

GENESIS 44:1-17 (THE CUP AND THE JUDGMENT)

Introduction: Today's 17 verses could be, and probably should be, two separate sermons. There will be a lot of details that we'll have to skip over in order to finish everything today. And this may be a bit longer than other sermons, but what is hidden here is so wonderfully revealed in the New Testament that it is amazing.

As far as I know, no one else has ever come to these conclusions that you'll hear today, so I hope you'll enjoy them and that you will be blessed in them. God did a mighty work in Jesus Christ and that has been available to all people of the world. But for the most part, Israel rejected His plan.

However, in His great way, He has worked things out to reconcile them to Himself once again. As the church age winds down, the time for Israel's reconciliation is coming nearer. A major portion of that plan is seen in these verses.

Text Verse: I will bring the *one*—third through the fire,
Will refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.
They will call on My name,
And I will answer them.
I will say, 'This *is* My people';
And each one will say, 'The LORD *is* my God.'" Zechariah 13:9

In order to be Lord of Egypt, Joseph had to suffer first. But after the suffering came the exaltation. And before he reveals himself to his brothers, he will put them through a test to refine them. And this is exactly what Jesus will do for Israel before He is fully revealed to them. It is all to be found in this majestic and superior word and so... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Cup of Divination (1-5)

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 each man’s money in the mouth of his sack.

This happens on the same day as the feast in Joseph's house. During the feast, there was a lot of drinking going on. This is what the Hebrew implies. While the brothers are in a rather happy state, Joseph prepares them for a test of their character.

The steward of the house is given his instructions. The sacks are to be filled with food, even an abundance of food. As it says "as much as they can carry." And once again, the money that they brought for the grain is to be returned.

Once again, like the last time, Joseph will not accept money from their hand for the grain needed to sustain them. Just like before, the food is by necessity a gift. In the past, they had sold Joseph and received money for him.

If he accepted their money it would imply an exchange of payment for what he was actually sold for. If you see Christ in this, you are right. He paid the debt and the Bread of life is offered freely. How could he receive payment for what is a gift of grace? And more so when the money they have partly came from His sale.

² Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money.”

This silver cup was certainly used by Joseph at the meal. The brothers would have seen him using it and so what is coming has been prepared in advance. The implication is that the cup was in sight of them, *they all saw it*, and one of them must have it.

However, if this was all there was in the sack, it would have been convincing evidence that it was stolen by Benjamin. But it's not all that was

in there, for Benjamin or for any of them. They all have their money back in their sack. And so they could come to a certain conclusion - that Benjamin was innocent.

***The cup Benjamin has is *not one he stole*. Instead, it was a cup he bore even though it wasn't his to bear. A picture of Jesus is to be seen in this action if you understand His work...

Also in this verse, instead of using the term "food" like he did in the previous verse, it says "grain." It is the word *shever* which has been used five times so far to describe the grain being bought and sold by the brothers. It implies breaking, or a fracture, or a breach. These different words for food and grain will soon make sense.

The cup that's referred to here is the Hebrew word *gabia*. It comes from an unused root word which conveys the sense of elevation or roundness, like a hill. Thus it is a goblet or bowl of large size. While we go through these verses, I want you to try to think of where this cup, *gabia*, may be connected in the New Testament.

² (con't) **So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.**

The steward complied with the instructions and did exactly as Joseph had directed. Every step of the process here shows a careful and methodical plan to determine what he wants to know. It is all intended to lead to how he will ultimately deal with his brothers and it is all centering on Benjamin, the Son of the Right Hand.

³ **As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys.**

It is early the next day, the day after the big feast, that they are sent away. The Hebrew says, *ha'boqer ovr* - "The morning, light, and the men were sent away." It implies the time when the light first comes out. This is the only time this exact expression is used in the Old Testament and it corresponds with what Matthew 28:1 says -

Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. Matthew 28:1

Also, it specifically notes, "and their donkeys." The story is giving every necessary word in order to highlight what is happening. They had a great day of feasting, they are loaded up, and they are heading out early with everything they had come for and the animals they had come with. They are packed for the journey like a family on a vacation, and nothing is lacking.

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?"

Completely aware of when they left and probably estimating the amount of time it would take for them to just get out of the city, Joseph, gives the order to bring his plans to a climax. This steward would certainly have had guards with him.

There are 11 men and, although not mentioned anywhere in the story, there would probably have been servants with them as well. When he caught up with them, he is told to ask them why they repaid evil for good.

This is a common biblical theme, seen from the Garden of Eden all the way through its pages. And it's a part of the human condition ever since as well. Someone does something good and another turns and does something wicked in return.

The ultimate example of it, of course, is God sending Jesus and He being crucified, and then even that work being rejected. Proverbs shows that the penalty for this is only more evil -

Whoever rewards evil for good,
Evil will not depart from his house. Proverbs 17:13

Thus Israel found much evil in their house for their rejection of Jesus. It has gone on for 2000 years. But God, who is patient and forgiving has brought

them back home and is preparing to restore them. And this is all what is being pictured in the life of Joseph. Thank God for His great mercy.

*Why have you so repaid evil for good
What is it that makes man act in such a way?
In the gift of Jesus it must be understood
That His life was given for our sins to pay*

*And so to turn from Him and malign what He has done
Is to repay evil for His greatest good
Yes, God gave to us Jesus His Son
But we crucified Him, nailing Him to a cross of wood*

The cup which is now in Benjamin's sack is a special one and it has a special purpose - one which points to something which is fulfilled in Jesus. Let's take a look at the continuing details...

⁵Is not this *the one* from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing."

There is a lot of speculation about the wording here. Almost every translation says that the cup is used for divination or telling the future. But among scholars there are a which variety of other possibilities which have been submitted.

Some say that he would have "diligently looked for the cup," rather than that he would have used the cup for divination - it is an action by Joseph to find the cup, rather than a use by Joseph of the cup. Others say that he would have consulted diviners in order to find the cup. And another translates the word instead of divination as "testing."

In other words, "he used this cup to test you and you have failed the test." This seems the most likely based on the surrounding text. It is the cup from which he drank and the cup he would have had with him the day before. He is using it to test his brothers.

And another thing, it cannot go unexplained that the word for divination is *nakhash*. It is the verb from which is derived the same word in noun form, *nakhash*, meaning "serpent."

It is the same word used for "serpent" in the Garden of Eden and also the bronze serpent which was held up in the wilderness to save the people when they were bit. This serpent is referred to by Jesus in the New Testament in John 3:14, 15 -

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

Is anybody seeing the connection? Has anyone placed the cup, *gabia*, yet? Keep thinking. It is all to be found in Christ.

II. In Whomever Lies the Guilt, Let Him Die (6-13)

⁶ So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words.

Just as he was instructed, so he relayed to the brothers. They have been given the words of Joseph and now comes their denial...

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.

There is the immediate protestation of innocence. "We haven't done what we have been accused of. It is simply not correct." As we read this account, we have to remember what it's picturing. Joseph pictures Jesus and the brothers are the tribes of Israel.

They have been accused of a crime and they are denying they have committed one. They are actually unaware of the guilt they now bear. As you know possession is 9/10ths of the law.

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?

In their defense, they remind him that they brought back the money from the previous trip, even after having been out of the reach of Egypt's authority, so why would they try to take a cup made of silver in a place where they could be caught?

Especially for something that probably wasn't worth the same weight in the silver they brought back. And as a further defense, they mention both silver and gold. In other words, we could have stolen silver or gold. Why would we steal a silver cup? To further their claim they continue speaking...

⁹ With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves."

What is said here is such a close reflection of what happened to their father Jacob many years ago, that the similarity shouldn't be missed. When Jacob fled from his father-in-law Laban, Rachel took his household gods. When Laban accused Jacob, his response was -

"With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take *it* with you.' For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them." Genesis 31:32

In fact all of them *except Benjamin* were with Jacob at that time, though most were very young, but it was probably remembered by them as they spoke now. Jacob didn't know that Rachel had stolen the gods and none of them now realize what is in their possession.

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."

This verse perplexes scholars because of what seems like a dismissive or misunderstanding steward. The proposal was that the one who had the cup would be executed and the rest would become slaves. Instead, the steward

says basically, "Ok, the one who has it will be my slave and everyone else is free to go."

It doesn't make sense. But one scholar says that instead of being an agreement, the steward made it a surprised question, "Is that right according to your words?" In other words, fair justice only demands the punishment of the thief. This is what makes sense.

And it's what makes Bible reading interesting. By reading different versions and thinking things through, we can come to acceptable answers concerning hard to translate passages, of which there are many. In his words we see that the one who has the cup will be *punished in place of all the others*. Do you see a parallel to Jesus?

¹¹ Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack.

The challenge is accepted and the sacks are opened...

¹² So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

The old saying, "They that hide can find" rings true here. The steward hid the cup and in a dramatic and suspenseful way he finds it, having gone from one brother to the next, from the oldest to the youngest in the process.

Another connection to the search by Laban in Genesis 31 is made in this verse. The word for "So he searched" is *v'happesh*. The first time it was used in Scripture was during the search by Laban for the idols in Rachel's tent. But they weren't found.

This is the second time this term, *v'happesh*, is used in the Bible and this time, what is looked for *is* found. This isn't a coincidence, but the accounts are being drawn together to show us the contrast between them. If you missed that sermon, or if you've forgotten it, it would be worth going back and checking it out.

The order of that search was carefully described and yet perplexing, but ultimately it pointed to the people of Israel and the work of Christ. This search is no different. It goes through the sons of Israel and ends with Benjamin, the Son of the Right Hand.

And the cup which belongs to Joseph is now in Benjamin's sack. Both of them are sons of Rachel and are the last sons to be born to Jacob. Rachel pictures grace, not the law. These are the sons of grace. That story, all the way back in Genesis 31, is showing us this pattern. It's being contrasted with what we now see here.

Israel *has been* in exile because they missed the grace. Now the grace must be revealed. None of this is chance or coincidence. It is given to show us details of the Messiah. *The cup* is in Benjamin's possession. What is this telling us? Another curiosity is that the word for sack used here is a special word *amtakhath*.

It's used only 15 times in the Bible. All 15 have been in the story of Joseph and his brothers, starting in chapter 42 and ending right here. The word has been used 7 times in this chapter alone and this is the last time it will be used in the Bible. It comes from another word, *mathakh*, which is used only once, in Isaiah 40:22 -

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,
And its inhabitants *are* like grasshoppers,
Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
And **spreads them out** like a tent to dwell in. Isaiah 40:22

And why has Joseph ordered this scenario to happen? Why has it come to this point? The answer is that he wanted to know their attitude towards Benjamin, the second son of Rachel. Did they hate him like they hated Joseph?

If so, it would now become evident because they'd have a reason to simply leave him to be a slave and head back home. This is why the steward changed the conditions of the agreement from death for one and slavery for all to just slavery for one. Will this happen, or will they have a change in

attitude towards their father's favorite son? The next verse begins to tell us...

¹³ Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

"They" implies all the brothers. They collectively tear their clothes as a sign of the deepest distress. They are in true anguish over the chain of events and the situation in which they have found themselves. And without note of hesitation or consultation, they surrender themselves collectively to whatever fate awaits them.

They load the sacks back onto the donkeys and return to face the ruler of Egypt once again.

III. The Man in Whose Hand the Cup was Found (14-17)

¹⁴ So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house,

Judah is now highlighted. Why? It is because he is the one who vowed to his father these words in the previous chapter -

⁸"Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you *and* also our little ones. ⁹ I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him *back* to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever." (Gen 43)

What was vowed is now expected and Judah is specifically named in the Bible to reflect this. Other than Benjamin, none of the other brothers are named in the entire account. It is up to Judah to make things right. Judah is where the term "Jew" comes from. Judah is representative of all Jews in this regard; he will speak for all Israel.

¹⁴ (con't) **and he *was* still there; and they fell before him on the ground.**

Joseph never left the house as one might expect of the lord of the land who directs the selling of the grain. This is the moment to which everything has

been pointing and he has remained to see it through. When the brothers arrived, rather than bowing, they simply and completely prostrate themselves.

Along with the torn clothes, they have wholly humbled themselves in his presence. Jesus the Lord (Jehovah), whom Joseph pictures will be there in the Lord's house - the temple - in Jerusalem when they come to their moment of distress too. This picture is exact.

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?"

Joseph, the ruler of Pharaoh's house, gives them questions which have long been anticipated. And then he follows up with a rhetorical question, "What thing have you done? Don't you know I can look into matters in a way you can't even perceive."

Here he uses the term *nachesh v'nachesh* - "divining can divine." But again, this doesn't mean he is using mystical interpretations. Instead, he implies that he can make a trial into a matter or discern truth in some way. The emphatic nature of it implies that he has the complete ability to find out the truth.

¹⁶ Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves?"

Judah's words imply that nothing they say can clear their guilt and nothing they say will be effective to do so. One commentator on this verse said, "The address needs no comment" and then he went on for a full page commenting on it. The heartfelt nature of this account cannot be left without our deepest consideration.

¹⁶ (cont') God has found out the iniquity of your servants;

Here in this verse the term *ha'elohim*, "the God" is now used by Judah. Until this point, the sons have never said this. He admits their iniquity without specifying what he means. But it is certainly referring *not to the*

matter of the cup here, but that of having sold their brother more than 20 years earlier. The Geneva Bible says -

"If we see no obvious cause for our affliction, let us look to the secret counsel of God, who punishes us justly for our sins."

He knows that God's secret counsel is behind what is happening and so he resigns them to their fate...

16 (cont') here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found."

In acknowledgment of what they deserve, he offers all of them as slaves for their deeds of the past and the supposed misdeed of Benjamin.

*** 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."**

Joseph is now ready to test the sincerity of the brothers personally. In response to their offer, he makes his own claim, and it is on Benjamin, the Son of the Right Hand. "He will be my slave and the rest of you are free to go in peace, back to your father." The word "slave" here means a servant.

This is our last verse today, but the story must be looked at in a way which will reveal what is going on. It is, as every story thus far in this cycle of Joseph since he was sold off to Egypt, pointing to the work of Christ and His ultimate reconciliation with Israel.

From this perspective, and before I give my personal analysis, I'd like to read you the comments of Jamieson-Faucett-Brown -

"Joseph's behavior must not be viewed from any single point, or in separate parts, but as a whole—a well-thought, deep-laid, closely connected plan; and though some features of it do certainly exhibit an appearance of harshness, yet the pervading principle of his conduct was real, genuine, brotherly kindness. Read in this light, the narrative of the proceedings

describes the continuous, though secret, pursuit of one end; and Joseph exhibits, in his management of the scheme, a very high order of intellect, a warm and susceptible heart, united to a judgment that exerted a complete control over his feelings—a happy invention in devising means towards the attainment of his ends and an inflexible adherence to the course, however painful, which prudence required."

As they see it, Joseph is working out an exceptional scheme which is intended to produce one ultimate goal - reconciliation with his brothers. Viewing Joseph as a type of Jesus, the same must be considered in the history of the Jewish people as they are led directly to their meeting and reconciliation with Him.

In order to see that this is, in fact how God works, I want to read you a passage from 2 Samuel 14 which says exactly this. It is spoken to King David by a woman from Tekoa as she attempts to reconcile the king to his estranged son Absalom -

¹⁴ "For we will surely die and *become* like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away a life; but He devises means, so that His banished ones are not expelled from Him."

What Joseph has done toward his brothers, and what God has done towards Israel is perfectly summed up in this idea. Now, here are my thoughts on today's verses.

The brothers have been in the presence of Joseph, in his house, celebrating - and yet not recognizing him. This points to the Jewish people in the end times, back in Israel, back in the temple, in the presence of the King and not even recognizing Him.

Until they acknowledge Him in his past and present role as the suffering Servant who now sits at God's right hand, He will not reveal Himself to them. They must acknowledge the Jesus they rejected in order to have Him return and save them.

This is so clearly laid out elsewhere in the Old Testament, that it is astonishing that people miss it. It's even spoken by Jesus Himself in a verse I often quote from Matthew 23:37-39

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing!
³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the LORD!’”

Joseph orders that they be given as much food as they can carry and he returns their money. The food is the word of God. It is both testaments of the Bible. They have the full supply spread out before them.

The money is returned because there can be no payment made for what is grace, especially when they had sold their brother 20 years earlier. That money would have been included in their wealth. What is free cannot be paid for. It is pointing to the grace of God in Christ, something that cannot be earned.

This is why the word *amtakhath* has been used again and again for describing their sacks. It means "to spread out." It pictures God spreading out the story filled with the grain, the word. It is the spread out and fully revealed word of God. It reveals what is hidden; it shows what has been concealed, represented by the silver which was twice hidden in their sacks.

At first, their sacks were called *sak* - implying sackcloth. They had only the Old Testament which showed the law, woe, and suffering, not God's fully revealed plan. But all during this series of stories, since chapter 42, *amtakhath*, not *sak*, is used.

And in the Bible it is only used in the Joseph stories - an account pointing to the future reconciliation between Jesus and Israel. The grain in the sacks is called *shever*, meaning cracked or a breach, instead of *bar* meaning purified. There is a breach between their understanding of the word and what the word actually says.

This isn't a stretch here because only one more time is grain going to be mentioned in relation to this account and the term *bar* -purified grain, not *shever* will be used. And it will be *after the revealing of Joseph* to his brothers. Only in the Hebrew, not English, can this be seen.

Into the sack of grain, the *shever*, of Benjamin's bag is placed the cup, the *gabia*. And so we need to remember what Benjamin pictures. At his birth, he pictured Christ. If you missed that sermon, you should go back and watch it.

He was named Ben-Oni by his mother, meaning Son of My Suffering. Jacob renamed him Benjamin, Son of My Right Hand. Like Christ, before the exaltation there was suffering.

Benjamin here pictures Christ who first bears the cup. But there is a multi-level play on words in this cup. In the New Testament, there is a word, used only one time, which is exactly brought into the gospel records, being specifically named in both Greek and Aramaic by John. Let me read you the account -

"When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha).."
John 19:13 (NIV)

I used the NIV for that because it is an Aramaic, not a Hebrew word as many versions incorrectly translate it. The cup, *gabia*, is named from a root word conveying the sense of elevation or roundness, hence a goblet. The word Gabbatha means an elevated place, a knoll - hence a rounded area like a goblet. Like Benjamin with the *gabia*, there at Gabbatha, Jesus was charged and committed to His execution, just as we saw with Benjamin here.

So now, I now want to read you all of John 19:1-30. As I read, think about the Jewish people as they sold Jesus off to His death - Ben-Oni, the Son of My Suffering, just as the brothers sold Joseph off to his fate. Remember as I read also what I said earlier about the cup in Benjamin's sack.

They have been accused of a crime and they are denying they have committed one. They are actually unaware of the guilt they bear, but they are guilty, even though they don't realize it. They sold off Joseph, whom Benjamin is now picturing - the suffering Son.

And after his suffering Joseph was exalted, thus Benjamin again pictures Jesus, the Son of My Right Hand. Israel has missed this for 2000 years, but the story shows us that the time to be revealed has come - maybe in our lives! Here is John 19:1-30 (READ TEXT)

I said there was a multi-leveled play on the word "cup." It is pointing to the trial at Gabbatha, but it is also the cup which Jesus prayed to be taken from Him while in Gethsemane. There, in the garden, He said "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me." The cup *is* the trial, and the trial *was at* Gabbatha.

And the cup *was the wrath of God*, poured out in full strength upon His own Son; His Son of Suffering. This is why Benjamin has the cup and why the brothers will have to defend him and be willing to trade places with him before Joseph will reveal Himself to them.

This is what Jesus said to Israel, under the Law "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23

These are the things that the Bible says are coming and it has been shown in advance so that we don't err by saying that the church has replaced Israel. Instead, the church, pictured by Joseph's gentile wife, is referred to between the accounts of Joseph's brothers.

And this is why Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph's sons, will later be adopted by Jacob. How can we deny what God is so clearly showing us? This is why the servant asked "Why have you repaid evil for good?" God sent His Son for the good of all mankind, but they rejected what He did for them.

And this is why the word for "divination" was used as it was. It indicates "testing." In other words, the cup was their test and they failed the test.

They didn't accept His work. That cup was the cup of God's wrath - His trial at Gabbatha, and the cross. And God's way of proving it to us is that from the same word *nakhash*, "divination" comes the word which means "serpent."

It is the same word for "serpent" in the Garden of Eden and also the same word for bronze serpent which was held up in the wilderness to save the people when they were bit. That serpent is the one referred to by Jesus in the New Testament -

¹⁴ "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:14, 15

One serpent tested man. He failed and was condemned. One serpent was used to prefigure the cross of Jesus where man is pardoned. One results in God's wrath; one results in God's healing grace. One brought death; one brings life. This is why the servant said, "*Is not this the one* from which my lord drinks?"

Yes, He did drink from it. Jesus drank it down to its dregs for you and me - and for His brothers Israel too. The question is, will they defend Benjamin so that Jesus will be revealed among them in power in the coming Kingdom Age? We'll see in the sermons ahead.

There is so much in these 17 verses which pointed to the work of Christ. These hidden and amazing details show what He has done and what He will do. I've tried to give you enough of them to show God's amazing plan for Israel. They are back in the land and the time is coming, certainly soon.

In the end, it all points to Jesus and His love for all people - both Jew and gentile. It also shows us His faithfulness to Israel. Despite being sold off by them, Joseph develops a plan to test them and bring about reconciliation. And Jesus has done the same, showing us the details in these stories. He is the ever-faithful, merciful, and full-of-grace Lord.

Closing Verse: Thus says your Lord,
The LORD and your God,
Who pleads the cause of His people:
“See, I have taken out of your hand
The cup of trembling,
The dregs of the cup of My fury;
You shall no longer drink it. Isaiah 51:22

Next Week: Genesis 44:18-34 (Judah's Impassioned Plea) (111th Genesis Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you and He has a good plan and purpose for you. Call on Him and let Him do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Cup and the Judgment

And he commanded the steward of his house, saying
“Fill the men’s sacks with food to take back
As much as they can carry, to you I am relaying
And put each man’s money in the mouth of his sack.
Also put my cup, the silver cup I implore you
In the mouth of the sack of the youngest, an unknown token
And his grain money, put that in too
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 who brayed, as the men yawned

When they, out of the city had gone
And were not yet far off, but still near
Joseph said to his steward "Come on
Get up, follow the men before they disappear
And when you overtake them, say so it's understood
‘Why have you gone and 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 methinks
So he overtook them, these eleven folk
And to them these same words he spoke
And they said to him, as together their voice did ring
“Why does my lord say these words?
Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing

Look, to you we certainly brought back
From the land of Canaan the money
Which we found each in the mouth of our sack
How then could we steal silver or gold
From your lord’s house? We are honest men as we before told
With whomever of your servants it is found
Let him die, to you this we speak
And we also will be my lord’s slaves, remaining bound
Even if our future were to remain so bleak

And he said, “Now also let it be
According to your words in your address
He with whom it is found shall be my slave
And the rest of you shall be blame-less
Then each man let down his sack with speed
To the ground and each opened his sack
Showing he was not a man of greed

So he searched as each man did unpack
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, filled with remorse and pity
And each man loaded his donkey
And so they returned to the city

So Judah and his brothers each and all
Came to Joseph’s house, surely making a mournful sound
And he was still there and they did fall
Before him there on the ground
And Joseph said to them by and by

“What deed is this you have wrought?
Did you not know that such a man as I
Can certainly divine, and see that which I have sought?
Then Judah said, certainly trembling and weak
“What shall we say to my lord?
What of value to you shall we speak?
Or how shall we clear ourselves, by what word?
God has found out the iniquity of your servants this day
Here we are, my lord’s slaves
So both we and he also with whom the cup was found will stay

But he said, “Far be it from me
That I should do so in this matter so grave
The man in whose hand the cup was found, only he
Shall be kept here and he shall be my slave
And as for you, go up in peace to your father
I will keep only him here and not another
What Joseph has done involves a detailed plan
To finally bring reconciliation between his brothers and he
And it is no different than God's redemption of man
He has devised ways to reunite us and bring about harmony

He works in our lives in ways we cannot perceive
But it is for an intended purpose and goal
His plans are meant to bring us to where we believe
That He alone can save our wayward soul
In demonstration of His great love and unending care
He has worked in history to reconcile us
And there in the Bible is the place that where
We find the story of His plan, all centered on Jesus

Yes Lord, thank You for all this wonder that You have wrought
And carefully recorded in the Bible, so that we can be taught

Hallelujah and Amen...