

Brothers Meet Joseph

Joseph 9; Genesis 44:1 – 45:8

By Scott Huckaby

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Genesis 44:1-5, Joseph's Cup

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. ² 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. ³ As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. ⁴ 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? ⁵ Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.'"

What happened when the brothers headed back to Canaan with their grain?

Joseph had their money hidden in the grain sacks yet again and also his silver cup was put in Benjamin's sack. Then he sent his steward after them to bring them back.

Why didn't the brothers check their grain sacks before they left since they had been tricked before?

Such extra ordinary grace was unexpected and people just don't learn the lessons of history so history ends up repeating itself...

Ecclesiastes 1:9 – That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

v2 – What is the significance of Joseph's cup being used to bring the brothers back?

As the cup of Joseph was used to bring the brothers back to him, the cup of Jesus is used to bring us back to Him as we remember what He did for us [112]:

1 Corinthians 11:25 – In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

What is the significance of the cup being silver?

It was a symbol of wealth and power at that time... silver was rare and thus valuable; thus, such a cup was very special (not as if it was part of a set) and would be missed

if lost. So, it showing up in the grain sack of Benjamin would be totally unexpected and disconcerting.

v4 – What is the significance of Benjamin being arrested outside of the city?

As Joseph's full-brother Benjamin was arrested outside the city, so too was Jesus crucified outside the city [113]:

Hebrews 13:12 – Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate

v5 – What is meant by the cup being used for divination?

Apparently, there was a practice of using a cup to somehow discern the will of the gods... you've heard the phrase, "read the tea leaves" ... This comes from the practice of fortune-telling by examining the patterns of tea leaves in the bottom of a cup.

Did Joseph really use his cup for divination?

Probably not... he was still hiding his true identity from his brothers by perpetrating the narrative that he was a pagan Gentile ruler. People know to take the religion of others seriously because it can be very dangerous not to.

v5 – What is the significance of Joseph's cup being an instrument for discerning the will of the gods?

As Joseph's cup was referred to as being an instrument for discerning the will of the gods, Jesus referred to His cup of suffering as the will of the Father [114]:

Matthew 26:39 – He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

What was Jesus' cup of suffering?

His bearing our sins as He died for us on the cross. Since God is Holy, He can have no fellowship with sin and for the time that Jesus bore our sins there was a break in fellowship with the Father...

Matthew 27:46 – My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

Genesis 44:6-17, Enslavement due to Joseph's Cup

⁶ So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. ⁷ 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. ⁸ 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? ⁹ With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves."

¹⁰ 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." ¹¹ Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack. ¹² So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. ¹³ Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

¹⁴ So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he was still there; and they fell before him on the ground. ¹⁵ 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?"

¹⁶ 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."

¹⁷ 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."

v8 – What is the significance of 11 brothers of Joseph being innocent of betraying him in his house?

As 11 brothers of Joseph were innocent of betraying him at his table, Jesus had 11 disciples who were innocent of betraying Him at His table [115]:

Mark 14:17-18 – *In the evening He came with the twelve. Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me."*

v16 – What is the significance Joseph's brothers being innocent yet willing to suffer as slaves?

Substitutionary atonement... Judah acknowledged iniquity which led to their predicament before God though was innocent in what they were accused. As the brothers were innocent and yet still willing to suffer as slaves to satisfy God's demands, so too Jesus was innocent and still willing to suffer to satisfy God's Law on our behalf [116]:

2 Corinthians 5:21 – *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

What is substitutionary atonement?

Jesus Christ died as a substitute for sinners. The Scriptures teach that all men are sinners (Romans 3:9-18, 23). The penalty for our sinfulness is death. Romans 6:23 reads, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- Without Christ, we are going to spend an eternity in hell as payment for our sins. At the same time, eternal life is available through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ died in our place when He was crucified on the cross. We deserved to be the ones on that cross because of our sinful lives. But Christ took the punishment in our place—He substituted Himself for us and took what we rightly deserved.

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

"He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

v17 – What is the significance Joseph's brother being found with his cup making him a slave?

As being found with Joseph's cup made his brother Benjamin a slave, those observing communion with the cup of Jesus are His slaves [117]:

Romans 6:22 – *But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.*

Why is being a slave of God a good thing?

God is not an evil task master as a human slave master would be...

Matthew 7:11 – *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*

All people are slaves of something...

Matthew 6:24 – *No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*

We are the property of our Creator so recognizing ourselves as His slave simply recognizes reality and brings us into conformity with His will. And, trust me, you don't want to be outside the will of God.

Genesis 44:18-34, Judah Intercedes for Benjamin

¹⁸ 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." ¹⁹ My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' ²⁰ 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.' ²¹ Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' ²² And we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' ²³ But you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.' ²⁴ "So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. ²⁵ And our father said, 'Go back and 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 may not 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 went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since. ²⁹ 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.' ³⁰ "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, ³¹ 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. ³² 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.' ³³ 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. ³⁴ 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?"

How did Judah intercede for Benjamin?

He explained to Joseph his importance in the eyes of their father and offered himself up to be the slave instead of Benjamin.

v18 – What is the significance Judah being the advocate for his brother Benjamin?

As Judah was the advocate for his brother Benjamin, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah is our advocate [118]:

1 John 2:1 – *My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

Why do we need an advocate?

Because we have a prosecutor, an accuser...

Revelation 12:10 – *Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.*

The name Satan means adversary... that is what he does.

When will Satan's role of accuser of the brethren end?

When he is cast down to earth, about the mid-pint of the Tribulation

v28 – What is the significance of Jacob believing his son Joseph was torn to pieces?

As the father of Joseph believed he had died having been torn to pieces, God the Father saw Jesus, the Son of God scourged and crucified [119]:

Mark 15:15 – *Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.*

Why did Pilate have to satisfy the crowd, wasn't he the ruler in Jerusalem?

Authorities have a long history of not having any backbone in the face of public opposition. That is why despotic rulers have always controlled the media so that they may use it to mold public opinion in their favor.

v33 – What is the significance of Judah offering himself up as a substitute for his brother Benjamin?

As Judah offered himself up as a substitute for his brother Benjamin, so too did the Lion of the Tribe of Judah offer Himself up as our substitutionary sacrifice [120]:

Ephesians 5:2 – *And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*

How was Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf a sweet-smelling aroma to the Father?

It was the Father's will that the Son should pay our sin-penalty. Jesus executing the will of the Father was a sweet-smelling aroma to Him. Likewise, it is a sweet-smelling aroma to God when we embrace and conform to His will.

How may we do the will of God?

By embracing His provision that makes it possible to have an eternal relationship with Him. Then by getting to know Him by growing in our relationship and acting in obedience to what He has revealed to us.

Genesis 45:1-8, Joseph Revealed to His Brothers

Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.

³ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. ⁴ And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. ⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. ⁸ So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

How did Joseph reveal himself to his brothers?

He made everyone leave except his brothers, he wept and just told them who he was. He asked about his father again and told him God had raised him up in Egypt to be their deliverer. Then he told them to go bring back the rest of his father's family in order to survive the remaining 5 years of the famine.

v1 – What is the significance of Joseph cutting short the time before he'd be revealed to his brothers?

As Joseph cut short the time before he'd be revealed to his brothers, so too will Jesus in order to rescue Israel [121]:

Matthew 24:22 – And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

How will God shorten the days of the Tribulation? Wouldn't that change the prophecy of it being 7 years?

This might be rhetorical meaning that the Tribulation will have a limit. It does indicate that God retains control even though mankind is given over to his wicked ways, He will limit the evil so that there will be survivors of the Tribulation.

v2 – Why did Joseph weep?

He recognized the hand of God bringing them to this point where he was in a position to help his brothers and deliver them from the ravages of the famine.

v2 – What is the significance of Joseph weeping?

As Joseph wept when he recognized his role in rescuing his brothers from their desperate condition, so too did Jesus weep when He saw how desperately we needed Him when Lazarus died in particular and because of the human condition in general [122]:

John 11:32-36 – Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, "Where have you laid him?"

They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"

v3 – What is the significance of Joseph finally revealing himself to his brothers?

As Joseph revealed himself to his brothers in the end, so too will Jesus reveal Himself to Israel [123]:

Romans 11:25-26 – For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved

When will Israel recognize Jesus as Messiah?

While there has always been a remnant of Israel who recognized Jesus as the Messiah, Israel as a nation will not recognize Him until the mid-point of the Tribulation. The key even will be when the Antichrist goes into the Jerusalem Temple to declare himself to be God.

v3 – What is the significance of Joseph's brothers being dismayed in his presence?

As Joseph's brothers were dismayed in his presence, so too will Israel when they realize that Jesus is the Messiah [124]:

Zechariah 12:10 – then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

v4 – What is the significance of Joseph telling his brothers, "come near to me"?

As Joseph invited his brothers to trust him and depend on him when he said, "come near to me", so too does Jesus invite us to depend on Him [125]:

Matthew 11:28 – Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

How does coming to Jesus give us rest?

We don't have to work for our salvation... all the work needed for salvation was completed by Jesus on our behalf when He paid the penalty for our sins in His death on the cross.

v5 – What is the significance of God sending Joseph to Egypt to save lives?

As God sent Joseph to Egypt to save lives, so too did God the Father send His Son into the world to be our Savior [126]:

1 John 4:14 – *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.*

v5 – What is the brothers of Joseph being told not to grieve over what they had done to him?

As the brothers of Joseph were told not to grieve over what they had done to him, so too were the brothers of Jesus told not to grieve over what they had done to Him [127]:

Acts 2:36–38 – *Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.” Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

v5-7 – What is the significance of Joseph suffering according to predetermined plan of God?

As Joseph suffered according to predetermined plan of God, so too did Jesus [128]:

Ephesians 3:11 – *This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

v8 – What is the significance of Joseph forgiving those who wronged him?

As Joseph forgave those who wronged him, so too did Jesus [129]:

Luke 23:34 – *But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”*