



The Story of Joseph and Potiphar's Wife in Islamic Tradition



Introduction

Did you know, though, that various versions of the most well-known Biblical stories exist in different cultures? Many biblical stories and themes have been used, and modified, for other cultural uses. They can be found in classical literature and even in popular culture.

The well-known Biblical story of Joseph describes how the young boy was sold by his brothers as a slave to the Egyptian noble Potiphar, an officer of the Pharaoh. He moved into Potiphar's house and Potiphar's Wife tried to seduce Joseph who eluded her advances. As Joseph repelled her attempts, she grabbed him by his coat and it tore. Citing his garment as evidence, Potiphar's wife falsely accused Joseph of having assaulted her, and he was sent to prison.

This video tells this famous biblical story from a different perspective and emphasizes how different cultures utilize these stories to import values that are important to them.

[Show Video] <https://youtu.be/5NwMAQ1JegM>

Activity

Materials needed:

1. Microphone

Story Transmission Activity - This activity is based on the idea that stories can change as they are transmitted orally.

Break into small groups of 5 or 6 and sit in a circle.

Each group starts with the same beginning sentence of a story. One person adds a sentence to the story. Each person, in turn, adds another sentence to the story. Together they build a full story.

Suggested story starters:

1. Once, there were twin brothers. One brother was favored by his mother, and the other by his father.
2. One day, God looked at the world that He had created and realized that the people that He had created were acting in immoral ways.
3. In a town, there was a man who was very kind and charitable but nothing ever went his way. Terrible things kept happening to him.

Reconvene into a large group and have one person from each group share the gist of the story that they have created.

Compare how the stories are similar and how they differ. Did they end up with the same moral to the story or different ones? Why do you think that the stories ended differently? Did each group have a different message that they wanted to express?

Conclusion - The Bible is a foundational text for much of the western world and finds its way, in various forms, into popular culture. Familiarity with Biblical stories helps to understand the new texts.