



Joseph's Silver Cup

Genesis 44

This text illustrates for us God's purpose in putting us through testing. It is to reveal the condition of our heart and to refine the condition of our heart.

1. What has the testing that God is doing in your life revealed to you about the condition of your heart? Is there sin in your life that you are seeking to keep hidden?

Proverbs 28:13, Jeremiah 16:17, Galatians 6:7-8, Numbers 32:23

2. Where is the testing that God is doing in your life seeking to refine you? Where do you need to let God make you more like Christ?

Romans 5:3-4, James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 1:6-7

3. Judah is the first person in the Bible who offers to sacrifice his life for the sake of another, illustrating for us what Christ did for us on the cross. Where are you being called by God to love sacrificially? Where are you being called to put others' needs above your own?

4. Do you understand and recognize God's great love for you through the death of His Son on the cross? Have you trusted in Jesus' shed blood to pay the penalty for your sins?

Joseph's Silver Cup

When his brothers were ready to leave, Joseph gave these instructions to his palace manager: "Fill each of their sacks with as much grain as they can carry, and put each man's money back into his sack. ² Then put my personal silver cup at the top of the youngest brother's sack, along with the money for his grain." So the manager did as Joseph instructed him. ³ The brothers were up at dawn and were sent on their journey with their loaded donkeys. ⁴ But when they had gone only a short distance and were barely out of the city, Joseph said to his palace manager, "Chase after them and stop them. When you catch up with them, ask them, 'Why have you repaid my kindness with such evil? ⁵ Why have you stolen my master's silver cup, which he uses to predict the future? What a wicked thing you have done!'" ⁶ When the palace manager caught up with the men, he spoke to them as he had been instructed. ⁷ "What are you talking about?" the brothers responded. "We are your servants and would never do such a thing! ⁸ Didn't we return the money we found in our sacks? We brought it back all the way from the land of Canaan. Why would we steal silver or gold from your master's house? ⁹ If you find his cup with any one of us, let that man die. And all the rest of us, my lord, will be your slaves." ¹⁰ "That's fair," the man replied. "But only the one who stole the cup will be my slave. The rest of you may go free." ¹¹ They all quickly took their sacks from the backs of their donkeys and opened them. ¹² The palace manager searched the brothers' sacks, from the oldest to the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack! ¹³ When the brothers saw this, they tore their clothing in despair. Then they loaded their donkeys again and returned to the city. ¹⁴ Joseph was still in his palace when Judah and his brothers arrived, and they fell to the ground before him. ¹⁵ "What have you done?" Joseph demanded. "Don't you know that a man like me can predict the future?" ¹⁶ Judah answered, "Oh, my lord, what can we say to you? How can we explain this? How can we prove our innocence? God is punishing us for our sins. My lord, we have all returned to be your slaves—all of us, not just our brother who had your cup in his sack." ¹⁷ "No," Joseph said. "I would never do such a thing! Only the man who stole the cup will be my slave. The rest of you may go back to your father in peace."

Judah Speaks for His Brothers

¹⁸ Then Judah stepped forward and said, "Please, my lord, let your servant say just one word to you. Please, do not be angry with me, even though you are as powerful as Pharaoh himself. ¹⁹ "My lord, previously you asked us, your servants, 'Do you have a father or a brother?' ²⁰ And we responded, 'Yes, my lord, we have a father who is an old man, and his youngest son is a child of his old age. His full brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him very much.' ²¹ "And you said to us, 'Bring him here so I can see him with my own eyes.' ²² But we said to you, 'My lord, the boy cannot leave his father, for his father would die.' ²³ But you told us, 'Unless your youngest brother comes with you, you will never see my face again.' ²⁴ "So we returned to your servant, our father, and told him what you had said. ²⁵ Later, when he said, 'Go back again and buy us more food,' ²⁶ we replied, 'We can't go unless you let our youngest brother go with us. We'll never get to see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' ²⁷ "Then my father said to us, 'As you know, my wife had two sons, ²⁸ and one of them went away and never returned. Doubtless he was torn to pieces by some wild animal. I have never seen him since. ²⁹ Now if you take his brother away from me, and any harm comes to him, you will send this grieving, white-haired man to his grave.' ³⁰ "And now, my lord, I cannot go back to my father without the boy. Our father's life is bound up in the boy's life. ³¹ If he sees that the boy is not with us, our father will die. We, your servants, will indeed be responsible for sending that grieving, white-haired man to his grave. ³² My lord, I guaranteed to my father that I would take care of the boy. I told him, 'If I don't bring him back to you, I will bear the blame forever.' ³³ "So please, my lord, let me stay here as a slave instead of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers. ³⁴ For how can I return to my father if the boy is not with me? I couldn't bear to see the anguish this would cause my father!"