

# FLANNEL BOARD FRIDAY

## PART 3 JOSEPH'S COAT

### The Appearance of Joseph's Coat

The Hebrew phrase for "coat of many colors" is *ketonet passim*, which actually means "coat with long sleeves". The reason that our English translations speak of a multi-colored coat is because of a disputed mistranslation found in the Septuagint. Since the King James Bible was created from the Septuagint and Latin Vulgate, the mistranslation made it into the English Bibles.

### The Design of Joseph's Coat

In Joseph's day, only those who held the position of boss or foreman would wear garments with sleeves. A coat with sleeves was a symbol of authority and served practically to hold documents, writing instruments, and supplies. Consequently, a man on the job site with sleeves was equivalent to a man carrying a briefcase. In other words, the man with sleeves was clearly the boss.

### The Effect of Joseph's Coat

"Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat" and many Sunday School materials were created based on this one mistranslation and went on to produce millions in merchandise like t-shirts, toys, television specials, and songs.

## EVEN MORE TO THE STORY

### Did You Know?

- One quarter of the book of Genesis, which is one of the larger books of the Bible, is about the person of Joseph.
- After being sold off into slavery in Egypt, Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife (**Genesis 41:45**).
- Before his death, Joseph predicted that God would visit the children of Israel and lead them out of Egypt and into the promised land (**Genesis 50:22-26**).

### Quick Fact

Joseph's life was plagued by coats. When Joseph was a boy, his father made him a coat that set him apart from his brothers (**Genesis 37:3**). It was that very coat that would cause them to sell him into slavery. Later, while a slave in Egypt, the wife of his master would make a sexual advance toward Joseph. He eluded her and fled, leaving her with the coat he wore. The wife of his master would use the coat as "evidence" that Joseph had attempted to rape her, landing Joseph in prison (**Genesis 39:10-19**).

### Questions to Ponder

- After learning about the disputed mistranslation concerning Joseph's coat, are you able to still see this story in the same way?  
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- Long sleeves would have made manual labor difficult, so most laborers of that time and culture wore vest-like garments when working. In what other ways do you think Joseph's long sleeve coat was an insult to his brothers?  
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- The story of Joseph is like a floodlight shining on Jesus Christ helping us understand who He is, what He has done, and all that is ours in Him. How does the story of Joseph help you to better understand the person of Jesus Christ?  
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