### Genesis

## Chapter 44

1Then JoSeph gave instructions to his house manager. He said:  
  
 ‘Now, fill the men’s bags with as much food as they can carry, and put each one’s money in the top of his bag. 2Also, put my silver cup in the bag that belongs to the youngest, along with the price of his grain.’  
  
So he did exactly as JoSeph said. 3Then the next morning, the men and their burros were sent away.  
  
4Well, after they left the city (but before they had traveled very far), JoSeph said to his house manager:  
  
 ‘Now, get up and chase after those men; and when you catch up with them, ask:  
  
 ‘Why have you returned evil for good… 5why have you stolen my silver cup? Isn’t this the [cup] that our lord drinks from and the one which he uses to foretell the future?  
  
 ‘You’ve done an evil thing!’  
  
6So when he caught up with them, he said what [JoSeph] had told him to say.  
  
7And they replied:  
  
 ‘Why is our lord saying such things? Your servants wouldn’t do anything like that!  
  
 8‘If we returned the money to you which we found in our bags all the way from the land of CanaAn, why would we steal silver or gold from the house of your lord? 9May whichever of your servants that you find with the cup die, and then we’ll all be our lord’s slaves!’  
  
10So, [JoSeph’s house manager] told them:  
  
 ‘May it be just as you’ve said. But just the one who is found with the cup will be my slave… The rest of you can go free.’  
  
11Then each man quickly took down his bag and put it on the ground, and opened their bags, 12and the man began his search, starting from the eldest to the youngest… And then he found the cup in BenJamin’s bag.  
  
13Well at that, they all started ripping their clothes. So each man loaded his bag back on his burro, and they all returned to the city, 14where Judah and his brothers were taken to see JoSeph, who was [still at home].  
  
There they fell to the ground before him, 15and JoSeph asked them:  
  
 ‘What have you done? Didn’t you realize that a man like me can see the future?’  
  
16And Judah replied:  
  
 ‘What can we say to you, our lord? What can we say that will justify us? God has uncovered the unrighteousness of your servants.  
  
 ‘Look! We’re now our lord’s slaves… Both us and the one who was found with your cup!’  
  
17But JoSeph said:  
  
 ‘I wouldn’t do anything like that… Just the man who was found with my cup will be my slave. [The rest of you] may return home safely to your father.’  
  
18Then Judah came up to him and said:  
  
 ‘I beg you, sir,  
  
 ‘Allow your servant to say something to you, and don’t get angry, because you’re next to PharaOh.  
  
 19‘Sir, you once asked your servants whether we have a father or a brother, 20and we replied:  
  
 ‘Yes Lord, we have a father who is an old man, and he has a young son of his old age. [Since this boy’s] brother is now dead, he’s the only one left that came from his mother, and his father loves him.’  
  
 21‘Then you said to your servants:  
  
 ‘Bring him down here to me, and I’ll take care of him.’  
  
 22‘And we said to our lord:  
  
 ‘The child can’t leave his father, because if he leaves his father, [his father] will die.’  
  
 23‘But you told your servants:  
  
 ‘Unless your younger brother comes down with you, you won’t see my face again.’  
  
 24‘And so, when we went up to your servant our father, we told him what our lord said.  
  
 25‘Then, when our father said:  
  
 ‘Return and buy a little food for us...’  
  
 26‘...we said:  
  
 ‘We can’t return, unless our younger brother goes with us. We can go there, but we won’t be able to see the man unless we bring our younger brother along!’  
  
 27‘And your servant (our father) said to us:  
  
 ‘You know that my woman gave birth to two [sons] for me. 28Now, one [of the two] is gone from me. For you told me that wild animals ate him, and I haven’t seen him since. 29So if you take this one away from me also and something should happen to him along the road, the sorrow will bring me to the grave in my old age!’  
  
 30‘Therefore, if I should return to your servant (our father) and the boy doesn’t return with us (remember that his life depends on this [boy’s] life)... 31Well, when he sees that the boy isn’t with us, he will die!  
  
 ‘And then your servants [will be responsible for] bringing your servant (our elderly father) to his grave in his sorrow... 32For when I (your servant) took the boy from his father, I said:  
  
 ‘If I don’t return him to you and stand him before you, I’ll be guilty before my father throughout the age.’  
  
 33‘Now, may I stay here as your slave instead of the boy! I’ll work in my lord’s house; but, let the boy [return home] with his brothers... 34For how could I return to my father without the boy and cause evil things to happen to him?’