

Jacob's Family

Genesis 29:21-35; 30:1-24

Level D Teacher Overview



Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is His reward.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth.

Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them.

They shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

Psalm 127:3-5

For Teachers:

Thank you for teaching! We hope this lesson will be enjoyable for you to teach and memorable for your students.

This Sunday School lesson is designed to accompany the *SHIFT: Small Changes. Big Difference.* program available from General Church Outreach. Further information for the week's story can be found in the adult workbook.

This lesson has several activity options. You may wish to choose 2-3. Reading through all of the options will help you identify the activities that are best suited to your group's size, gender mix, available supplies, and the time you have to prepare. You may also want to mix and match activities from other age levels.

Activity Options:

1. Talk About It
2. Explore: Cultivating Patience
3. Make: Twelve Sons of Jacob Mural

Your feedback and statistical information will help us continue to provide quality Sunday School materials. Please take a moment to fill out the brief form on the next page soon after you finish teaching.

Teacher Feedback

Week 4 - Level D

The General Church Office of Education wants to support you in the important work of teaching Sunday School and leading youth groups. If you have questions—age ranges, curriculum, classroom discipline, safety, etc.—please feel free to contact us.

Email: sundayschool@newchurch.org **Phone:** 267-502-4949 **Fax:** 267-502-4935

Mail: Office of Education, P.O. Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009, USA

Your Input Is Vital!

Please take a moment to complete this information and send it back to us by one of the methods listed in the box above.

Name of Congregation/Group:

Number of Students You Taught Today:

Materials Used Today (check all that apply):

- Talk About It**
- Explore: Cultivating Patience**
- Make: Twelve Sons of Jacob Mural**

We welcome your comments:

Did you know that the General Church Office of Education offers a Sunday School E-Newsletter to let you know about available programs and resources? Each edition features classroom-ready ideas, teaching tips, and suggestions for maximizing your program's success. Subscription is free! To be added to our mailing list, send your email address to sundayschool@newchurch.org.

Talk About It

Reading: Genesis 29:21-35; 30:1-24

This week's story mentions marriage practices that were common when the Word was written. The Sunday School teens might benefit from a brief discussion about whether or not these stories give justification for polygamy today. Also you can present the idea to the teens that marriages in the Word picture relationships between true or false ideas and good or evil loves of various kinds.

1. What qualities do you admire in others? Do you have a vision for the qualities you want to have when you grow up?
2. Rachel embodies the inspiring thoughts a person can have about becoming a wisely caring, heavenly person. When you have tried to be that kind of person was it easy or hard?
3. What is a good first step to take if you want to become a heavenly person? (Learn what the Lord teaches in His Word, build good habits through fighting natural responses that get in the way of good habits, look for useful ways you can wisely care for the people around you, etc.)
4. At times the effort it takes to build good habits may become unappealing. The small everyday steps we take, e.g. not putting ourselves first, are like Leah. Just as Leah does not see clearly, it can be hard to see beyond the self-discipline it takes to achieve the long-term goal—of becoming the beautiful person you want to be.
5. Think of a time that you were disappointed by something that has taken longer than you expected it to. (E.g. A person hears a skilled musician playing a beautiful piece of music, decides to learn to play it, and then discovers that it takes a long time and a lot of hard work to play it well. Encourage sharing of experiences.)
6. Have you heard the term “brainchild”? What do you think it might mean? (an idea that is born in our minds) Children in the Word picture good and true motivations and ideas that are born into our spiritual lives. Jacob's many children embody the various fruits of the spirit that we experience in our lives when we make choices that lead our lives towards heaven.
7. Who was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, Jacob's youngest children? (Rachel) Rachel's children are the last to be born in the family and picture deeper spiritual truths that come to us as we are being transformed from being worldly people into spiritual people later in life. They come after a person has been doing the hard work of learning, wanting and finally loving true ideas.

Explore: Cultivating Patience



At a Glance:

“Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him” (Psalm 37:7). Explore the topics of patience and barrenness by reading and discussing the importance of patience and the state of being either physically or mentally barren. Students will then choose a personal goal and break it down into manageable steps that can to keep their goal in mind while they feel far from achieving it.

Supplies Needed for Each Student:

- *Cultivating Patience* reading page
- *Cultivating Patience Chart*
- pen or pencil

Directions:

1. Read *Cultivating Patience* with students.
2. Complete the *Cultivating Patience* activity.



Cultivating Patience

Think of a time when you have felt frustrated by situations such as the following:

- Waiting in a long slow line for something you urgently need?
- Hearing a series of messages on the phone when you want to talk to a live person?
- Being interrupted again and again as you try to say something important?
- Other examples?

Can you compare the level of frustration you have experienced to the frustration Jacob must have felt when he found out that he had to work an extra seven years to marry Rachel.

- It is easy to weigh which is worse, but why do even minor issues sometimes cause huge frustration and an unpleasant mood?

Imagine Rachel's frustration when her sister Leah kept having children, but she was barren and apparently could not have even one child.

- Almost everyone has experienced a time when he or she felt "barren". Think of a time when something was hard or impossible for you, but easy for a brother, sister or a friend. Or a time that others lives seemed happy and your own life seemed empty of happiness.

On the level of natural conception and birth being barren means that the physical substances or qualities that are needed to form a new body are not ready or simply do not exist. Without an egg, sperm and a nurturing womb it is impossible for a baby to be formed. Looking at this on a higher level, we may experience times when we do not have the mental substances and qualities we need to be a fruitful or productive person, e.g. we may experience writers block if we lack the facts to write a paper; we may fail an exam because we do not know the facts needed to pass; we may "fail" in helping a friend because we don't know how to be truly helpful.

Whether we are facing writer's block, waiting for the independence of adulthood, or waiting for a baby to be born, cultivating patience will help us wait. People commonly wait

- nine months for a child to develop and be born.
- for years to complete college, find a job and live independently.
- through a period of ill health before dying.

Doing what we can in the present enables us to transform wait times into a time of positive preparation for what lies ahead.

- Expectant parents gather clothing, blankets, a bed, etc. to care for their baby.
- Developing habits of personal responsibility prepares a person to live independently.
- Asking the Lord's help to turn our reactions from frustration, impatience, resentment and anger that things are not what we wish they were helps the Lord to bless us with patience.
- Consciously working not to express impatience in word and deed or even to dwell on the impatient thoughts and reactions is our part in receiving patience.
- Working to think from a longer-term perspective and making deeper goals our priority can help see us through difficult times.

Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord! (Psalm 27:14)

Cultivating Patience Chart

1. Think of a personal goal or choose a goal from the following list.

Become financially independent
 Learn to play chess
 Make a difference in the world
 Choose a college major

Play a musical instrument
 Be in charge of your own life
 Eat healthily
 Choose a profession

Be on a college sports team
 Become a happy person
 Become fit
 Cultivate a new social group

2. Break this large goal down into smaller parts that you can work on one at a time.
3. Write the steps down in the chart below.
4. Consider habits you want to develop that can help you, e.g. patience, prayer, strength and stamina to do what you need to.
5. If there is time, consider additional goals.

Goal	Groundwork	Develop skills	Further skills	End Goal
Become a writer	Read a variety of books, articles and short stories. Become familiar with literary styles. Choose a genre of writing to develop.	Take a writing course. Increase my vocabulary. Practice writing short pieces. Revise work I have done.	Write longer pieces. Learn how to edit. Find someone to read and edit my work. Re-work and improve my writing.	Write a book. -Choose a theme -Characters -Plot -Put it all together

Make: Twelve Sons of Jacob Mural

At a Glance:

The Heavenly Doctrines for the New Church tell us that the 12 sons of Jacob represent qualities of people who are trying to follow a life of religion at different stages. Using a chart, students will read selected passages about each son, and learn about his name's meaning in Hebrew and in the inner sense of the Word as revealed for the New Church. They will finish by creating a circular mural of symbols for the 12 sons, either as a group or individually.

Supplies Needed:

- Bibles or Words (ideally, one for each student)
- *The Twelve Sons of Jacob* chart for each student
- markers or colored pencils
- scissors
- clear tape
- *Group Project:*
 - 12 Large Edge Pieces
 - 1 Large Center Piece
- *Individual Project:*
 - 3 Small Edge Pieces for each student
 - 1 Small Center Piece for each student



Teacher Preparation:

- Decide whether you will be doing the group project or the individual project and prepare the needed materials.
- If doing the group project, decide how you will assign the sons.




Directions:

1. Introduce the activity: The twelve sons of Jacob represent various qualities of people who are trying to follow a good life, a life of religion. Today, you will read a few passages about one or more of the sons, learn about the meanings of their names in Hebrew and in the inner sense of the Word. Then, we will make a mural, representing the twelve sons with symbols that are associated with each of them.

Make: Twelve Sons of Jacob Mural continued

2. Hand out the chart of *The Twelve Sons of Jacob* and the copies of the Bible or Word.
3. Explain the Chart: The first column shows some symbols that have been used for these sons in different ways for centuries. For example, some synagogues have mosaics with these symbols incorporated into them. The state of Israel used versions of these symbols on a set of stamps. These symbols relate to the names of the sons or to something their father Jacob said about them near the end of his life. Years after the story we are currently studying, Jacob called all his sons together and gave them his blessing before he died. The second passage listed for each son on the chart is what Jacob said at that time.
4. Assign each student to look up and read the passages about one or more sons.
5. Note: some additional information is needed for students to understand what Jacob says about his three oldest sons. Reuben is likened to troubled water because he slept with one of his father's concubines (Genesis 35:21-22). What is said about Simeon and Levi refers to them killing all the male inhabitants of a city in revenge for them taking their sister Dinah (Genesis 34:25-31).
6. Hand out the project pieces. Have students write the name and the birth order number in the spaces shown in the picture above.
7. Students draw symbolic pictures using the first and last columns on the chart for ideas.
8. *If doing the group project*, have students agree on a color scheme for the borders so they will all match.
9. Cut out all the edge pieces. *For the individual project don't cut apart the four segments that are on the same page.*
10. Do not cut out the center pieces. Instead place the edge piece around the circle and tape them in place. *For the individual project you will need to snip off the corners of the center piece of paper.* Find a place to display the group mural.
11. If time allows, conclude by asking students if they see connections between the natural meanings of the names and their inner spiritual meanings.

The Twelve Sons of Jacob

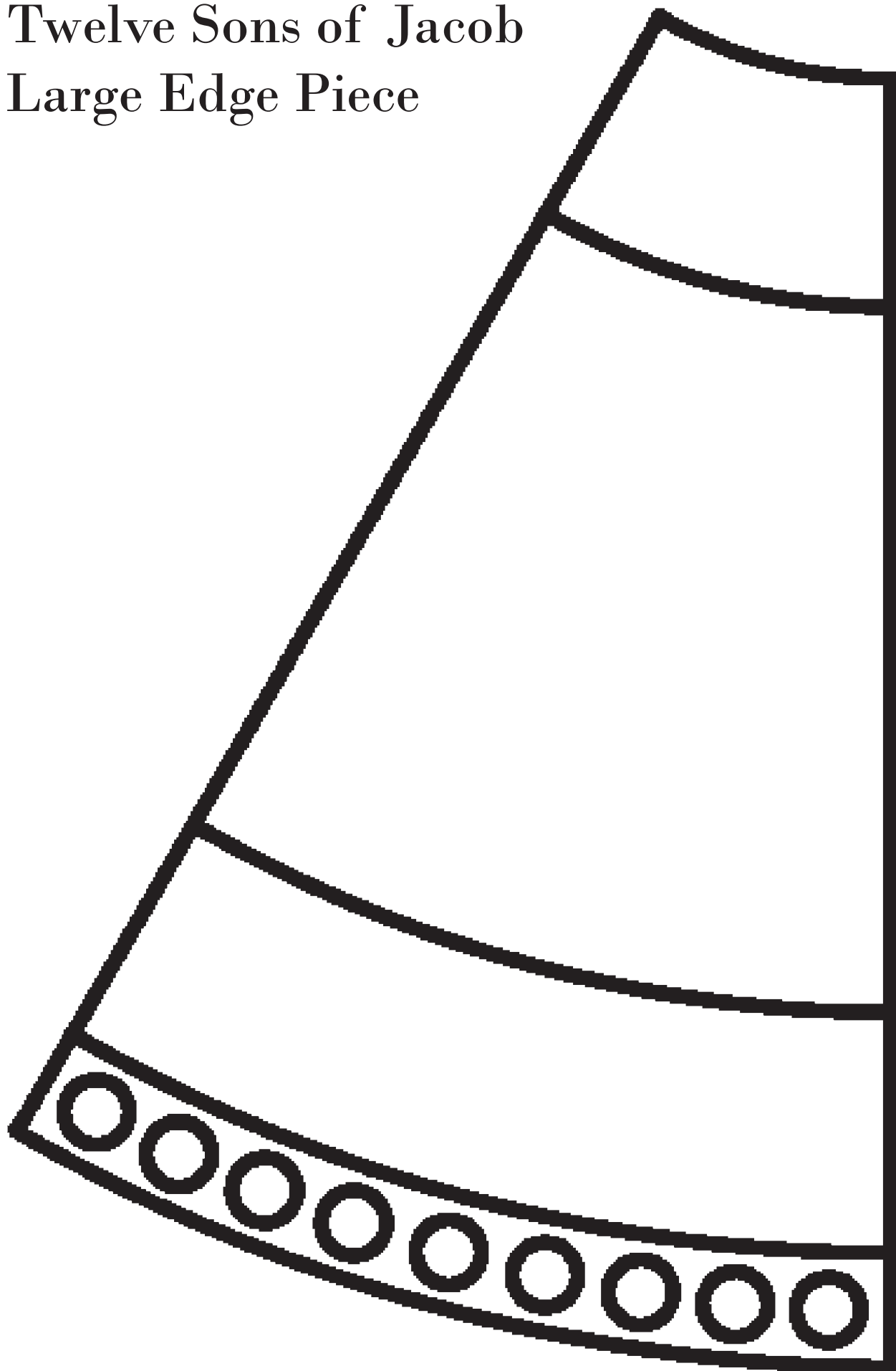
	Son	Passages	Meaning of Name Itself	Spiritual or Inner Meaning	Picture Ideas
	Reuben	Genesis 29:32 Genesis 49:3-4	see, a son	faith – seeing truth	troubled water
	Simeon	Genesis 29:33 Genesis 49:5-7	hearing	obedience to truth	sword, ear
	Levi	Genesis 29:34 Genesis 49:5-7	joined, attached, associated	charity	sword
	Judah	Genesis 29:35 Genesis 49:8-12	Jehovah be praised, praise	loving the Lord	lion cub (whelp)
	Dan	Genesis 30:5-6 Genesis 49:16-18	judge or judgment	temptation about what is true and what is false	snake or scales (for judgment)
	Naphtali	Genesis 30:7-8 Genesis 49:21	struggle, wrestling	temptation about what is good and what is evil	deer
	Gad	Genesis 30:10-11 Genesis 49:19	a troop of warriors, good fortune	doing good things	soldiers or tents
	Asher	Genesis 30:12-13 Genesis 49:20	blessedness	happiness	bread
	Issachar	Genesis 30:17-18 Genesis 49:14-15	a hired person	love for other people – mutual love	donkey
	Zebulun	Genesis 30:19-20 Genesis 49:13	dwelling	knowing truth combined with caring for others	shoreline or ship
	Joseph	Genesis 30:22-24 Genesis 49:22-24	increasing, fruitful	love or caring that leads to insight and understanding	branch with fruit
	Benjamin	Genesis 35:16-18 Genesis 49:27	son of sorrow (Benoni); son of the right hand (Benjamin)	insight or understanding that supports a wise love for others	wolf

The Twelve Sons of Jacob
Large Center

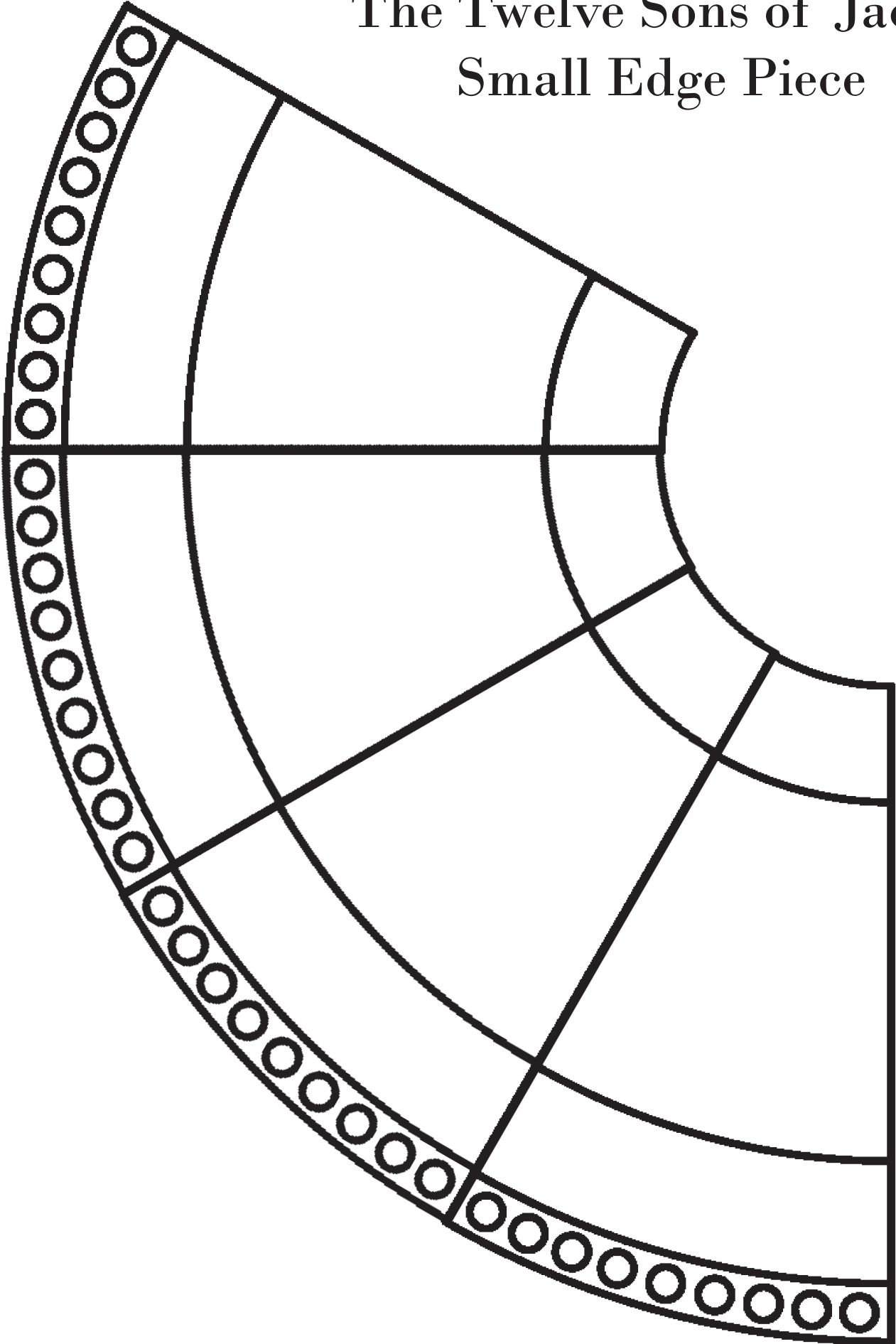


The Twelve Sons of Jacob

Large Edge Piece



The Twelve Sons of Jacob
Small Edge Piece



The Twelve Sons of Jacob

Small Center

