

“I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But do not feel troubled because of what you did. For God sent me before you to save your lives. There have been already two years of need and famine, and there are to be five years more, when there shall neither be plowing of the fields nor harvest. It was not you who sent me here, but God; and he sent me to save your lives. God has made me like a father to Pharaoh and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Now I wish you to go home, and to bring down to me my father and all his family.”

Then Joseph placed his arms around Benjamin’s neck, and kissed him and wept upon him. And Benjamin wept on his neck. And Joseph kissed all his brothers, to show them that he had fully forgiven them; and after that his brothers began to lose their fear of Joseph and talked with him more freely.

Afterward Joseph sent his brothers home with good news, and rich gifts, and abundant food. He sent also wagons in which Jacob and his sons’ wives and the little ones of their families might ride from Canaan down to Egypt. And Joseph’s brothers went home happier than they had been for many years.

(END OF STORY)

WHAT DID JOSEPH WISH TO ACCOMPLISH WHEN HE SAID THAT ONE OF HIS BROTHERS HAD TAKEN AWAY HIS CUP?



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THE STORY OF THE LOST BROTHER

PART - III

After dinner, Joseph said to his steward: “Fill the men’s sacks with grain, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in his sack. And put my silver cup in the sack of the youngest, with his money.”

The steward did as Joseph had said; and early in the morning the brothers started to go home. A little while afterward, Joseph said to his steward:

“Hasten, follow after the men from Canaan, and say, ‘Why have you wronged me, after I had treated you kindly? You have stolen my master’s silver cup, out of which he drinks’.”

The steward followed the men, and overtook them, and charged them with stealing. And they said to him:

“Why should you talk to us in this manner? We have stolen nothing. Why, we brought back to you the money that we found in our sacks; and is it likely that we would steal from your lord his silver or gold? You may search us, and if you find your master’s cup on any of us, let him die, and the rest of us may be sold as slaves.”

Then they took down the sacks from the asses, and opened them; and in each man’s sack was his money, for the second time. And when they came to Benjamin’s sack, there was the ruler’s silver cup! Then, in the greatest sorrow, they tied up their bags again, and laid them on the asses, and came back to Joseph’s palace.

And Joseph said to them: “What wicked thing is this that you have done? Did you not know that I would surely find out your deeds?”

Then Judah said, “O, my lord, what can we say? God has punished us for our sins; and now we must all be slaves, both we that are older, and the younger in whose sack the cup was found.”

“No,” said Joseph. “Only one of you is guilty; the one who has taken away my cup. I will hold him as a slave, and the rest of you can go home to your father.

Joseph wished to see whether his brothers were still selfish, and were willing to let Benjamin suffer, if they could escape.

Then Judah, the very man who had urged his brothers to sell Joseph as a slave, came forward, and fell at Joseph’s feet, and pleaded with him to let Benjamin go. He told again the whole story, how Benjamin was the one whom his father loved the most of all his children, now that his brother was lost. He said:

“I promised to bear the blame, if this boy was not brought home in safety. If he does not go back it will kill my poor old father, who has seen much trouble. Now let my youngest brother go home to his father, and I will stay here as a slave in his place!”

Joseph knew now, what he had longed to know, that his brothers were no longer cruel nor selfish, but one of them was willing to suffer, so that his brother might be spared. And Joseph could not any longer keep his secret, for his heart longed after his brothers; and he was ready to weep again, with tears of love and joy. He sent all of his Egyptian servants out of the room, so that he might be alone with his brothers, and then he said:

“Come near to me; I wish to speak with you.” and they came near, wondering. Then Joseph said: “I am Joseph; is my father really alive?”

How frightened his brothers were, as they heard these words spoken in their own language by the ruler of Egypt and for the first time knew that this stern man, who had their lives in his hand, was their own brother whom they had wronged! Then Joseph said again: