

Genesis 44

Verses 1- 5

Then he commanded his house steward, saying, “Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in the opening of his sack. ² And put my cup, the silver cup, in the opening of the sack of the youngest, and his money for the grain.” And he did as Joseph had told *him*. ³ As soon as it was light, the men were sent away, they with their donkeys. ⁴ They had *just* left the city, *and* were not far away, when Joseph said to his house steward, “Up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you repaid evil for good? ⁵ Is this not *that* from which my lord drinks, and which he indeed uses for divination? You have done wrong in doing this!’”

Then he commanded his house steward,

This time Joseph had the steward put every man’s money in the opening of their sack

And put my cup, the silver cup, in the opening of the sack of the youngest

Why did Joseph do this?

Perhaps to find out if his brothers hatred their father's favorite son Benjamin

If given the opportunity, would they abandon Benjamin?

The partiality shown to Benjamin at the banquet may have been part of the test

When you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you repaid evil for good? ⁵ Is this not *that* from which my lord drinks, and which he indeed uses for divination? You have done wrong in doing this!’”

Did Joseph really practice divination or was this just a ploy?

It seems unlikely since he told the baker and cupbearer that the interpretation of dreams belongs to God

And when the king had his dream none of the soothsayer priests, or any of the wise men was able to interpret the dream

Verses 6-13

⁶ So he overtook them and spoke these words to them. ⁷ And they said to him, “Why does my lord say such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing! ⁸ Behold, the money which we found in the opening of our sacks we have brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house? ⁹ With whomever of your servants it is found, he shall die, and we also shall be my lord’s slaves.” ¹⁰ So he said, “Now let it indeed be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, but *the rest of you shall be considered* innocent.” ¹¹ Then they hurried, each man lowered his sack to the ground, and each man opened his sack. ¹² And he searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. ¹³ Then they tore their clothes *in grief*, and when each man had loaded his donkey, they returned to the city.

With whomever of your servants it is found, he shall die, and we also shall be my lord’s slaves

Joseph wanted to provide them with a chance to abandon Benjamin

This way he would find out if they had truly repented of their sin

Now let it indeed be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, but *the rest of you shall be considered innocent*.

What the steward said was not according to their words

But why argue with someone when they make you a better offer

Then they tore their clothes *in grief*, and when each man had loaded his donkey, they returned to the city.

The brothers had passed part of the test with flying colors

Instead of returning home without Benjamin, they went back to the city, to defend and support Benjamin

Verses 14-17

¹⁴ When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, he was still there, and they fell down to the ground before him. ¹⁵ Joseph said to them, "What is this thing that you have done? Do you not know that a man who is like me can indeed practice divination?" ¹⁶ So Judah said, "What can we say to my lord? What *words* can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; behold, we are my lord's slaves, both we and the one in whose possession the cup has been found." ¹⁷ But he said, "Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father."

Do you not know that a man who is like me can indeed practice divination?

It wasn't divination, but a well-designed plan that snared his brothers

So Judah said, "What can we say to my lord? What *words* can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves?"

Judah had the leadership role so he spoke all of them

God has found out the guilt of your servants

The sons of Jacob had abused Joseph and they believed this current distress was a result of that wrong

Admitting they did wrong was the 1st step toward repentance

The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father."

Joseph was still testing his brothers

They again had the opportunity to leave Benjamin and return to their father

But they refused to do so

Verses 18-34

¹⁸ Then Judah approached him and said, “Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord’s ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh. ¹⁹ My lord asked his servants, saying, ‘Have you a father or a brother?’ ²⁰ And we said to my lord, ‘We have an old father and a little boy *born in our father’s* old age. Now his brother is dead, so he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.’ ²¹ Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me so that I may set my eyes on him.’ ²² But we said to my lord, ‘The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.’ ²³ You said to your servants, however, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.’ ²⁴ So it came about when we went up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. ²⁵ And our father said, ‘Go back, buy us a little food.’ ²⁶ But we said, ‘We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’ ²⁷ Then your servant my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons; ²⁸ and the one left me, and I said, “Surely he is torn to pieces,” and I have not seen him since. ²⁹ If you also take this one from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.’ ³⁰ So now, when I come to your servant, my father, and the boy is not with us—since our father’s life is so attached to the boy’s life— ³¹ when he sees that the boy is not *with us*, he will die. So your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant, our father, down to Sheol in sorrow. ³² For your servant accepted responsibility for the boy from my father, saying, ‘If I do not bring him *back* to you, then my father can let me take the blame forever.’ ³³ So now, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord instead of the boy, and let the boy go up with his brothers. ³⁴ For how shall I go up to my father if the boy is not with me? *I fear that I may see the evil that would overtake my father.*”

So now, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord instead of the boy, and let the boy go up with his brothers.

What a transformation had occurred in the life of Judah!

Years earlier he had suggested selling Joseph for money and now he is willing to give his own life in place of his brother's

Judah had become like Christ, the one who brought reconciliation

Jesus Christ would be called "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah."