

Glenview New Church Sunday Morning Program
Primary Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 9
Joseph and His Brothers (Genesis 37)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Word in its inmost sense treats of the Lord Himself. Joseph represents the Lord.
- B. The Lord provides that experiences which when we endure them seem very hard may serve as a means to our spiritual growth.
- C. Basic correspondences:
 - 1. Jacob's 12 sons = the necessary thoughts and affections we develop
 - 2. Joseph = the affections for spiritual things
 - 3. Benjamin = the affections for learning about spiritual things

II. Story Circle

- A. Introduction
 - 1. Last time we talked about Jacob's return to the Holy Land, the land of Canaan, where he had been born and spent his youth. Do you remember why he had had to leave? (To escape his brother, Esau's, intention of killing him for stealing Esau's special blessing.)
 - 2. Jacob ran away to Haran and stayed there 20 years working for Laban, his uncle. He married 2 of Laban's daughters. What were their names? (Leah and Rachel) Which was his favorite wife, the one he loved more? (Rachel)
 - 3. When Jacob returned to the land of Canaan, he was wealthy and had a large family. How many sons were born to him while he was living in Haran? (11) Only one of these was Rachel's son. What was his name? (Joseph)
 - 4. After Jacob returned to the land of Canaan, one more son was born, so he then had 12 sons. What was the name of the youngest son? (Benjamin) Joseph and Benjamin were the only 2 children Rachel had, and she died after Benjamin was born.
 - 5. Do you think you can name all 12 of Jacob's sons? (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, Benjamin)
 - 6. Today we're starting to study the story of Joseph, Jacob's 11th son. Listen while I read the beginning of the story, and pay attention to how Joseph gets along with his ten older brothers.

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B. Tell/Read the Story

1. Read Genesis 37:1-11
 - a. Which son did Israel [or Jacob] love more than the others? (Joseph)
 - b. Joseph's older brothers hated him. Can you think of 3 reasons why? (Joseph brought a bad report of some of his brothers to their father; Joseph was Israel's favorite, so his brothers were jealous of him; his dreams showed that he was going to be greater than his brothers.)
 - c. What did Jacob make for Joseph? (A tunic of many colors)
2. Read Genesis 37:12-36.

C. Ideas to Discuss

1. When Jacob sent Joseph to make sure all was well with his brothers and the flocks, the brothers saw him coming when he was still far away. What did they plan to do? (To kill him)
2. Who talked the rest out of killing Joseph and into putting him into a pit instead? (Reuben, the oldest of the 12)
3. What secret plan did Reuben have? (To get Joseph out of the pit and bring him back to his father.)
4. Which brother suggested that they should sell Joseph? (Judah, the fourth son of the 12)
5. Did Reuben's plan work? (No) Why? (The brothers sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekels of silver, and the Ishmaelites took him to Egypt.)
6. To whom was Joseph sold in Egypt? (To Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard)
7. How did Joseph's brothers hide from Jacob what had really happened to his favorite son? (They dipped Joseph's tunic of many colors in the blood of a kid, and they brought the tunic to their father, saying they had found it. Jacob was convinced that a wild beast had killed Joseph.)

D. Further Ideas

1. Who do you think gave Reuben the idea to save Joseph? (The Lord) Do you have an idea why? (The Lord had plans for Joseph to become a great leader in Egypt and to save his whole family from starvation later on.)
2. Jealousy, anger, and hatred: these were the bad feelings Joseph's brothers had toward him. Did Joseph really deserve this? Had he done evil to his brothers? (No) The 10 brothers let those bad feelings of jealousy, anger, and hatred grow inside them until they wanted to hurt Joseph or kill him. These are dangerous feelings,

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and when we find them inside us, we should try very hard to remember to ask the Lord to take these feelings away. We should NOT let ourselves make plans for hurting or killing the person we're angry with.

3. Joseph's brothers had the difficult job of finding pasture and water for Israel's flocks during the dry season, and of protecting them from wild animals at night. They must have felt even more hateful toward Joseph because he remained at home in the comfort of his father's tents, while they worked in the heat of the day and the cold of the night, away from home.

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Joseph's Coat," LORI'S SONGS I (Side I, first song)
2. "Heav'nly Father, Thou art near," Hymnal #158. (Talk about how Joseph would have felt very much alone in the pit and then as a slave, and he would have prayed to the Lord, perhaps with words like in this song.)
3. "The Twelve Sons of Israel," LORI'S SONGS III

B. Activities

1. Practice saying the names of the 12 sons of Israel in birth order. Doing it rhythmically may help the children to remember.
2. Give each child an 8 1/2 x 11 inch piece of paper with the name of one of the sons of Israel written on it. (If there are more than twelve children in the group, pair kids up with one name; if less, give two names to one child.) Arrange chairs in a circle for the children to sit on. The teacher sings "The Twelve Sons of Israel" by Lori Odhner (see Music above), and the children stand up and sit down, holding up their cards when they hear their assigned names. Make a game of this; begin by singing the names slowly, and with each round, mix up the name cards and sing a little faster. Challenge the kids to pop up and down as fast as they can when they hear their apostle's name.

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C. Projects

Joseph's Tunic of Many Colors

1. Attached is a line drawing of Joseph and one of his tunics. The teacher can make use of these in several ways. Here are a few:
 - a. Photocopy both pictures for all the students. Color the tunic (perhaps coloring in a sash, or cutting one from yarn, cord, etc.), cut out the tunic, and glue it onto Joseph. (You could then mount the picture of Joseph on a bright construction paper background.)
 - b. Have children use their tunics as pattern pieces. Each student cuts a tunic from a multi-colored fabric scrap (striped is good). Glue fabric tunic to Joseph. Perhaps add a sash of yarn, ric-rac, cord, etc.
 - c. A paper doll: Children color the Joseph doll, then teacher dry mounts the picture (with rubber cement) on lightweight cardboard (e.g. manila file folders). Cut out around Joseph figure. Add tabs to the tunic shoulders before photocopying; then children can color and cut out the tunic and dress their dolls. Or make a pattern for a tunic that slips over Joseph's head; cut fabric tunics and tie around waist with yarn, cord, etc.

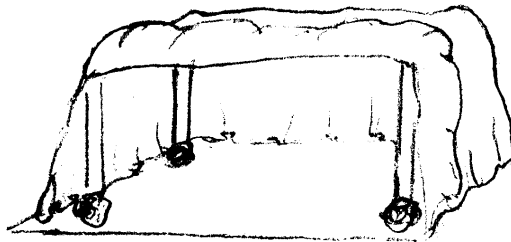
4. Joseph's Journey to find his Brothers— A Table Scene

The children will be creating a scene to show Joseph's journey from Hebron to Shechem and then to Dothan where he found his brothers and his father's flocks, and was thrown into a pit. We can assume the brothers moved on from Shechem to Dothan to find new pasture and water sources. Hebron, Shechem, and Dothan lie almost in a straight line, south to north. The journey for Joseph would have been a mountainous and dangerous one, with many rocks and bramble bushes for robbers to hide behind.

- a. Make mountains and valleys by placing rocks on a table and covering with fabric. (Burlap or felt work well.) Dothan was a plain. Add small rocks and scraggly plants to the landscape. Plants can be stuck into Plasticine to make them stand.
- b. Mark Hebron, Shechem, and Dothan with labels. (It may be easiest for the teacher to write the labels before class.)

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- c. Make clothespin figures (see following page for instructions):
 - 1. Israel (a good figure for the teacher to demonstrate with), the 10 brothers, Joseph, and the man who found Joseph in Shechem.
 - 2. Make figures stand by sticking them into small balls of Plasticine.
- d. Make sheep from salt ceramic (see following page for recipe) or use plastic sheep. Place sheep at Shechem.
- e. Make wild animal from Plasticine: jackals, foxes, lions, and bears. Place them throughout the landscape.
- f. Make Israel's tent. Put 4 small balls of Plasticine on each corner of an index card, push a popsicle stick into each ball, and lay a piece of fabric over top so that it covers the sticks. Fold back one long side for a door. (It may be easiest for the teacher to make the tent before class.) Place tent at Hebron.



- g. Place grass and water at Shechem and Dothan. Use green felt for grass, aluminum foil for water (pools or streams).
- h. Make an imitation of a pit by cutting out a small circle of black felt. Place this at Dothan.
Read or retell the story (Gen. 37:12-17), letting the children act it out with their figures. (If you have a big class with too many children to fit around the table, go through the story more than once.) While Joseph is traveling from Hebron to Shechem, the children could move the brothers on to Dothan, removing the grass and water from Shechem at the same time.
This scene makes a nice display. Be sure to label it.

Salt Ceramic

3 cups flour
2 cups salt
1 cup water

Mix flour and salt. Add water and knead until dough is mixed and workable. Store in sealed containers or plastic bags until ready for use.

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IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Illustrations of the Joseph story
- B. Map to show land of Canaan, Shechem and Dothan where Joseph looked for his brothers and the flocks, and Egypt where Joseph was sold as a slave to Potiphar.
- C. Pictures of Canaan (Hebron, Shechem, and Dothan if possible.)

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. The Sower, Vol. I, "Joseph and His Brothers," Gen. 37, pp. 146-151.

