

Joseph's Coat of Many Colors

Overview



Materials You'll Need

- old knit gloves
- chenille wires
- moveable eyes
- yarn; other scraps
- construction paper
- glue
- scissors
- markers



Scriptures

Gen 37

Bible Truth Objective(s)

Jealousy can hurt others and ourselves when it's not controlled.

Behavioral Objective(s)

To understand what being jealous means; to learn how to live at peace with everyone.

Memory Verse

"Live peaceably with all men." (Rom 12:18b)



Bible Knowledge

Joseph's Coat

In Joseph's day, everyone had a robe or cloak. Cloaks were used to warm oneself, to bundle up belongings for a trip, to wrap babies in, to sit on, or to serve as security for a loan. Most coats were knee length, short sleeved, and plain.

Joseph's coat, however, was probably of the kind worn by royalty—long sleeved, ankle length, and richly embroidered. It would have stood out among the brothers. While wearing it, Joseph would not have been expected to work since it was much too expensive and the sleeves would have covered the entire length of his arms and hands. In essence, even though Joseph was the second youngest, the gift of the coat had elevated his status among the brothers.

Strained Relationships

Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph was symbolized by the "tunic of many colors" (Gen 37:3) that had been given to him. The coat aggravated the

already strained relations between Joseph and his brothers. When Joseph revealed the contents of his dreams to his family, it is unclear whether he was just naive or boastful. Nevertheless, this made the brothers hate Joseph even more.

Even though Joseph knew his brothers disliked him, he still listened to his father and walked about 50 miles to find them in Shechem to see how they were doing with the flocks. When he couldn't find them, he continued to walk another 15 miles to Dothan until he did locate them.

But his brothers did not see a brother who had walked over 60 miles to find them. They only saw a "dreamer." Their hatred for Joseph was so intense they were ready to kill him. Because of Reuben's pleas, they threw him in a deep pit instead. In the end, his brothers sold him into slavery to get rid of him.

In Genesis 37:25, it records that Joseph was sold to a caravan of Ishmaelites. It is obvious from Genesis 37:36 and Judges 8:22-24 that these Ishmaelites could also be called Midianites.



Understanding Your Students

At this age, the students will want things others have but may not fully understand what it means to be jealous. Instead of focusing on the negative, we need to teach them that God made and loves each of us. He wants us to be glad about who we are and what we have.

An activity the students will enjoy is one that provides them with the opportunity to project who they are. After the lesson, show your children a collage of yourself. This collage will be a collection of magazine cut-outs, personal pictures, and other items representing yourself. These items will be pasted onto a poster board (about 12" X 12" in size). Tell your children about yourself by referring to the pic-

tures and items on your "All About Me" collage. Include your family, your hobbies, and things you like to do.

After talking about the collage, tell the students that they are each going to create their own "All About Me" collage. Provide them with small paper bags that have "All About Me" written on them, and have your children collect different items to place into this bag over the next week. The following Sabbath, they can bring in their collections and begin making their collages. As they are working on their collages, make a point of noting different qualities and talents each child has. Afterwards, close the activity with the message that there really is no need for jealousy, because we are all created very differently by God. We all have our own special qualities, and this makes everyone very special and important.



Vocabulary

Jealous

when we want something someone else has; sometimes, we dislike or want to hurt the person

Robe

a big piece of cloth worn around the body, like a coat

Bundle

a big bunch of something that is tied up

Slave

when you have a master and work for him; you need to do whatever he says



Before You Teach

Like anger, jealousy is an emotion that many people have a difficult time dealing with. It almost always leads a person down a destructive path. Take the examples of Isaac's neighbors, the Philistines, and Saul.

In Genesis 26, Isaac had become very wealthy and his Philistine neighbors had grown jealous of him. In response, they decided to plug up his wells. They even went so far as to claim newly-dug wells as their own because Isaac was living in Philistine territory. They were hoping to drive Isaac out of the land by taking away his source of water. Because of their jealousy, it drove the Philistines to want to get rid of Isaac and have what he had.

In Saul's case, he had become tired of hearing everyone praise David for his great accomplishments on the battle front. Although he appreciated what David had done by killing Goliath, his

thankfulness turned into jealousy over time. In 1 Samuel 18:11, it records that in a jealous rage, Saul hurled a spear at David, hoping to kill him. We can see how Saul's rage had gotten the better of him and allowed him to seek to harm another.

From these two examples, we see how jealousy destroyed the people involved:

1. It made them want what someone else had,
2. It made them want to harm someone, and
3. It led them to sin.

In today's lesson, Joseph's brothers also let their jealousy dictate their actions. In the end, it destroyed their relationship with their brother and they brought a great deal of pain to their father.

Although it is hard to overcome feelings of anger and jealousy, we also see examples of those who were able to respond with love. David did not get angry with Saul even though he knew very well he was being pursued. Instead, David asked God for strength to continue to love Saul. Jesus also asked God to help those who constantly attacked Him.

We can see from these examples that becoming more Christ-like can help us conquer our feelings of jealousy. In Ephesians 4:24-32, the verses encourage us to not give our ungodly desires any opportunity



Bible Story

Do you remember two people in the Bible called Esau and Jacob? They were twins. Although they were twin brothers, they didn't look alike or act the same. Esau was hairy and liked to hunt while Jacob was not hairy and liked to stay near the tent. One time Esau was so angry at Jacob that Jacob had to run away. They did not see each other for about twenty years. That is a long time to be away from your family. But after twenty years, Jacob went back to see his brother and they were not mad at each other anymore. Today's story is about Jacob and his family.

Jacob Has Twelve Sons

How many of us have brothers or sisters? (Ask students to raise their hands to do a quick survey.) Some of us may have one brother or sister. Some may have even two brothers or sisters. When we have four or five people in the family, that is already a lot of people. It probably makes the house a little bit noisy when all these people stay together. But Jacob did not just have four or five people in his family. Actually, he had a very, very large family. Jacob had twelve sons. That is a lot of children. Let's all count to twelve together. (Count with the students by saying the numbers, writing them on the board or posting up already made figures to represent each of the twelve sons.)

Joseph's Beautiful Coat

One of the sons was called Joseph. Now Joseph was one of the youngest in the family. He had ten older brothers and one younger brother. That means he was the eleventh brother. Even though he was young, he was a good boy. He listened to his parents and did what they asked him to do. He was obedient. Joseph's father loved him very much.

One day, Joseph's father made him a special coat of many colors. Now, the coats the people wore during the time of Joseph are not like the coats we

to lead us to sin. Instead of continuing down a destructive path, let us pray to God to help us overcome all our bitterness and envy.

wear today when we get cold. Instead, they looked like robes, like a big piece of cloth you wear around your body to keep you warm. When Joseph saw the coat, he was very happy and thanked his father.

Joseph's Brothers Are Jealous

Although Joseph was very happy to get this colorful new coat, his older brothers were not happy at all. When they saw the beautiful coat, they became jealous. Being jealous means to want something that someone else has. Joseph's brothers were jealous of him because they wished they had gotten the coat instead.

One brother said, "Our father always treats Joseph better."

"I hate Joseph," another brother said.

It isn't very nice to hate your brother or sister. God teaches us to love everyone, especially the people in our family, but Joseph's brothers did not like Joseph very much.

Joseph Has Two Dreams

One night while Joseph was sleeping, he had a dream. He dreamed about some golden bundles, or large bundles of grain. The next morning, he told his brothers about it.

"Listen," Joseph said. "I had a strange dream when I was sleeping. We were all out in the field putting grain into bundles. Suddenly, my bundle stood up, and your bundles bowed down to it."

When the brothers heard this, they shouted angrily at him, "So you want to be our king? Is that what your dream means? You think your bundle of grain is better than ours?"

Joseph didn't really know what his dream meant. It was just all very strange to him. Then Joseph had another dream. This time, it was about the stars, the moon and the sun in the sky. Just like the first time, he told his brothers about this second dream.

Joseph said, "I had another funny dream. This time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down before me." His brothers became angrier than ever. How could Joseph think that they would ever

bow down to him? Now, they hated Joseph even more than before.

Joseph Is Sold

One day Joseph's brothers took their father's sheep to eat in the fields.

The father said to Joseph, "Joseph, your brothers have been out with the sheep for quite a while now. I want you to go and see if they are all right."

Joseph listened to his father and put on his new coat. He walked out across the hills to find his brothers. He walked for a very long time. Finally he saw his brothers from far away. When his brothers saw him, instead of feeling happy, they were angry because they saw him wearing the beautiful coat.

"Here comes our brother, Joseph the dreamer," they said to each other. The brothers were so jealous that they wanted to hurt Joseph. Actually, they wanted to kill him.

But one brother said, "He is still our brother. Let's throw him down into that deep hole instead and leave him in it."

"That's a good idea," the others agreed.

When Joseph came near, he didn't know about his brothers' plan. But as soon as he got close to them, they pulled off his coat and threw him down into the deep hole. Poor Joseph. He was all alone, in that deep and dark hole.

Later, the brothers saw some men coming on camels. The men were taking things from one country to sell in another country, Egypt.

One brother jumped up and said, "I have a great idea. Let's sell Joseph to them. He can be a

slave and we can make some money too. Then we don't have to ever see him again and hear about his strange and silly dreams."

You know what a slave is? If you are a slave, you need to do what the master tells you to do. The others thought that it was a good idea, and that is just what they did! They sold their own brother to the men on camels for twenty pieces of silver. As Joseph was taken away, only one older brother felt sad. He wanted to help Joseph. But it was too late now.

Joseph's Brothers Put Blood on His Coat

After the men took Joseph away, the brothers said, "Now Joseph won't bother us anymore! Let's put animal blood on Joseph's coat; then we'll show it to our father and he will think that Joseph was killed by a wild animal. That way we won't get into trouble."

The brothers killed a baby goat and dipped the coat into the blood. Then they brought the coat back to their father. When Joseph's father saw the bloody coat, he thought he'd never see Joseph again. He was sure that a wild animal had killed Joseph, and that made Joseph's father sad for a very long time. But Joseph was not dead. He became a slave in Egypt simply because his brothers were jealous of him and hated him.

God does not want us to be like Joseph's brothers. God wants us to love the people around us. Although our friends or family may sometimes have things we don't have, it's okay. We don't need to hate them or want to hurt them like Joseph's brothers. God wants us to remember to try our best to love everyone.



Check For Understanding

1. **How many sons did Jacob have?** (Twelve.)
2. **What did Jacob give to Joseph?** (A beautiful, colorful coat.)
3. **What did Joseph dream about in his two dreams?** (He dreamed that his brothers' bundles of grain bowed down to his. He also dreamed that the sun, the moon and the eleven stars bowed down to him.)
4. **Did Joseph's older brothers like him?** (No,

they were jealous of him.)

5. **What did Joseph's brothers do to him when he went to find them?** (They threw him into a deep hole and then sold him to become a slave in Egypt.)
6. **Why did they put blood on Joseph's coat afterward?** (They didn't want their father to find out what they had done. This way, Joseph's father would think he was killed by a wild animal.)
7. **Does God want us to be jealous?** (No, He wants us to try our best to love everyone.)



Life Application Story

The Birthday Party

Julie was really excited as she walked into Elizabeth's house. It was her friend's birthday party today! When Julie got inside, many of her friends were already there and playing. Julie saw a place for dressing up like a princess. She spotted another area where she could play with Elizabeth's dolls. There were also outdoor games like mini-golf and ring toss. There was so much to do Julie didn't know where to begin. Then Elizabeth saw Julie and grabbed her by the hand.

"Come on, let's go and play dress up!" Elizabeth said as she led Julie away. Soon, Julie was having a great time.

Before she knew it, it was time to cut the cake and open the presents. The first one Elizabeth opened was the latest Barbie doll. It had sparkles and a beautiful crown. Julie had wanted that one too but her mom said that she had many dolls already. Next, Elizabeth took a shiny princess t-shirt out of a bag. It is really pretty, thought Julie. Then, Elizabeth's parents brought out a huge box and opened it for her. Julie couldn't believe her eyes. It was the most beautiful dollhouse she had ever seen. It had four levels and it came with furniture. There were also many buttons that made real-life sounds when they were pressed. Julie thought that Elizabeth was the luckiest girl. She always had the best parties and got the best presents. After the party was over, Julie's mom came to pick her up.

Even before Julie's mom could ask her how the party was, Julie burst out, "Mom, can I have a four story dollhouse, just like the one Elizabeth got for her birthday?"

Julie's mom was surprised but calmly said, "It isn't your birthday for another half-year and it is too expensive to get such a big dollhouse."

"Mom, I never get anything nice and pretty like Elizabeth. Why does she always get the big parties and big presents? We never have parties and I always get small presents," Julie whined.

"Julie, there will always be something that someone else has that you want. But we can't have everything. Actually, we already have a lot. We have good health, a great family and all the things

we need to live everyday. Even though we don't have parties, we love you and know that you are growing up. God teaches us to be happy with what we already have. When we always want to have many things that other people have, we become jealous. That is something God does not want us to be. It makes Him sad that we always just want, want, want."

Julie thought about what her mom said. "I know. But it's just so hard when I see Elizabeth with all those new things. I really wish I could have them too."

Julie's mom thought of a good idea to help Julie feel better. "I know there are many things that you don't play with anymore. How about we go home and clean those toys out and donate them to charity so other kids who don't have any toys can play with them? Sometimes by giving things to others who need them, it makes us feel good. And we will not always just want to have things. It always makes us know how much we already have and should be thankful for."

Julie agreed. She knew that she did have a lot more than other kids. As she walked home, she prayed to God that He could help her become more thankful for what she already had.

Questions to Think About

1. **What did Julie want to have?** (She wanted to have big parties and the big dollhouse her friend got.)
2. **What did Julie's mom say to her?** (She said that God doesn't like it when we always just want things. We already have many things we should be thankful for.)
3. **What are some things you are thankful for?** (Allow students to answer.)
4. **What does it mean to be jealous?** (It means we want things that other people have. It can make us feel bad because we only want and want.)
5. **What should we do when we see a brand new toy that some one has and we want to have one just like it?** (Allow students to answer but throw out some suggestions: e.g. Should we steal it? Should we beg our parents for one? Should we ask the person if he could share the toy? Should we play with something else?)



Activity 1

Joseph's Coat

Look at Joseph's coat. Color in the stripes according to the numbers. Turn Joseph's coat into a beautiful coat of many colors.



Activity 2

Joseph's Dreams

Look at the pictures. How many bundles of grain are bowing down? (11) How many stars are bowing down? (11)



Activity 3

Who is Jealous? Who Has Love?

Look at Joseph's brothers. They were jealous and sold Joseph as a slave. Look at the other pictures. Are the other people jealous or showing love? Put an "O" for showing love and put an "X" for being jealous. What does God want us to do?



Optional Activity

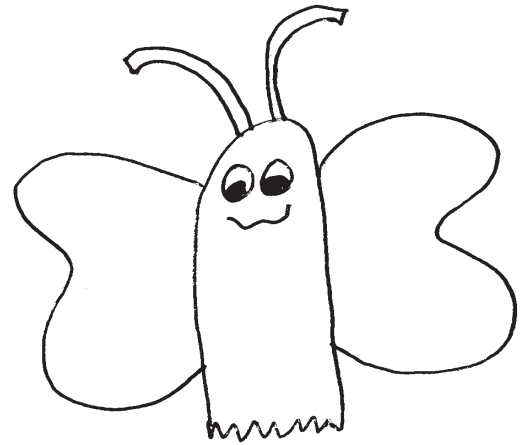
Cheerful Butterflies

Materials:

1. old knit gloves (inexpensive ones can also be purchased at local chain stores)
2. 2- inch chenille wires
3. moveable eyes
4. yarn; other leftover scraps
5. construction paper
6. glue
7. scissors
8. markers

Directions:

1. Pre-cut the fingers from old gloves so that there is one finger for each student.
2. Help the students bend the chenille wire in half and push it up through the tip of the finger to create an antenna (see diagram).
3. Help the students cut a set of butterfly wings from construction paper. Then glue the finger to the center of the wings.
4. Guide the students to glue the eyes and mouth (with a small piece of yarn) on to the butterfly head.
5. Let students decorate the wings of the butterfly.
6. Encourage the students as they complete the activity that it was sad Joseph was sold. But God will always be with us even when we feel sad or scared. The butterfly today can help remind us to be happy and cheerful, even when it is hard.



Activity 1:1

Joseph's Coat

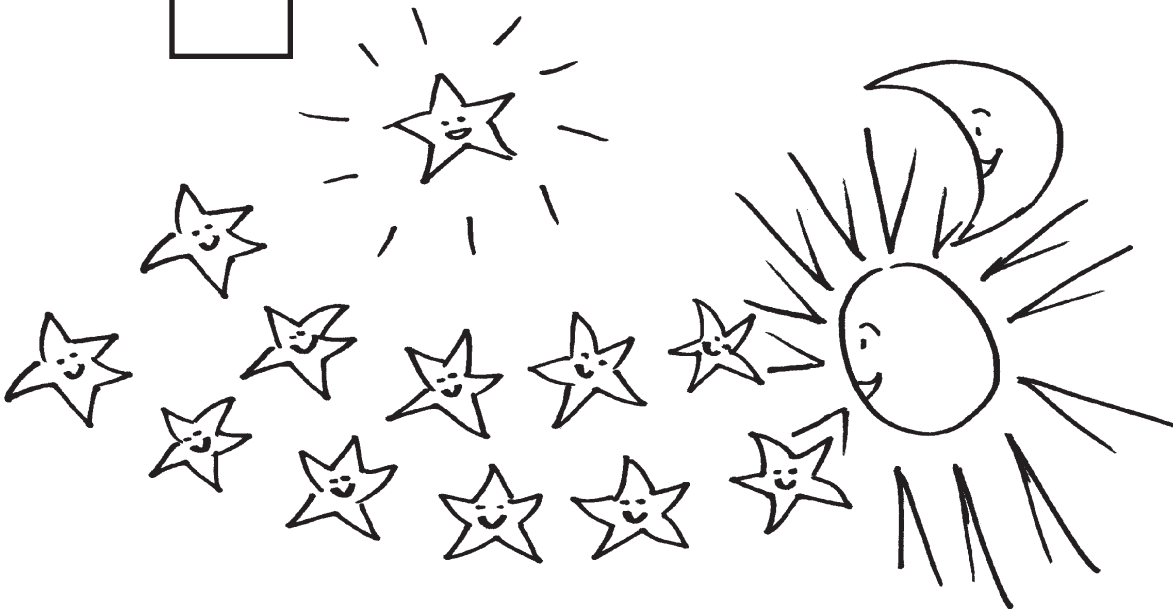
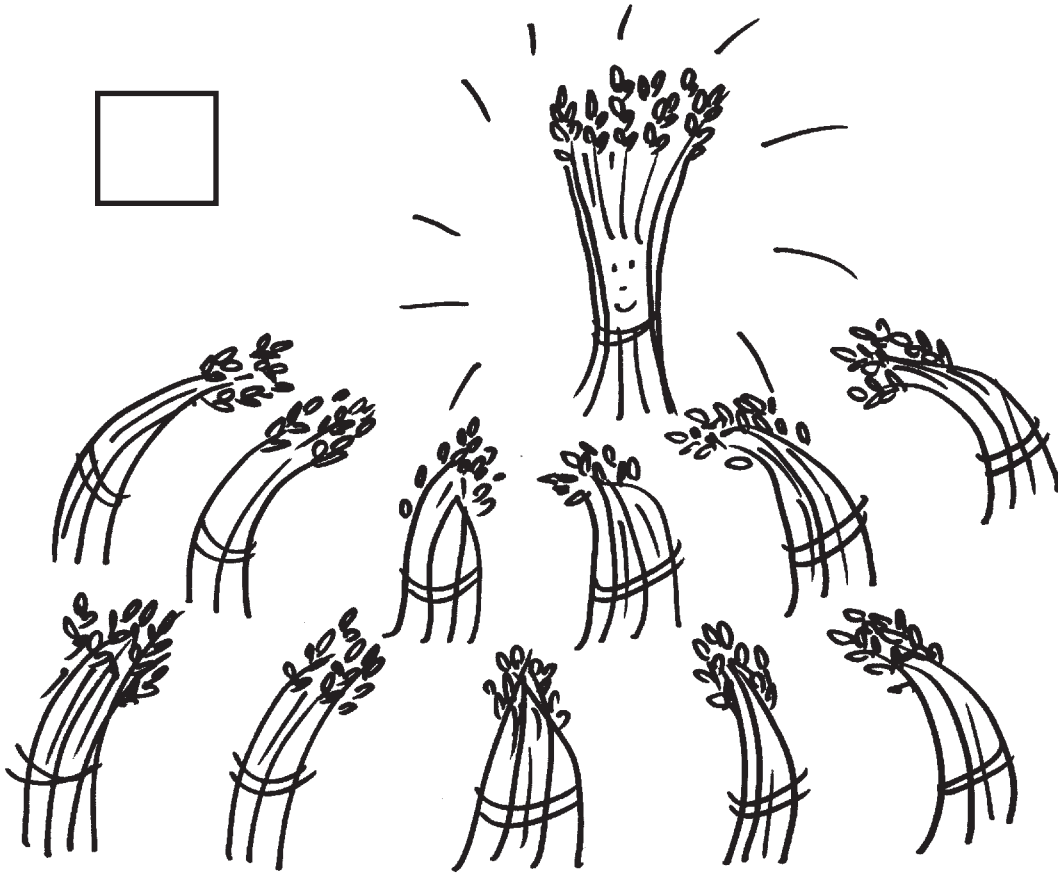
Look at Joseph's coat. Color in the stripes according to the numbers.
Turn Joseph's coat into a beautiful coat of many colors.



Activity 1:2

Joseph's Dreams

Look at the pictures. How many bundles of grain are bowing down?
How many stars are bowing down? Write the number in the box.



Activity 1:3

Who is Jealous? Who Has Love?

Look at Joseph's brothers. They were jealous and sold Joseph as a slave. Look at the other pictures. Are the other people jealous or showing love?

Put an "O" for showing love and put an "X" for being jealous.
What does God want us to do?



jealous

love



jealous

love