

Community Bible Church

The Book of Genesis

Chapter 44

This week's study in **Genesis chapter 44** is the third of a four-chapter account of Joseph and his eleven brothers. This chapter takes place in Egypt, over twenty years after Joseph was sold as a slave to an Egyptian family. Joseph has learned much and has grown in his faith during these twenty years. As his brothers travel to Egypt during a famine to purchase food, God is taking them through a process of repentance, forgiveness and spiritual growth. Joseph has risen to a high government position in Egypt, but the brothers have yet to recognize him as they negotiate a food purchase. Recall that the overarching theme of this narrative is much greater than just a family drama during a time of famine. God is preparing this family to be the founders of the nation of Israel and He is maturing them for this role. From these twelve brothers will come the twelve tribes of Israel, which will emerge from Egypt after several centuries to form this nation. And it is out of Israel that God will ultimately bring the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, the hope of our salvation. We are reading the history of God's redemptive plan for the nations. **Chapter 44** can be divided into two sections:

The Plot (Confrontation) 44:1-13
The Plea (Confession) 44:14-34

1. **Chapter 43** concludes with a description of a banquet in Joseph's home prior to the return of the brothers to Canaan. Read **44:1-3** and describe how Joseph prepared them for their return trip.
2. What does Joseph instruct his main servant to do in **44:4-5**?
3. What happens next in **44:6-12**? What are the response and emotions of these brothers in **44:13**? Why might they have been so distraught? (See **43:8-9** from last week's lesson).
4. This question is somewhat speculative, but what might have been Joseph's motivation in this plot, and what was he attempting to have the brothers learn from this episode?

5. Read **44:14-16**. What evidence do you notice that might indicate the brothers are beginning to develop humility, an understanding of their sin and a focus on God ?

6. Were the brothers content with Joseph's directions in **44:17**?

7. In **44:18-34**. Judah steps forward and responds to Joseph's directions. He recounts the previous dialogue with his father, Jacob, while they were back in Canaan, and reveals Jacob's love for both Joseph and Benjamin. He explains Jacob's concern regarding sending young Benjamin to Egypt and his offer to act as surety for Benjamin. Recall that Judah was the brother who originally suggested they sell Joseph in **chapter 37** and was also involved in sexual immorality in **chapter 38**.

How did Judah respond to Joseph in **44:33**?

Do you see any evidence of God's grace and life-change in Judah?

In what ways do you sense Judah's love and concern for his father in this passage?

Does Joseph's plan of dealing with his brothers so far seem to be having an impact on the brothers?

8. What are ways in which we may have to encounter hard and difficult circumstances in order to come to a point where our character and our attitudes are changed by God and our lives become more in conformity with bringing Him honor and glory?

