

LESSON 5

THE STORY OF JOSEPH

LESSON NOTES

FOCUS: JOSEPH: A LEADER, DREAMER AND INTERPRETER OF DREAMS (GENESIS 37:1-31; 49:1-6)

- **SACRED STORY**
- **ENRICHMENT PRESENTATION**

THE MATERIAL

- **LOCATION: OLD TESTAMENT SACRED STORY SHELVES, BOTTOM SHELF, UNDER "SARAH"**
- **PIECES: SMALL BASKET WITH 12 PEOPLE OF GOD IN IT (ONE FOR EACH OF THE 12 SONS OF JACOB), COAT OF MANY COLORS, 12 HEADS OF GRAIN, IMAGE OF SUN, MOON AND STARS FROM "CREATION," CLEAR BOX FILLED WITH SILVER COINS, PYRAMID, COW AND EAR OF CORN, SACK OF GRAIN**
- **CONTROL**
- **UNDERLAY: TAN FELT STRIP, 42" X 11"**

BACKGROUND

The story of Joseph adds to the core narrative of the journey of the people of God from the beginning of "the Great Family" to the Exodus. Why did the People of God move to Egypt and become slaves? It was because of a famine in their land. There was also a famine in the land of Egypt, but they had stored up grain during the good years so there was food there. Why did they store the grain? Because of Joseph's leadership. Here is his story.

NOTES ON THE MATERIAL

Joseph's story sits in a deep wooden or wicker tray (12" x 8" x 3"). The story icon (5" x 2.5") is Joseph's coat of many colors. It can be attached to the end or the side of the tray depending on the size of the shelves, the classroom or other considerations. The underlay is a strip of tan felt, 42" x 11". Each object in the story is approximately the same size (no more than 4" high and 4" wide). The story calls for the following objects: a small basket containing twelve People of God (Jacob's twelve sons), a small coat of many colors, twelve heads of grain, the image of the sun, moon

and stars from the Creation story (*Volume 2*, p. 41), clear box filled with silver coins, a small gold pyramid, a cow and ear of corn, and a sack of grain.

A control for the lesson is folded and placed in the tray for the children to use to check their work. The sequence of the story is important because when you change the sequence, you change the story.

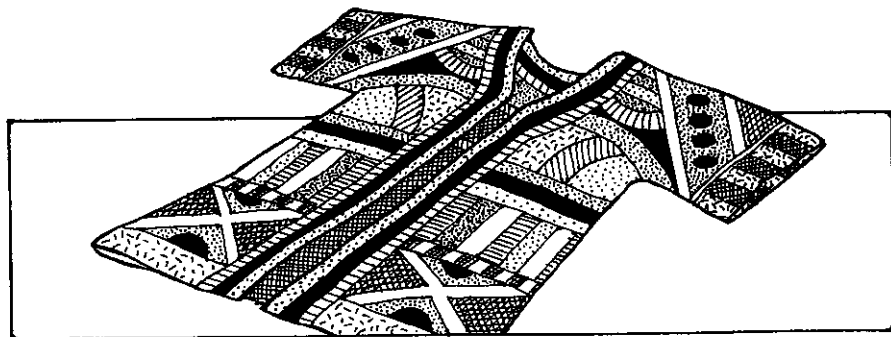
SPECIAL NOTES

The core stories about the People of God are placed on the top of the sacred story shelves. The enrichment stories about the key people in the core stories are placed on the lower shelves of the sacred story section in the room, under the core stories they enrich and extend (see diagram below).

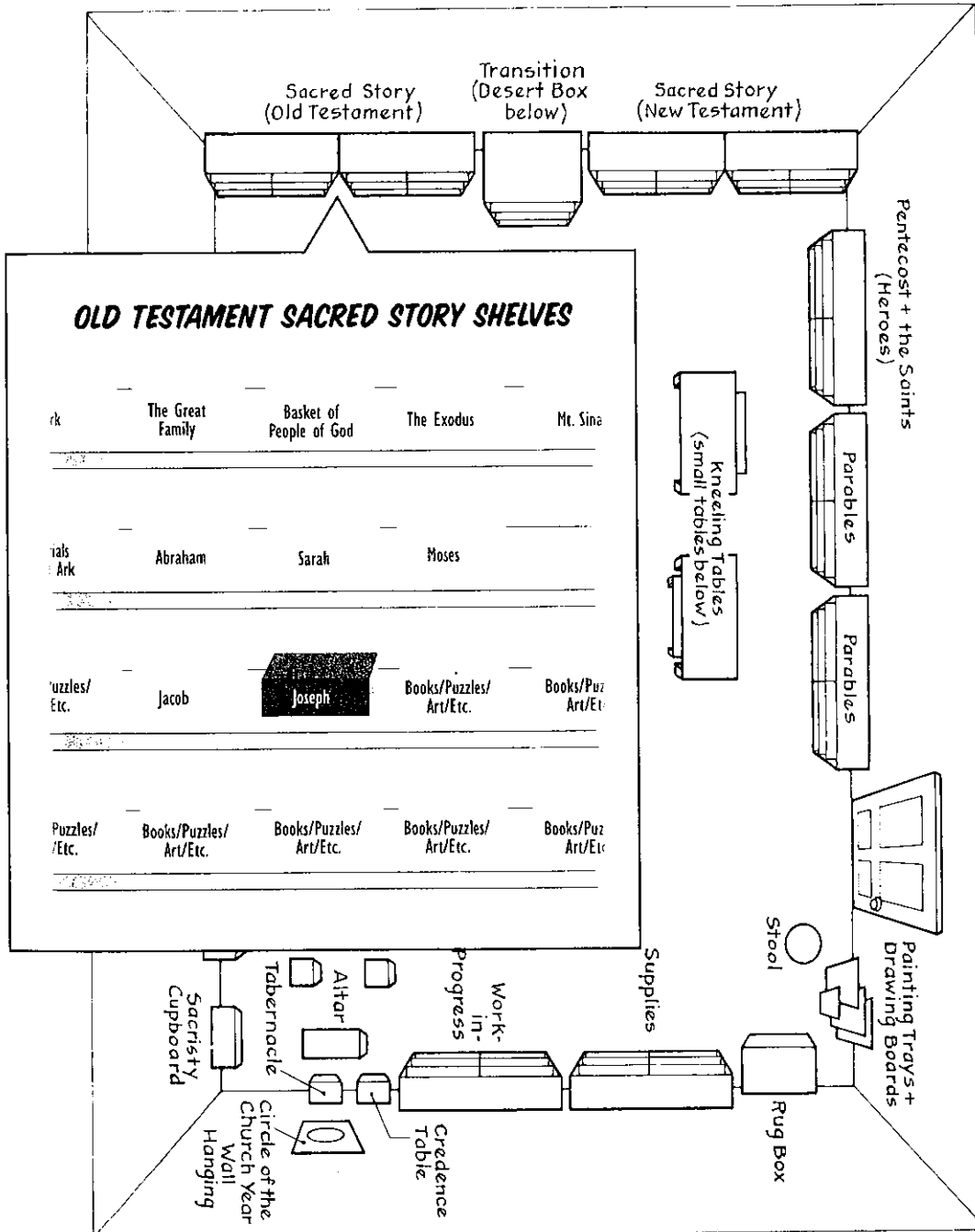
The story of Joseph adds to the core narrative the journey of the people of God from the beginning of "the Great Family" to the Exodus. When you introduce the stories in this volume, take care to set them in the larger context of the sacred story of which they are a part. You can accomplish this by:

- presenting the top shelf story the week before and then following up with this,
- presenting the top shelf story briefly on the same day you present this, or
- standing by the shelf and reminding the children of the top shelf story before bringing this one to the circle.

As you tell the story of Jacob's life, place objects on the underlay to remind you of each important event. Unroll the underlay slowly, just enough for the next object, as if you are unrolling a life. At the end of the wondering, show the children the control card and then carefully place each object back in the tray saying something about each event like, "Here is Jacob's coat of many colors," and so forth. Lastly, model how to roll the underlay back up and place it in the tray.



STORY ICON FOR THE STORY OF JOSEPH



WHERE TO FIND MATERIALS (TEACHING OBJECTS)

MOVEMENTS

Move with deliberation to the shelf where the material waits.

Pick up the tray containing the material and return to the circle. You may need to say:

Remove the underlay from the tray and unroll it so that just the first object will fit, right to left (storyteller's perspective).

Place Object #1 (twelve People of God—one for each of the sons of Jacob) on the underlay.

Place Object #2 (long-sleeved coat of many colors) on the underlay.

Place Object #3 (twelve heads of grain) on the underlay.

Place Object #4 (image of sun, moon and stars) on the underlay.

Place Object #5 (clear box filled with twenty pieces of silver/coins) on the underlay

WORDS

Watch. Watch where I go.

Everyone needs to be ready.

The Great Family grew. Jacob had twelve sons.

Jacob's favorite son was Joseph. To show his love, Jacob gave Joseph a long-sleeved coat with many colors. This made Joseph's brothers hate him.

One night, Joseph had a dream. He and his brothers were working in a field gathering wheat. Suddenly, Joseph's bundle rose up and all of his brother's bowed down before him. Joseph told his brothers this dream and they hated him even more. They wondered if Joseph would rule over them.

Joseph had another dream. In this dream, the sun, moon and eleven stars bowed down before him. Joseph told his father and brothers about this dream, and they all became angry. It sounded like not only the brothers, but also Jacob and his wife would bow down before Joseph.

One day, when the brothers were far away in the fields with the flocks, Jacob sent Joseph to see how they were doing. Joseph went to them, and when his brothers saw him coming, they decided to kill him, but the oldest brother, Reuben, convinced them not to. Instead, they took away his coat and put him into a pit.

Soon, a caravan of traders came past. The brothers sold Joseph to the traders for twenty pieces of silver. They took Joseph's coat and dipped it in the blood of a goat, and brought the coat to their father. They told Jacob that a wild beast had killed Joseph, and Jacob wept.

MOVEMENTS

Place **Object #6** (pyramid) on the underlay.

Place **Object #7** (cow and ear of corn) on the underlay when you mention them.

Place **Object #8** (sack of grain) on the underlay.

WORDS

Joseph was taken to Egypt and sold as a slave. A captain of the Pharaoh's army named Potiphar purchased him. Potiphar's wife had Joseph sent to jail, but Joseph remained close to God and God to him. Some of the Pharaoh's servants were in jail with Joseph. They had dreams and Joseph told them what they meant.

When the Pharaoh's servants were released they found that the Pharaoh had dreamed many dreams that no one understood. One of them told Pharaoh about Joseph, and Pharaoh called for him.

The Pharaoh's dream had two parts. First there were seven fat cows and seven skinny cows. The thin cows ate the fat ones. Then he dreamed there were seven fat and good ears of corn and seven sick and thin ones. The thin ones swallowed up the good ones.

Joseph told the Pharaoh that his dreams meant that there would be seven good years followed by seven bad years. He told Pharaoh that this was a warning to save up grain during the good years so that there would be food for the people of Egypt in the bad years. Pharaoh agreed and put Joseph in charge of gathering and saving the grain. Joseph was now thirty years old.

The lands near Egypt also had bad years. The people from the lands near Egypt came to Joseph to beg for food. Jacob sent ten of his sons into Egypt to get food to eat.

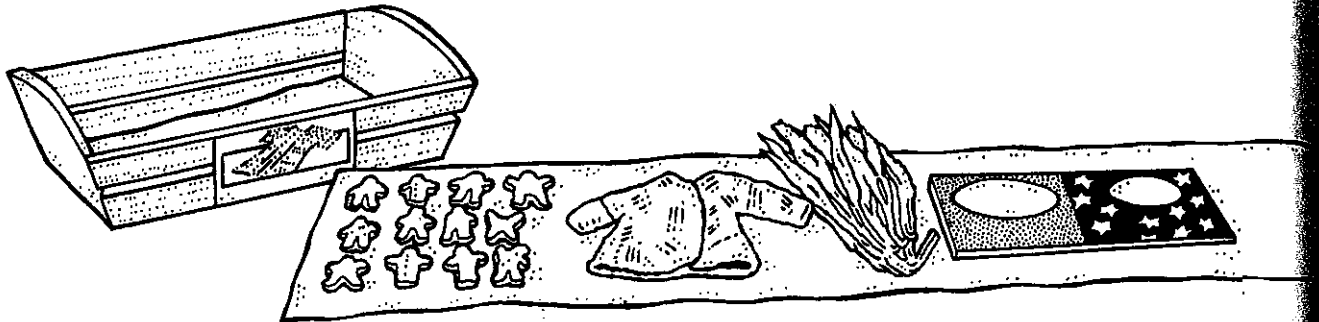
When the brothers came to Egypt, they bowed down before Joseph. They did not recognize him, but Joseph knew who they were. He kept one of the brothers with him and gave the others grain, and told them to go home.

Then all of them came back. This time Joseph told them who he was. He said, "God sent me before you to preserve life."

Joseph and his family spent the rest of their days in Egypt. When Jacob died Joseph took him home to be buried in the land of their fathers. Then Joseph and his brothers returned to Egypt, where years later their children would become slaves because the new Pharaoh forgot all that Joseph did.

MOVEMENTS

WORDS



FINAL LAYOUT OF THE STORY OF JOSEPH (CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE)

Sit for a moment and look at the lesson from beginning to end to let the story rest. Then begin the wondering.

❁ I wonder what part of the story you like the best?

I wonder what part is the most important?

I wonder what part is about you or what part was especially for you?

I wonder if we can leave out any of the story and still have all that we need?

MOVEMENTS

WORDS



After the wondering is over, show the children the control card for them to use to check their own telling of the story. Then put the story away carefully. Pick up each object in reverse order and remind the children what the object is, saying for example, "Here is Joseph's coat of many colors." After all of the objects are back in the tray, carefully model how to roll the underlay back up and place it in the tray as well. Return the lesson to its place on the shelf. Then return to your spot in the circle and dismiss the children one by one to their work.