

JOSEPH TESTS HIS BROTHERS — GENESIS 44

JOSEPH AGAIN PUTS MONEY IN HIS BROTHERS SACKS

v.1-5

- As before, the grain sacks of the brothers are topped off by the money they paid for the grain, but this time, Joseph has his special silver cup put in the sack of Benjamin.
- Joseph is still testing his brothers to see if their jealousy and aggression against his full brother (Rachel's children) is finished.
- The brothers left Egypt in high spirits. They were treated well, had their sacks full of grain, and Simeon was out of prison. Nothing horrible happened to Benjamin. But wait! The brothers will be accused of stealing.

THE BROTHERS CLAIM THEY ARE INNOCENT OF THEFT

v.6-10

- The brothers confidently stated they did not have the cup. They had a healthy trust in each other.
- The brothers promise was not only rash but foolish since the contents of their sacks had surprised them previously.

THE CUP IS FOUND IN BENJAMIN'S SACK

v.11-13

- The steward accused them of theft. He deliberately created tension among them by opening the sack of the oldest first and ending with the youngest.
- Not only was the cup found among them, but it was in Benjamin's sack. The steward knew, of course, that the silver cup was in Benjamin's sack.
- Joseph had set his brothers up with a perfect excuse to abandon Benjamin and free themselves from slavery.
- The brothers did not suspect that they were the victims of fraud any more than Jacob did when his sons gave him Joseph's bloody coat.



THE BROTHERS STICK WITH BENJAMIN EVEN AS SLAVES

v.14-17

- Judah regarded this turn of events as divine condemnation for the brothers' treatment of Joseph and Jacob years earlier.
- Joseph did not divine their theft; he engineered it!
- This resignation to slavery in Egypt is more significant considering these were middle-aged men who came from lives of privilege and status.
- The man who had sold one favored little brother into slavery now offered to become a slave himself to save another favored little brother.

JUDAH TELLS THE WHOLE STORY TO JOSEPH

v.18-32

- This is one of the most moving addresses in the Word of God. It is the longest speech in Genesis.
- Judah appeals to Jacob's old age, and Benjamin's youth.
- The brothers could not return home without Benjamin because they were afraid Jacob would die (Ge.44:30-31).
- 20 years before, Joseph's brothers showed a callous disregard of their father when reporting Joseph's "death" (Ge.37:31-33).
- Judah shows they were now greatly concerned for the feelings and welfare of their father. This is evidence of a change of heart.

JUDAH LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE FOR BENJAMIN AND HIS FATHER

v.33-34

- Judah, the brother who had stepped forward with the plan to sell Joseph (Ge.37:27), now stepped forward to take Benjamin's punishment so that Benjamin could return to their father.
- Judah's evident compassion for Jacob and readiness to substitute himself for Benjamin in slavery finally overwhelmed Joseph (Ge.45:1).
- You can't hide from your sin. Time does not erase the guilt of your sin. Only the blood of Jesus can remove your guilt.