

Genesis - Lesson 44

Genesis Chapter 44

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Memory verses for this week: *Nah 2:13 Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.*

Introduction: We continue our study on the book of Genesis this week as we pickup after the meal Joseph prepared for his brothers on their return trip to Egypt when they brought young Benjamin along with them.

I. A Plan to Apprehend the Departing Brethren

Many of the things that happen to us in life, happen in order to bring us to the light, in order that we may know our own condition and to turn us to the Lord. We will certainly see that in this week's lessons concerning the brothers of Joseph.

Deu 8:2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

Deu 8:3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Gen 44:1 *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.*

Gen 44:2 And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

Gen 44:3 As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.

Joseph commands the steward of the house to fill the sacks and to put their money back in the sacks. So the brothers' sacks are filled to the limit. This reminds us of our Lord's generosity in giving unto us who are so undeserving. Also, not only are the bags filled to capacity, but each man's money was placed in their sacks. Remember that the bread of life, God's salvation, cannot be bought with money. One brother was to have

something special placed in his bag. It was Joseph's silver cup which was placed in Benjamin's sack. Silver typifies the price of redemption.

1Pe 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

1Pe 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

1Pe 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

1Pe 1:21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

The men prepare and head out of the city. They had just departed when Joseph commanded the steward to chase down the men.

Gen 44:4 And when they were gone out of the city, and 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?

Gen 44:5 Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing.

Gen 44:6 And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words.

The steward was instructed to follow after them and to ask them if they had rewarded evil for good. This cup of Joseph's was a divining cup, used to foretell the future, but it is highly unlikely that Joseph ever used it for that purpose. Soon the men were overtaken in the way. No doubt until now they were rejoicing that their trip had proven so successful.

Gen 44:7 And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing:

Gen 44:8 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?

Gen 44:9 With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.

Gen 44:10 And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

The men are taken aback by the accusations and they declare their innocence. They were indeed innocent of the charge, but they were guilty in many other things. Many today are the same way. We do not have to be guilty of breaking every commandment to be condemned before God. Without Christ we are condemned already.

Joh 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

*Joh 3:18 He that believeth on him is not **condemned**: but he that believeth not is **condemned** already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

The men are so certain of their innocence that they make a strong and reckless agreement as is recorded in verse 9. They say whoever has the cup should be killed and the rest would become bondmen. The steward agrees that it will be according to their words, but he modifies the agreement to only make the one that is guilty to be his servant.

Gen 44:11 Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack.

Gen 44:12 And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

Gen 44:13 Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

The men quickly took down each sack and they were almost safe. When all but one bag had been searched they must have sighed with relief. But when they took down the youngest man's sack, the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Their reaction was surprising.

They rent their clothes and laded every man his ass and returned to the city. They could have accused or abandoned Benjamin, but they did not. This had to be a huge blow to the family. Verse 13 says they returned to the city in sorrow. Little did they know, that sorrow was bringing them to repentance.

2Co 7:9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

2Co 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

There is a lesson here for us. Like these men, one day the "sack" of our life is going to be examined by God. Every secret will come to light. I heard that story about the grandfather that died and told his kids and grand kids before hand that he wanted to live such a life that when he died, he had nothing to lose, nothing to fear, and nothing to hide. I think we would all be well off to live such a good life before man and God.

Rom 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Rom 14:8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto

the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Rom 14:9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

Rom 14:10 *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

Rom 14:11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

Rom 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

II. Joseph's Brethren Brought to Trial

Gen 44:14 And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground.

Gen 44:15 And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?

Gen 44:16 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 servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.

Gen 44:17 And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

The brothers come before Joseph. I think the reality of the sin in their lives had come full circle, and they knew that their guilt was before them. In verse 14, they take their true place before Joseph. They fall in contrition before him. Joseph's steward is here a type of the Holy Spirit. He brings them to the feet of Joseph, who is of course a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. He asks them 'What deed is this that ye have done?'

They are presented with the opportunity to confess. Like they were given by Joseph, I think most men have multiple opportunities to come to Christ in their lifetime. But if you only have one, that is enough. We need to see ourselves as fallen sinners without hope unless we confess and forsake our sins and accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Notice Judah's three questions there in verse 16.

First he confessed, "What shall we say unto my lord?" " How shall we clear ourselves. " "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants" None of us can clear ourselves, only God can clear us from our sins.

Eze 20:42 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers.

Eze 20:43 And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed.

Be sure of this... The Lord always finds out. We may can hide our sins from man, but God knows all about us. Reputation is what men think we are, character is what we are.

God isn't interested in reputation, he wants us to be men and women of our word and have true character. Notice Judah's offer that they all would serve with Benjamin. However, Joseph was teaching them a lesson and the sentence was passed upon Benjamin, the innocent one. Think back to the beginning of our story. Joseph was the innocent one who was sent into bondage. Think of how Christ was condemned, but yet without a single sin.

Matthew Henry said this about Judah and the other brothers:

Here is their humble submission, Gen 44:16. 1. They acknowledge the righteousness of God: *God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants*, perhaps referring to the injury they had formerly done to Joseph, for which they thought God was now reckoning with them. Note, Even in those afflictions wherein we apprehend ourselves wronged by men yet we must own that God is righteous, and finds out our iniquity.

2. They surrender themselves prisoners to Joseph: *We are my lord's servants*. Now Joseph's dreams were accomplished to the utmost. Their bowing so often, and doing homage, might be looked upon but as a compliment, and no more than what other strangers did; but the construction they themselves, in their pride, had put upon his dreams was, *Shalt thou have dominion over us?* (Gen 37:8), and in this sense it is now at length fulfilled,; they own themselves his vassals.

Gen 44:18 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.

Gen 44:19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?

Gen 44:20 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 loveth him.

Gen 44:21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

Gen 44:22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

Gen 44:23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

Gen 44:24 And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

Gen 44:25 And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food.

Gen 44:26 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.

Gen 44:27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

Gen 44:28 And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since:

Gen 44:29 And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Gen 44:30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

Gen 44:31 It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

Gen 44:32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

Gen 44:33 Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

Gen 44:34 For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

Judah pours out his heart to Joseph and tells him the story. It was an eloquent intercession. Judah was able, noble, and passionate. Seldom will we ever find a plea that will equal Judah's. Here we see Judah at his best.

It foreshadows the great future of his tribe. From out of the tribe of Judah did our Lord Jesus Christ descend.

Deu 33:7 And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.

Gen 49:10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Psa 78:67 Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

Psa 78:68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

Judah in this account is here a type of Christ who intercedes for us.

Heb 7:14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

Rev 5:5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Rom 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted

as sheep for the slaughter.

Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Judah goes into detail and tells the moving story of his family tragedy. He explains how much Benjamin means to their father, and Judah offers to take Benjamin's place. Christ not only offered to do so, He did.

Heb 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Heb 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Gal 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

There is evidence of the repentance of Joseph's brethren. It was necessary that they should evidence repentance and change of heart, before Joseph would reveal himself to them. The proof is in the seven things these last verses convey.

1. They rent their clothes. A sign of sorrow and possibly repentance. v. 13
2. They did not accuse or abandon Benjamin as they might have done.
3. In verse 16, they admit the iniquity for which God was punishing them.

Although they do not mention the selling of Joseph, they may well have had this in mind.

4. Judah shows a genuine love for his father.
5. Judah pleads that he might take Benjamin's place at the end of the chapter.
6. Even though he was the leader in selling Joseph, he will not abandon Benjamin.

Gen 37:26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

Gen 37:27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.

7. The entire company of brothers seem to be broken and melted. Carrying sin is hard, and only God through the Lord Jesus Christ can take away that burden from us.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What was Joseph's plan to apprehend his brethren?

Putting his own silver cup in the sacks along with their money.

2. In what brother's sack was the silver cup placed?

The youngest, Benjamin.

3. What does silver typify?

Silver typifies the price of redemption.

4. What foolish agreement did the brothers make if the cup was found in any of their sacks?

That the person responsible should be killed and they all would become bondsmen.

5. How does the steward typify the Holy Spirit?

Joseph's steward is here a type of the Holy Spirit. He brings them to the feet of Joseph, who is of course a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. He asks them 'What deed is this that ye have done?' The Holy Spirit brings conviction to our hearts and draws us to God that we might be saved.

6. What was Judah's confession when the cup was found?

That they had done wrong. "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants"

7. How is Judah a type of Christ in verses 18-34?

He intercedes and tries to take the place of Benjamin.

8. What evidence did the brethren show they truly had repented?

All 7 of the things listed at bottom of the lesson. (Re-Read those 7.)

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more

unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.