




Genesis 44:1-34

**Note: There was no Sunday school 11/8/09, and there will be no Sunday school 11/22 or 11/29.*

Understanding the Book of Genesis is essential to understanding the rest of the bible and the world as it is today. Genesis 44 is still about Joseph, and we see why he did what he did, why he went so far to be nice to his brothers who treated him so poorly in the past. These brothers are going to become the tribe of Israel that God would use later in the history of the world, even to today. God tested the brothers thoroughly.

- 1 ¶ **And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.** The brothers have to come to Egypt for the second time for food, this time with the youngest brother Benjamin, and the father Israel is worried to death that something bad will happen to his youngest son.
- 2 **And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his grain money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.** Joseph had a special cup, as many of us do, but Joseph ordered his special cup and his money to be put in Benjamin's grain sack.
- 3 **As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.**
- 4 **And when they were gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?** Joseph let the brothers get outside the city gates, and then ordered his steward to track them down and ask them why do they repay good deeds with evil deeds? Joseph had to know what his brothers were thinking.
- 5 **Is not this that in which my lord drinks, and whereby he indeed divines? ye have done evil in so doing.** In those times, magic men and wise men used a special cup to tell the future, not to drink from it. They "divined" with their special cups, even though it is forbidden in the bible. We don't think Joseph used divination, but word got around that Joseph could tell the future, probably with his dreams and more. The Egyptians revered him, and they thought he used this special silver cup. That's just what the Egyptians thought; it's not what Joseph did. It doesn't matter what was happening; we know Joseph was close with the Lord.
- 6 **And he overtook them, and he spoke unto them these words.**
- 7 **And they said unto him, Wherefore speak my lord such words as these? Far be it from thy servants that they should do such a thing.** The brothers respond to the steward, "Why are you accusing us of stealing from Joseph? We just had a nice meal with him.
- 8 **Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold?** We brought the money back that we found in our sacks last time. If we did that, why would we steal his silver cup?"
- 9 **With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.** Be careful of making oaths.
- 10 **And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my bondman; and ye shall be blameless.** The one with the cup will become the servant.
- 11 **Then they hastened, and took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack.**
- 12 **And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left off at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.** Notice the pressure the steward puts on the brothers: he starts with the eldest knowing the cup is in the youngest's sack. Can you imagine how those brothers felt, knowing how their father felt about Benjamin? And they just made an oath to kill the one who stole the cup!
- 13 **Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.**

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- 14 And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; and he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground.** The brothers were returned to the city, and again they fall on their knees to Joseph, just like his dreams foretold. You can humble yourself, or God will do it for you.
- 15 And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? Know ye not that such a man as I can indeed divine?** Joseph tells them "Why do you do stuff like this? I can see where you are, what you are doing, and what you are thinking." Joseph has their lives in his hands now.
- 16 And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's bondmen, both we, and he also in whose hand the cup is found.** Here is one of the greatest confessions in the whole bible. Judah finally admits the bad things were that they've been doing. He asks how they can be spared.
- 17 And he said, Far be it from me that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my bondman; but as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.** Joseph says Benjamin has to stay here and be his servant, and the brothers must leave immediately.
- 18 ¶ Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh.** Judah came to have a private conversation with Joseph. Judah says "Please don't be mad at me. I know you are the second most powerful leader in the world at this time. I know you can kill me in an instant." He's begging now.
- 19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?**
- 20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother; and his father loves him.** Judah tells Joseph that their brother Joseph is dead.
- 21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.**
- 22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.**
- 23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.** Joseph had given them strict orders to not show up again without their youngest brother.
- 24 And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.** We explained to dad what you said, and we did what you ordered.
- 25 And our father said, Go again, buy us a little food.**
- 26 And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down; for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.** They told dad they can't go back to Egypt for food without their youngest brother or they would be killed.
- 27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:**
- 28 and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I have not seen him since:**
- 29 and if ye take this one also from me, and harm befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol (the grave).** If anything happens to Benjamin, the father will die, because he already lost one son (Joseph), and he couldn't bear to lose another.
- 30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad is not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; My dad lives for this boy.**
- 31 it will come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not *with us*, that he will die: and thy servants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to Sheol (the grave).**
- 32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then shall I bear the blame to my father for ever.** Judah said he'd take the blame and live with it for the rest of his life if they took Benjamin to Egypt and live with it for the rest of his life.
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- 33 Now therefore, let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.** Judah says, take me instead of Benjamin. I'll be your servant instead.
- 34 For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? lest I see the evil that shall come on my father.** I can't go home without Benjamin and witness the grief on my dad's face again. I couldn't bear it, and neither could he.

This is about God's redemption of the nation of Israel. When Jesus Christ came to Israel, they rejected him and sold him. When Jesus Christ comes back, they see the marks on his hands, and the Israelites wonder how he got the marks, and Jesus Christ said, "It is from you. You sold me and I got these marks on my hands." Joseph's story is parallel: his brothers rejected him, the brothers are not recognizing him, the brothers are tried and tested, and the redemption is coming to give birth to the nation of Israel. The brothers still don't know who Joseph is, and when Jesus Christ comes back in the tribulation, 2/3 of mankind will die. The Israelites will not recognize Him then, either.