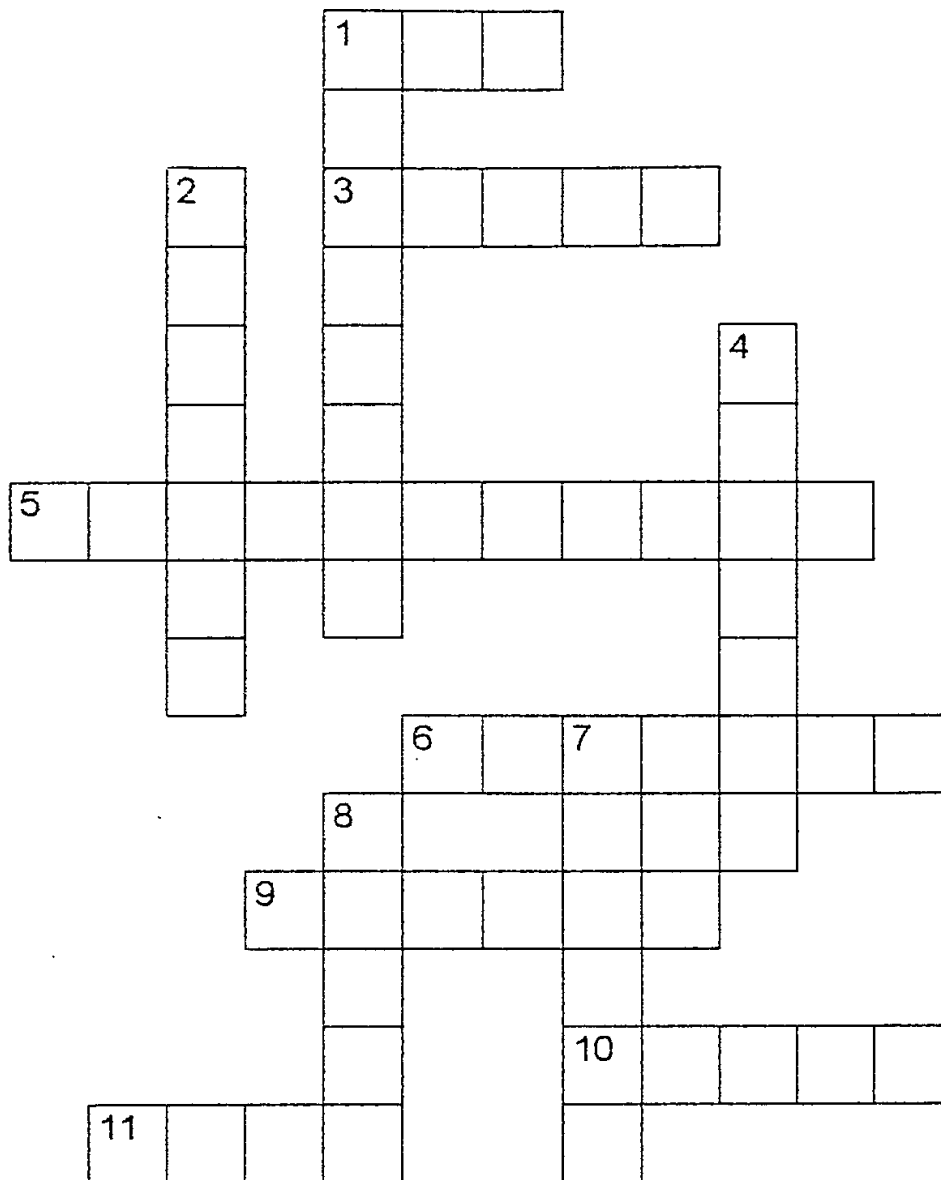


JOSEPH'S FIRST DREAM

Joseph dreamed that he and his eleven brothers were in a field binding sheaves of wheat. Suddenly his brothers' sheaves all bowed down to his.



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LEVEL 3 – FACTS ABOUT JOSEPH



ACROSS

1. They cast Joseph into a _____
3. Jacob made Joseph a _____
5. The _____ came on their camels
6. They sold Joseph for twenty _____ of silver.
9. _____ told the other brothers not to kill Joseph
10. The Midianites took Joseph to _____.
11. They dipped Joseph's tunic in the blood of a _____.

DOWN

1. The Midianites sold Joseph to _____
2. Jacob sent Joseph to _____ to see his brothers.
4. In a dream, the brothers' _____ bowed down to Joseph.
7. In a dream _____ stars bowed down to Joseph.
8. Jacob thought a wild _____ had devoured Joseph.



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LEVEL 4 – THE BROTHER’S PLAN

Your project is to focus on how Joseph felt the day that his brothers turned against him, and then to notice how the brothers themselves felt much later.

1. Read *Genesis 37:20* which tells what Joseph’s brothers planned to do.
2. Which two commandments would the brothers be breaking if they followed this plan?

3. Which brother tried to save Joseph? (*Genesis 37:21,22*) _____

4. “Many years later these same brothers came down to Egypt and were roughly treated. The rough treatment made them think back to wrong things they had done. They remembered the day they turned against their brother.

Read *Genesis 42:21*. It tells us that Joseph had pleaded with his brothers, but they had not paid attention. Finish the sentence:

“We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us,

_____.”

This is an illustration of how we don’t pay attention to someone’s feelings and don’t even notice that we are being heartless. Years later we may remember the scene and realize that we caused someone to feel very unhappy and hurt.

When some people your age are ganging up against or teasing another person, they often do not stop to think how that person feels? When that happens, what could you do to help the person?

It takes courage to stand up for others. Why might you be afraid to defend the person?

5. Reuben reminds the other brothers that he had warned them not to do it. Read what he said in *Genesis* 42:22, then finish the sentence:

“Did I not speak to you saying, ‘Do not sin against the boy’;

_____.”

This brother is like our **conscience**. Sometimes we don’t listen to the voice of conscience, but then much later the same voice reminds us.

Many years later, Joseph’s brothers, looking back, remembered the pleading voice of their brother, and felt sorry for what they had done.

WHAT DOES THE LORD TEACH US
ABOUT FEELING SORRY FOR OUR MISTAKES?

So there are times when *we* look back and feel sorry for something we have done.

Good things can happen when we feel sorry

If you think back to something you have done wrong, and while remembering it you feel sorry, it is a good sign. Good things can happen when we feel sorry for hurting others—then the Lord can make us better by taking away our fault (**reform** us). Read what the Writings teach in the *Arcana Coelestia* about what good will happen:

“If when a man betakes himself to evils, as is the case with many in youth, he feels any anxiety when he reflects upon his having done what is evil, it is a sign that he will still receive influx through the angels from heaven, and it is also a sign that he will afterwards allow himself to be reformed.”
Arcana Coelestia 5471:portion)

Write in your own words what good can happen with us when we feel sorry for doing something wrong:

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LEVEL 5 – JACOB’S TWELVE SONS



As you know, Jacob had twelve sons. The Word describes the birth of each one, from the last part of *Genesis 29* and into *Genesis 30*. Each son was named for a particular reason. Your assignment is to find the reason each son received his name. Here is a list of the twelve names. You can write beside each one what you discover.

REUBEN (Genesis 29:32)	
SIMEON (Genesis 29:33)	
LEVI (Genesis 29:34)	
JUDAH (Genesis 29:35)	
DAN (Genesis 30:6)	
NAPHTALI (Genesis 30:8)	
GAD (Genesis 30:11)	
ASHER (Genesis 30:13)	
ISSACHAR (Genesis 30:18)	
ZEBULUN (Genesis 30:20)	
JOSEPH (Genesis 30:23,24)	
BENJAMIN (Genesis 35:18)	