

BOOK OF GENESIS

GENESIS 44

VERSES 1-13	ADDED TEXTUAL NOTES, QUESTIONS, OTHER
<p>1 Now Joseph gave these instructions to the steward of his house: "Fill the men's sacks with as much food as they can carry, and put each man's silver in the mouth of his sack. 2 Then put my cup, the silver one, in the mouth of the youngest one's sack, along with the silver for his grain." And he did as Joseph said. 3 As morning dawned, the men were sent on their way with their donkeys. 4 They had not gone far from the city when Joseph said to his steward, "Go after those men at once, and when you catch up with them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid good with evil? 5 Isn't this the cup my master drinks from and also uses for divination? This is a wicked thing you have done.'" 6 When he caught up with them, he repeated these words to them. 7 But they said to him, "Why does my lord say such things? Far be it from your servants to do anything like that! 8 We even brought back to you from the land of Canaan the silver we found inside the mouths of our sacks. So why would we steal silver or gold from your master's house? 9 If any of your servants is found to have it, he will die; and the rest of us will become my lord's slaves." 10 "Very well, then," he</p>	<p>Verse 1 - Joseph plants his silver cup in Benjamin's sack—the ultimate test. This recreates the exact scenario from 20+ years ago: one favored brother in danger, the other brothers able to save themselves by abandoning him. How is this the climactic test of their transformation?</p> <p>Vv. 7-13 - The brothers confidently assert their innocence: "We even brought back the silver!" They stake their lives on their integrity. But when the cup is found, what does their response reveal? They tear their clothes (v. 13) and ALL return—they don't abandon Benjamin! How does this demonstrate genuine transformation?</p>

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said, "let it be as you say. Whoever is found to have it will become my slave; the rest of you will be free from blame." **11** Each of them quickly lowered his sack to the ground and opened it. **12** Then the steward proceeded to search, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. **13** At this, they tore their clothes. Then they all loaded their donkeys and returned to the city.

Notice what the brothers DON'T do: they don't blame Benjamin, don't accuse him of theft, don't abandon him to save themselves, don't argue that only he should be punished. What has changed in 20+ years? Compare to Genesis 37:18-28.

KEY NOTE:

This is Joseph's masterstroke—he recreates the exact conditions of Genesis 37. Then: Joseph was the favored son in danger, they abandoned him to slavery/death. Now: Benjamin is the favored son in danger, they could abandon him and go free (v. 10 says "the rest of you will be free from blame"). But they ALL return (v. 13)! This proves the transformation is REAL. Joseph tests whether they've learned not to fall into animosity when one brother is favored, whether they'll protect Benjamin or abandon him, whether they care more about their father's grief or their own freedom. The test reveals: Envy and hatred NO LONGER rule them. They've become men who value family unity over personal safety. This is evidence of genuine repentance.

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VERSES 14-17	ADDED TEXTUAL NOTES, QUESTIONS, OTHER
<p>14 Joseph was still in the house when Judah and his brothers came in, and they threw themselves to the ground before him. 15 Joseph said to them, "What is this you have done? Don't you know that a man like me can find things out by divination?" 16 "What can we say to my lord?" Judah replied. "What can we say? How can we prove our innocence? God has uncovered your servants' guilt. We are now my lord's slaves—we ourselves and the one who was found to have the cup." 17 But Joseph said, "Far be it from me to do such a thing! Only the man who was found to have the cup will become my slave. The rest of you, go back to your father in peace."</p>	<p>Verse 14- They "threw themselves to the ground before him." Joseph's dreams are fulfilled yet again (37:7, 9). <i>But notice—this time they bow in humility and repentance, not in forced subjugation.</i> How does this fulfill God's purposes differently than the brothers anticipated when they tried to thwart the dreams?</p> <p>Verse 16 - Judah speaks for all the brothers. He doesn't try to prove Benjamin's innocence. Instead he says "God has uncovered YOUR SERVANTS' GUILT." What guilt is Judah talking about? The cup? Or something deeper? (Hint: See 42:21-22—their guilt for selling Joseph)</p> <p>Judah offers: "We are now my lord's slaves—WE OURSELVES and the one who was found to have the cup." ALL the brothers will stay as slaves together. No one is left behind. How is this the opposite of what they did to Joseph in Chapter 37?</p>

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Verse 17- Joseph's response: "Only the man with the cup will be my slave. The rest of you, go back to your father IN PEACE." The word "peace" (shalom) is devastating. There will be NO peace if they return without Benjamin! How does Joseph's statement set up the impossible dilemma that will draw out Judah's great speech?

KEY NOTE:

"God has uncovered your servants' guilt" (v. 16)—Judah sees this crisis as divine justice for their past sins, especially selling Joseph. Though innocent of stealing the cup, they're guilty of far greater sins. This is confession at the deepest level—acknowledging that God is bringing hidden sins to light. Judah's offer for ALL to become slaves together shows radical change: unity, collective responsibility, refusing to abandon a brother. But Joseph pushes further: "Go back to your father in peace" (v. 17). This is impossible! The entire narrative has established that returning without Benjamin = destroying Jacob. Joseph creates an impossible dilemma to draw out the final proof of transformation. Will they abandon Benjamin to save themselves, as they abandoned Joseph?

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	Or will someone step forward to take Benjamin's place? The stage is set for one of the greatest speeches in Scripture.
VERSES 18-34	ADDED TEXTUAL NOTES, QUESTIONS, OTHER
<p>18 Then Judah went up to him and said: "Pardon your servant, my lord, let me speak a word to my lord. Do not be angry with your servant, though you are equal to Pharaoh himself. 19 My lord asked his servants, 'Do you have a father or a brother?' 20 And we answered, 'We have an aged father, and there is a young son born to him in his old age. His brother is dead, and he is the only one of his mother's sons left, and his father loves him.' 21 "Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me so I can see him for myself.' 22 And we said to my lord, 'The boy cannot leave his father; if he leaves him, his father will die.' 23 But you told your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.' 24 When we went back to your servant my father, we told him what my lord had said. 25 "Then our father said, 'Go back and buy a little more food.' 26 But we said, 'We cannot go down. Only if our youngest brother is with us will we go. We cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 27 "Your servant my father</p>	<p>Verses 18-34- This speech is called "the most moving address in all the Word of God" by commentator Donald Grey Barnhouse. What makes it so powerful? Trace Judah's argument: he recounts the family history, his father's grief, his personal guarantee, and finally his offer to substitute himself. How does each element build toward the climax?</p> <p>Verse 33- "Please let your servant remain here as my lord's SLAVE in place of the boy." This is SUBSTITUTIONARY SACRIFICE—Judah offering to take Benjamin's punishment, to bear his blame, to die in his place (slavery = death). How does this foreshadow Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who would take OUR place?</p> <p>Verse 34- The final question: "How can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? No! Do not let me see the misery that</p>

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said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. **28** One of them went away from me, and I said, "He has surely been torn to pieces." And I have not seen him since. **29** If you take this one from me too and harm comes to him, you will bring my gray head down to the grave in misery.' **30** "So now, if the boy is not with us when I go back to your servant my father, and if my father, whose life is closely bound up with the boy's life, **31** sees that the boy isn't there, he will die. Your servants will bring the gray head of our father down to the grave in sorrow. **32** Your servant guaranteed the boy's safety to my father. I said, 'If I do not bring him back to you, I will bear the blame before you, my father, all my life!' **33** "Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord's slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers. **34** How can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? No! Do not let me see the misery that would come on my father."

would come on my father." Judah would rather spend his life as a slave in Egypt than see his father grieve. How does this selfless love prove genuine transformation?

KEY NOTE:

The same man who sold Joseph for profit now offers himself as a slave to save Benjamin. The same man who showed no concern for his father's grief (37:31-35) now cannot bear the thought of causing Jacob pain. The same man who fell into severe moral failure (Ch 38) now displays heroic virtue. What caused this change?

God's mercy and kindness. Judah encountered God's grace in Genesis 38 when Tamar confronted him and he confessed "She is more righteous than I" (38:26). God's kindness leads to repentance (Romans 2:4). Judah's offer to substitute himself is a prophetic picture of Jesus Christ. The Hebrew word for "blame" literally means "sin"—Judah says "I will bear the SIN forever." This foreshadows Jesus bearing our sin on the cross. Judah becomes surety—guaranteeing Benjamin's safety with his own life. Jesus is our surety (Hebrews 7:22)—guaranteeing our salvation with His life. Jesus, descended from Judah, (Revelation 5:5). Just as Judah offered to die in Benjamin's place, Jesus died in OUR place.

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