Genesis Chapter 44 Verses 1 – 4a

* This ***steward*** intrigues me…in the Hebrew, the word almost isn’t there…I’m not sure how else to say it. Go look it up on Blue Letter Bible. The word is *“bayith”* and it mean *“warm house,”* or *“household,”* or *“family.”* ***“Steward”*** is there but it is **far** into the list of *translatable descriptors*…and I actually really like that. It’s not Joseph working here, they still don’t know him (the brothers). Joseph isn’t directly interacting, he can’t, **he’s not yet revealed**…and so ***he commands and his steward works.*** See the parallel, don’t you?
* Jesus said in John Chapter 14 verses 15-17, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”* And then in John Chapter 15 verse 26, *“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father,* ***He will testify of Me.”******He won’t do His own bidding, He will do the Bidding of Jesus.*** Yes, the work of the Holy Spirit, His work is to fill you and transform you, turn you around from the destruction of the flesh and this world to the life of the spirit and the reality of heaven…but ***all of that is accomplished by Him bringing you to Jesus…***
* And here, this steward of Joseph, he is directed by Joseph to fill all that belongs to these men…even giving them Joseph’s cup and then ultimately, *go after them, overtake them, and turn them around*, **back to Joseph.** Now this bit about Joseph’s cup…silver speaks of *redemption*…a price that has been paid...and that night in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus knelt and prayed in Luke 22:42, *“Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”* What cup? Jesus’ portion…His mission…to be the redemption of all men, the paid price for sin.
* Jesus said to His disciples who wanted prestige in the coming Kingdom, *“You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?”* Joseph says, “*They don’t know me, they have betrayed me and consented to my death…they have forgotten me…but fill them up…and* ***give them my cup.****”*  Romans 5:8 says, *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us…”*
* And notice this, the steward was **not** to *fill them up until they were full*…Joseph’s command of him was to fill the men’s sacks with food, **AS MUCH AS THEY CAN CARRY.** *I love this.* ***God will not fill you to full…He will fill you to capacity.*** There’s a difference! Each and every time you choose to love God over the love of self or this world, every time you choose the spirit over the flesh, you break free a little bit more…you heal your heart of hearts a bit more by drawing nearer to Jesus…you’re on your way…not at the end of the way…and as you give a smidge more of yourself by faith to God, He fills that little smidge more…
* ***He doesn’t portion out His love…but we most certainly bring Him different size containers***…give Him half your heart, that’s what He will fill…you can’t carry anymore…give Him all your heart…He fills what you have today > and tomorrow you find you can carry even more!

Genesis Chapter 44 Verses 4 – 6

* The job of the steward is ***to follow them, to overtake them***, the word in the Hebrew is to *“reach”* them, to *“grab”* them….and then his job is to reveal to them what is hidden and to bring conviction at that revelation. And check this out…when this happens, when the steward speaks and says, “*Why have you taken the cup and yet are unaware, asleep? You have it and yet you don’t know…having this cup is causing no reaction…,”* when this is revealed to them, they are **clueless!** Just like us…waking up to reality after reality…the big one being of course concerning what Jesus has done for each one of us individually!!

Genesis Chapter 44 Verses 7 – 10

* Did you hear that? **Mercy** just flowed forth from the steward! It’s an amazing thing and picture and type…they said, *“Let him die and let us all be slaves.”* But the stewards conviction, *his sentence of guilt*, is WAY less harsh. His is, *“He with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless.”* Its mind boggling but it is ***exactly the heart of God.*** We see someone in sin and we are SO harsh…when God simply calls them back to himself…***we have not yet begun to understand God’s heart of mercy, grace and love!!***

Genesis Chapter 44 Verses 11 – 13

* This for them was the ***worst possible outcome.*** Not only was the cup found but it was found with Ben. Their father’s favorite son, the one Jacob worried about the most. Just like that, ***our sin problem is as bad as it could possibly be***…it’s not a mind issue, it’s not a behavioral issue, it’s not a wants, likes, or passion issue, an “our past” issue…**it’s a heart issue.**

Genesis Chapter 44 Verses 14 – 16

* **Something has changed in the brothers.** They sold Joseph as a slave and sent him ***alone***…now they volunteer to come and become slaves with whomever is condemned… A minute ago the steward said that they would be blameless but Judah says here, “*we too are slaves along with Ben.”* Maybe Judah was thinking about dad…how returning without Ben…well…perhaps not returning was better…
* Maybe there’s a underlying truth here…***that sin not only enslaves you…but also those near to you…especially your family.*** And that is most certainly truth…but this scene is even richer! Imagine Joseph here…watching his brothers *give themselves* for Ben…or not even, just alongside of Ben…do you know what brokenness does to a grudge…to a hard heart? **Breaks it…** Have you yet welcomed brokenness or are you not finished yet…complaining about how hard the situation is…or about how tired you are of dealing with it…***well don’t! Let God deal with it!!*** Takes brokenness….

Genesis Chapter 44 Verses 17 – 31

* Twenty years ago they could have ***cared less*** what their dad wanted. Joseph was obviously the pride of their father. But then, they didn’t respect Jacob, the despised even the garment he made for Joseph…but here, *Judah pleads*, tells the story of his father…more evidence of a change in them…**is there evidence of a change in you I wonder**…***you have learned so much, but have you grown up so much?*** Some for sure, some not…for sure. Why?

Genesis Chapter 44 Verse 32

* Just think about that statement for a moment and think of Jesus. That was His ***mission***. That was His ***reason*** for coming. ***If He had not taken the cross, He would have zero purpose on this earth***…but because He did, He **is** the purpose on this earth! Amazing isn’t it! Same goes for you and for me. Major question…**in eternity, will your life have meant anything at all…?**
* I have a friend of mine that is close to retirement age and it’s interesting to watch him go through this process…for the last year or so he’s said things like, *“You know, when I am taking my last breaths, I’m not going to say, ‘Man, I wish I had given up more weekends for work!’”* or *“‘Gee, I wish I had missed more family events because of deadlines…’”* Just like that though, the things that truly are important…become **second fiddle to luxury and provision and convenience**…***here is a secret to minimizing regret and maximizing purpose…take up your cross and follow Jesus.*** What is the secret to life? What is the meaning to life someone may ask you…the answer is to give your whole life to Jesus, and in that you will overcome this world, conquer this flesh that is soaked in sin…and no matter what your accounts look like on earth, your account in heaven waiting on you to arrive will be topped out! And your heart condition today **REFLECTS YOUR ACCOUNT BALANCE IN HEAVEN.**

Genesis Chapter 44 Verses 33 – 34

* What is it that ultimately brings Judah to this place of *letting himself go* and protecting his brothers, his family…simple. **The love of his father.** The greatest commandments, really the only commandments…what has been asked of us…to love God and as a ***result of that, a fruit of that, a sequential natural reality of that***…to love others. Greater love has no one than this (John 15:13) than to lay down one’s life for his friends. Is that your heart? To be second to those around you? Proof that you love the Father…