

## A Final Test of the Brothers' Hearts

Genesis 44-45

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**Joseph recognized the change in his brothers and the purposes of God in his saga.**

**I. Joseph prepared a final test to evaluate if his brothers had truly recognized their sin and repented. (44:1-5)**

**Dispensational pattern:** 1) a responsibility, 2) a failure, 3) a judgment, and 4) grace to move on.

### **The Seven Dispensations:**

Innocence: The Garden of Eden

Conscience: The Fall to the Flood

Human Government: Noah to Abram

Promise: Abraham to the Exodus

Law: Mt. Sianai to Christ

Grace: Church Age to Second coming

Millennial Kingdom

### **The Abrahamic Covenant:**

1. Abraham's descendants would become a great nation
2. God would make Abraham's name great.
3. God would bless those that blessed Abraham's descendants and curse those that cursed them.
4. In Abraham all the families of the earth will be blessed.
5. The sign of this covenant is circumcision.
6. This covenant is solely to the Hebrew people and the 12 tribes of Israel.

**II. The brothers proclaimed their innocence and a willingness to suffer the consequences if found guilty. (v. 44:6-13)**

And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD: "If you give the Ammonites into my hands, whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph from the Ammonites will be the LORD's, and I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering.

Then Jephthah went over to fight the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into his hands. He devastated twenty towns from Aroer to the vicinity of Minnith, as far as Abel Keramim. Thus Israel subdued Ammon.

When Jephthah returned to his home in Mizpah, who should come out to meet him but his daughter, dancing to the sound of timbrels! She was an only child. Except for her he had neither son nor daughter. When he saw her, he tore his clothes and cried, "Oh no, my daughter! You

have brought me down and I am devastated. I have made a vow to the LORD that I cannot break.” (Judges 11:30-35)

“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. (Matthew 5:33-37)

**III. When confronted, Judah expresses belief that God has “Uncovered” their sin. (v. 14-16)**

**IV. Joseph gave a final test of his brothers’ attitudes. (v. 44:17)**

**V. Judah (and apparently the other brothers) had realized the pain they caused their father. (v. 44:18-29)**

**VI. Judah volunteered to take Benjamin’s punishment in his place. (v. 44:30-34)**

**VII. Seeing the changed hearts of his brothers, Joseph was emotionally overwhelmed. (v. 45:1-3)**

**VIII. God had given Joseph proper perspective on all the events that had transpired. (v. 45:4-8)**

“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. (Acts 2:22-23)

**IX. Joseph did not retaliate against his brothers for what they had done to him, but instead promised to see they were cared for. (v. 45:9-15)**

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. (Zechariah 12:10)

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34)

While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep. (Acts 7:59-60)

**X. Pharaoh was so pleased with Joseph’s service that he allowed his family to take up residence in Egypt. (v. 45:16-20)**

**XI. The brothers returned to their father with news of a refuge to be provided by his still living son. (v. 45:21-28)**