

## **Day 41 - FRIDAY: December 9th**

### Genesis 44

#### Genesis 44:1-34 NKJV

And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. When they had gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.' " So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. And they said to him, "Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing. Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves." And he said, "Now also let it be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless." Then each man speedily let down his sack

to the ground, and each opened his sack. So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city. So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he was still there; and they fell before him on the ground. And Joseph said to them, "What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?" Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found." But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father." Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, who is young; his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' And we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' But you said to your servants, 'Unless your

youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.' "So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, 'Go back and buy us a little food.' But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; and the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since. But if you take this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.' "Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, it will happen, when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.' Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?"

**Daily Deep Dive:**

Verse 2 – What was this silver cup? Jamieson–Faucet–Brown commentary states “It was a large goblet, as the original denotes, highly valued by its owner, on account of its costly material or its elegant finish and which had probably graced his table at the sumptuous entertainment of the previous day.”

Verse 5 – Joseph asks his servant to ask if they stole the master’s cup, the one he uses to practice divination?

Jamieson–Faucet–Brown commentary states “Divination by cups, to ascertain the course of futurity, was one of the prevalent superstitions of ancient Egypt, as it is of Eastern countries still. It is not likely that Joseph, a pious believer in the true God, would have addicted himself to this superstitious practice. But he might have availed himself of that popular notion to carry out the successful execution of his stratagem for the last decisive trial of his brethren”

We certainly know that this is not a practice that God accepts, the Hebrew word used here that is translated “practices divination” is the same word used in both:

**Lev 19:26** 'You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying.

**Deu 18:10** There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, *or*

*one* who practices witchcraft, *or* a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,

Here's what the UCG reading program states: "When Joseph's servant confronts the brothers for their alleged crime, he is told to ask, "Is not this [the cup] from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination?" (verse 5). Did Joseph really use the cup for prognostication or the interpretation of omens? That would surely not have been approved of by God. About the cup of divination, the *Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Commentary* remarks:

"Divination by cups, to ascertain the course of futurity, was one of the prevalent superstitions of ancient Egypt, as it is of Eastern countries still. It is not likely that Joseph, a pious believer in the true God, would have addicted himself to this superstitious practice. But he might have availed himself of that popular *notion* to carry out the successful execution of his stratagem for the last decisive trial of his brethren" (note on verse 5). In other words, Joseph may have allowed them to *think* he practiced divination with this cup to instill more fear in them—as it would look to them like they would be charged with the theft of something of great importance in Egypt.

Also notice that Joseph did not order his steward to tell a direct lie—rather, he simply told him to ask a question. The real answer would have been no. But the brothers didn't know this.” [END]

Verse 9 – We must be careful with rash statements.

Sometimes strange things happen, and we would be wise to not put ourselves in a position that is not necessary.

Verse 12 – Imagine the emotional swings contained in these verses. The excitement they must have felt as they initially left Egypt with all their brothers and excited to return to their father. Then to be overtaken by force and scared. Then each man must have been so relieved as their sack was opened, searched and found innocent. The excitement and relief must have built all the way until the last son Benjamin opened his sack.

Verse 13 – This is now the third time in the Bible we find the practice of tearing one's clothes as a sign of extreme grief. The first example was when Reuben returned and found the pit that had once contained Joseph empty (Gen 37:29), the second was when Jacob believed that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal (Gen 37:34) and now here.

Every culture has customs that outwardly show our internal grief. In our modern culture we in the United States often wear black to a funeral and widows often wear a black veil over their face.

In these ancient cultures, tearing of one's clothes, often marked times of extreme grief, shock or shame.

In Joel 2:13 we see the connection made between tearing one's clothes to what God truly desires, the heart to be torn, not simply the clothes.

**Joe 2:13** So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He *is* gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

We even see the practice done by Paul & Barnabas in Act 14:14.

Verse 16 – After returning to Joseph we see Judah tell him that there is nothing more they can say, they are guilty of having the cup and Judah claims that it is a punishment from God on them for their sin and he tells Joseph that they are all his slaves (not just Benjamin).

Verses 18 through 34 – Judah lays out the whole story to Joseph (including the promise to return Benjamin safely to their father) and at last Judah offers himself as slave in place of Benjamin. Judah has grown and matured into the spokesman and a sacrificial servant.