

The Final Exam (44:1-13)

- Joseph plans the final test for Benjamin to be caught as a thief.
- Key question, “why have you repaid evil for good?”
- They protest they are innocent of all wrong doing.
- They volunteer to kill whoever the thief is.
- If anyone is found to be a thief, they will all willingly become slaves in Egypt.
- Joseph says the guilty brother will become a slave and the others will go free.
- Joseph searches their sacks slowly one brother at a time from oldest to youngest.
- This builds the tension and the drama until Benjamin is caught.
- Benjamin is taken back to Egypt as a slave and the other brothers are free.
- How will they respond when the favored brother is taken as a slave?
- They do not debate or even discuss what is to be done.
- They all tear their clothes in mourning and return to save their brother.
- This is markedly different behavior from the beginning of Joseph’s story.

Brother’s Response (44:14-17)

- Once again, the brothers bow down before Joseph.
- Judah appears to be the primary leader of the brothers now.
- Joseph tells them of his “divination” practice.
- Joseph is still pretending to be an Egyptian, which would mean worshipping Egyptian gods and practicing Egyptian ways.
- Joseph is claiming the gods have revealed the truth about the brothers.
- Judah does not protest their innocence or try to clear their name.
- Judah acknowledges YWH has found them guilty and they are.
- Judah says they are all prepared to remain as slaves in Egypt.
- Joseph refuses and says only Benjamin will remain and they can all go back home.

Judah’s Speech (44:18-34)

- Judah asks for the chance to make one more proposal.
- Judah talks about Jacob and how much he loves Benjamin, the implication is he does not love his other sons in the same way.
- They did not want to bring Benjamin to Egypt because they knew the distance alone could kill their father.
- If they return without Benjamin, then Jacob is going to die from grief.
- Judah explains his own two son’s lives depend on Benjamin returning.
- Judah lost two other sons because of their wickedness and he did nothing.
- Now Judah is willing to give up his own life to save his sons and Benjamin.
- Judah offers himself as a substitute for Benjamin.
- Judah foreshadows Christ’s substitutionary death for us.
- This is part of why Jesus came from Judah.

Joseph Revealed (45:1-15)

- Joseph finally realizes how much his brothers have changed and finally reveals himself to his brother privately.
- He cried so loudly everyone could hear it even outside of the room.
- His brothers are so shocked and afraid they cannot speak.
- Joseph tells them to come near and to not be filled with shame or guilt.
- Three times Joseph says, "God sent him."
- Joseph sees God's sovereign work all throughout his suffering.
- Joseph wants all of Israel to move to Egypt and be provided for during the five remaining years of famine.
- They cry and hug together and finally the brothers can speak.

Telling Jacob (45:16-28)

- Joseph sends them back loaded up with wealth and goods.
- They will come to Egypt to get the very best land.
- Joseph tells them to not fight or argue on the way.
- Telling Jacob means they have to confess what really happened to Joseph.
- They tell their father everything and he can't believe it at first.
- But he revives and is glad to see Joseph before he will die.

Application

- Recognizing the sovereignty of God in your life brings comfort and allows you to bless others instead of wallowing in grief.
- We should be willing to stand in the suffering of others, like Joseph's brothers do.
- This passage gives us a picture of what Jesus does for us.