

## 11.09a Joseph's Brothers' Second Visit (Genesis 43:1–34)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows  
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

### Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- (optional) Flash cards from “Joseph,” Genesis Series 5, A Beka Book, Pensacola, FL
- (optional) Herein Is Love Commentary Series; *Genesis, A Commentary for Children*, by Nancy Ganz, Shepherd Press, 2002
- Balm (or resin from a balsam tree), honey, aromatic gum (spices in paste form); myrrh (or chestnuts), pistachio nuts, and almonds (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/balm/>)

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *surety*: a person who takes responsibility for the welfare of someone else
- *bereaved*: to be deprived of a loved one because of death or absence
- *steward*: a job like the one Joseph had had in Potiphar's house: overseer of all the household

### Scripture (NASB)

Genesis 43:1 Now the famine was severe in the land. 2 So it came about when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, “Go back, buy us a little food.” 3 Judah spoke to him, however, saying, “The man solemnly warned us, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’ 4 If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. 5 But if you do not send *him*, we will not go down; for the man said to us, ‘You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.’” 6 Then Israel said, “Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man whether you still had *another* brother?” 7 But they said, “The man questioned particularly about us and our relatives, saying, ‘Is your father still alive? Have you *another* brother?’ So we answered his questions. Could we possibly know that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’” 8 Judah said to his father Israel, “Send the lad with me and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones. 9 I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him *back* to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever. 10 For if we had not delayed, surely by now we could have returned twice.”

11 Then their father Israel said to them, “If *it must be* so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. 12 Take double *the* money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was a mistake. 13 Take your brother also, and arise, return to the man; 14 and may God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of the man, so that he will release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.” 15 So the men took this present, and they took double *the* money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, “Bring the men into the house, and slay an animal and make ready; for the men are to dine with me at noon.” 17 So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house. 18 Now the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house; and they said, “*It is* because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, and take us for slaves with our donkeys.” 19 So they came near to Joseph's house steward, and spoke to him at the entrance of the house, 20 and said, “Oh, my lord,

we indeed came down the first time to buy food, 21 and it came about when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and behold, each man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full. So we have brought it back in our hand. 22 We have also brought down other money in our hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money in our sacks." 23 He said, "Be at ease, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them. 24 Then the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys fodder. 25 So they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there.

When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present which was in their hand and bowed to the ground before him. 27 Then he asked them about their welfare, and said, "Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" 28 They said, "Your servant our father is well; he is still alive." They bowed down in homage. 29 As he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, he said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "May God be gracious to you, my son." 30 Joseph hurried *out* for he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he sought *a place* to weep; and he entered his chamber and wept there. 31 Then he washed his face and came out; and he controlled himself and said, "Serve the meal." 32 So they served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome to the Egyptians. 33 Now they were seated before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at one another in astonishment. 34 He took portions to them from his own table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

### **Introduction/Review:**

When Jacob's ten sons, not including Benjamin, had gone to Egypt to buy grain, Joseph had treated them harshly, accusing them of being spies. In order to prove their innocence, the brothers were to bring back their youngest brother. In the meantime, Joseph kept Simeon in prison until the brothers' return.

Jacob, upon hearing this report, stoutly refused to send Benjamin the next time the journey to Egypt might be necessary.

### **Story:**

The famine continued in Canaan as well as in Egypt. The food purchased by Jacob's sons had been eaten. It was time for a necessary trip to Egypt. Jacob said to his sons, "Go back; buy us a little food."

#### ***Judah entreats Jacob***

However, Judah took courage and reminded his father of the situation by saying, "The man solemnly warned us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' Now, Father, if you send Benjamin with us, we will go down and buy you food. But if you do not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

"Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man whether you still had another brother?" asked Jacob (who is called *Israel* in this passage).

But the sons answered, "The man questioned particularly about us and our relatives. He asked, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' So we answered his questions. Could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the lad\* with me and we will arise and go. If we don't go soon, you, we sons, and our little ones will certainly die. I will be surety for Benjamin and be responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you, then I will bear the blame before you forever. We cannot delay any longer. We should have returned already."

#### ***Jacob sends Benjamin***

Israel/Jacob responded reluctantly, “If that’s the way it must be, then take some of the best products of our land and carry them to the man as a gift. Take a little balm (or resin, pronounced “RAW-zin”) and a little honey, aromatic gum (or spices) and myrrh (or chestnuts), pistachio nuts and almonds (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/genesis-43-11.html>). Take the money found in your sacks and enough to buy more grain this time. Take your brother also. Return to the man, and may God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of the man so that he will release Simeon and Benjamin. As for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.”

So the men took the gift of balm, honey, aromatic gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. They took double the money, and they took Benjamin. They journeyed ten to twelve days to Egypt and again stood before Joseph.

***The steward prepares*** [Teacher, at each speech of Joseph, perhaps you could speak gibberish, pretending to speak Egyptian. Then say, “This means—” and go on with the speech.]

Joseph, upon seeing Benjamin, directed his house steward in Egyptian, “Bring the men to my house. Slay an animal and prepare it for dinner. These men will dine with me at noon.”

The house steward followed Joseph’s instructions and brought the brothers to Joseph’s house. ✓Imagine the fear arising in the hearts of these Hebrews. After all, they looked like thieves because of the money found in their sacks, they had been accused of being spies, and now they were to dine with the highest official of Egypt?! What was happening?

They said, “It’s because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in. This man is looking for an offence against us. He will arrest us, take away our donkeys, and make us slaves.”

The brothers ventured near Joseph’s house steward and spoke to him at the entrance of the house. “Oh, my lord, we came to Egypt the first time to buy food, but when we left and lodged for the night, we opened our sacks and found our money in the mouth of the sacks—all the money we had paid. So we have brought it back to you. We have also brought more money to buy more food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.”

The house steward assured these frightened men, saying, “Don’t be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money.”

Then the man got Simeon from the prison and invited them all into Joseph’s house. He gave them water, and they washed their feet. The steward also gave their donkeys food. As for the brothers, they got their gifts ready for Joseph, for they had heard he was coming back and they were to eat a noonday meal there.

### ***Joseph entertains his brothers***

When Joseph came home, the brothers brought him the gifts of balm, honey, aromatic gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. As they presented their gifts, they bowed to the ground.

This high official asked them how they were and enquired, “Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” Oh, this Egyptian was being kind!

They answered, “Your servant our father is well; yes, he is still alive.” Then they bowed down again in honor.

Joseph looked and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother’s son. He asked, “Is this your youngest brother of whom you spoke to me?”

“Yes, it is.”

So Joseph said, as usual, with an interpreter, “May God be gracious to you, my son.” At that point, Joseph had to hurry out of the room because he was overcome with emotion at seeing Benjamin. In fact, Joseph was weeping; so he entered his private room where he could weep without notice.

Gathering himself together, he washed his face and came out and controlled himself. He announced, “Serve the meal.”

Now, the arrangements for this meal were interesting. There were three different areas in which the people ate: Joseph by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians by themselves. Why this arrangement? Because the custom of the Egyptians was not to eat with Hebrews, for to eat with Hebrews was loathsome to Egyptians. Yet, the brothers, ✓probably not knowing this custom or thinking Joseph was in a higher class than the other Egyptians, did not know why Joseph ate by himself.

Another interesting thing about this meal was the arrangement of the brothers themselves. They were seated exactly by age, oldest to youngest: [Teacher, point as if noting each person around a table as you sing these names from the “Jacob” song,\*\* stanza 4.] Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, and Benjamin. Still clueless, the brothers looked at each other in astonishment. Was it a coincidence that they had been placed so accurately?

Joseph sent to the brothers portions of food from his own table, but he sent to Benjamin five times as much food as he did to any of the others. Hmmm.

So they all had a good old time, feasting freely. Everything was good—no worries, right? Wrong.

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\*“Judah calls Benjamin a lad, because the youngest brother, and tenderly brought up by his father, who had an affectionate fondness for him as if he had been a child; otherwise he must be thirty-two years of age, for he was seven years younger than Joseph, who was now thirty-nine years of age; yea, Benjamin must have children of his own, who went with him and his father into Egypt, (Genesis 46:21); for the computation of Benjamin's age, see Genesis 30:22; 31:41; 35:18; 37:2; 41:40, 53, 54; 45:6”

(<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/genesis-43-8.html>).

\*\*The “Jacob” song is found at Lesson 10.01 or on the Songs page at [teachingthebibletochildren.org](http://teachingthebibletochildren.org).

### **Lessons from this lesson:**

- We see Jesus  
Judah was surety for Benjamin. Jesus is surety for His people: He took their punishment in their place (Hebrews 7:15–22).
- The brothers brought back the money they found in their sacks, knowing it really didn’t belong to them. We should be honest in money dealings; *e.g.*, when getting back too much change.

### **Activities:**

- Play dough: nuts, donkeys, coins, food on a plate
- Snack: something with a little honey and/or pistachio nuts and almonds. A recipe for Honey Roasted Almonds is found at <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/229881/honey-roasted-almonds/>.
- Taste or smell the items Jacob sent for a gift: balm, honey, aromatic gum (sometimes translated spices), myrrh (sometimes translated chestnuts), pistachio nuts, and almonds. A substitute suggestion for balm might be ✓Vicks<sup>®</sup> ointment; for aromatic gum, a vegetable broth base; for myrrh, canned water chestnuts.
- With older students, use play money to transact pretend business, having students count back change.
- With visuals from Lesson 10.04 or the clipart sons found below, see if students can put the sons of Jacob in birth order from oldest to youngest: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, (Joseph), and Benjamin. Sing the “Jacob” song, stanza 4, to help remember the birth order. For more action and connection with today’s lesson, have the students put the men in order

around a table.

- Practice bowing to the ground with head on the ground.
- Sing stanzas 1–5 of “Joseph,” found at Lesson 11.01 or on the Songs page at [teachingthebibleto kids.org](http://teachingthebibleto kids.org), where an audio and a visual are available.
- If you did not show the seven-minute video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBDdbDeepyS4>) about Joseph’s silos and grain distribution suggested in Lesson 11.06, show it today.
- Review questions: (Game: A student who answers a question correctly may practice bowing down to the ground. Or print the page with the brothers’ names, back with paper towel, and cut out. A correct answer allows a student to place the brother on the flannel board, hopefully in the correct birth order.)
  1. When Jacob told his sons to go buy food in Egypt, who spoke up about taking Benjamin? [Judah.]
  2. Judah promised Jacob what about Benjamin? [To be his surety.]
  3. What did Jacob send with his sons as gifts to the man in Egypt? [Products that were the best from his land: balm, honey, aromatic gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. (Students do not need to name them all.)]
  4. How much money did the brothers take? [Double—the money from the first visit as well as enough for buying during their second visit.]
  5. Name two things Joseph’s house steward did for the men. [Brought the men into the house; prepared a dinner for them; brought Simeon out; brought water; fed donkeys; reassured them they had paid for grain during the first visit.]
  6. What did the brothers do when Joseph came home at noon? [Brought him their gifts and bowed to the ground.]
  7. What was Joseph’s first question of his brothers? [“Is your father still alive?”]
  8. When Joseph saw Benjamin, what did he do? [Said, “God be gracious to you, my son” and went to his room to weep.]
  9. Tell two things about the seating arrangements at Joseph’s dinner. [Joseph was by himself; the brothers were by themselves; the Egyptians were by themselves; the brothers were all seated in birth order.]
  10. How did Joseph show favor to Benjamin? [Gave him five times as much food as his other brothers.]

#### **Memory Verse[s]:** (NASB)

- Genesis 43:14o—May God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of [others].

#### **Handwork:**

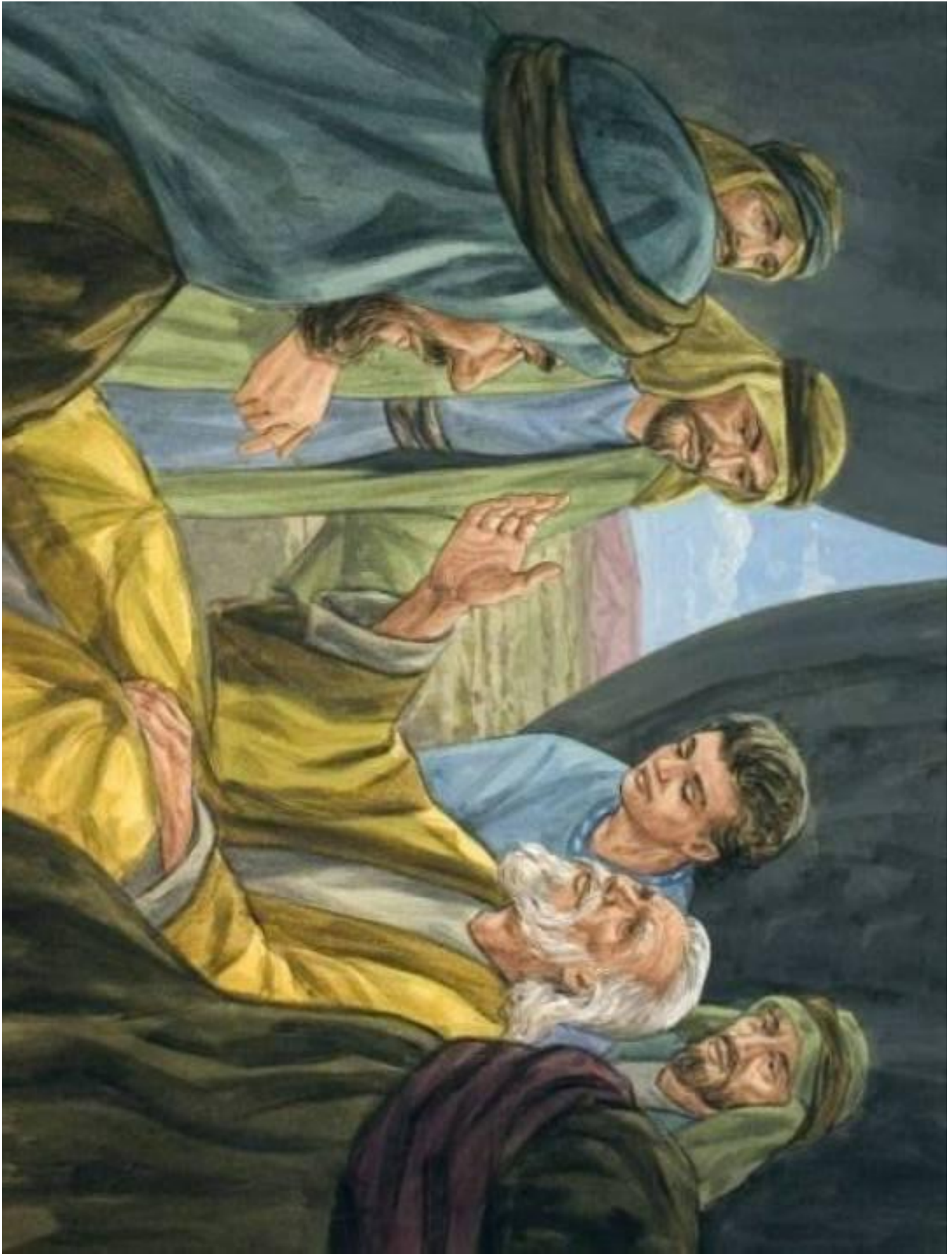
- Print the clipart sons found below for each student. Have students color and cut out (in rough rectangles is okay). They may print the number order on the back of the picture: 1 Reuben; 2 Simeon; 3 Levi; 4 Judah; 5 Dan; 6 Naphtali; 7 Gad; 8 Asher; 9 Issachar; 10 Zebulon; 11 (Joseph); 12 Benjamin. Students may practice putting the sons in order, trying not to look at the birth-order numbers. (Joseph is included with the other brothers so that this activity might be used in other lessons.)

**surety**

**bereaved**

**steward**







<https://www.gilberthouse.org/2015/03/gilbert-house-fellowship-20-genesis-43-47/>





<https://sceanutgallery.com/2016/04/14/daily-reading-14-april-joseph-the-brothers-return-genesis-43-44-family-intervention/>





