

“Take Me Instead”

Genesis 44:1–34

Main Idea: God exposes our sin and changes our hearts, pointing us to Jesus, who took our place to bring us freedom.

Recap

- **Genesis 37:26–35** Judah helps sell Joseph into slavery; Jacob grieves the loss of his favored son.
- **Genesis 42:21–24** Famine brings the brothers to Egypt. Their old guilt surfaces; Joseph hears and weeps.
- **Genesis 43:9** Judah pledges Benjamin’s safety: “If I do not bring him back to you...then let me bear the blame forever.”
- **Genesis 43:33–34** Benjamin receives special treatment. Will the brothers repeat their old jealousy?

Joseph’s Testing vv.1–17

- **The silver cup** They once sold Joseph for silver; now a silver cup tests their loyalty to another brother.
- **The old choice returns** Benjamin faces slavery while the others can go home. Will they abandon him?
- **v.13** “They tore their clothes... and they returned to the city.” This time, all of them stay with their brother.
- **v.16** “God has found out the guilt of your servants.” They did not steal the cup, but their past sin remains.
- **Numbers 32:23** “Be sure your sin will find you out.”
- **John Owen** “Be killing sin or it will be killing you.”
- **Application** When God exposes sin, stop hiding it. Confess honestly and turn from it. (1 John 1:9)

Judah’s Transformation vv.18–34

- **Judah’s appeal** Looks backward (vv.19–29), looks ahead (vv.30–31), and offers a way forward (vv.32–34).
- **A changed concern** He now cares about the grief he once caused. Jacob’s favoritism no longer excuses Judah’s sin.
- **v.33** “Please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers.”
- **Then and now** “Let us sell him” (37:27) becomes “Let me stay” (44:33). Judah offers the freedom he once took away.
- **Sanctification** Through his Word and Spirit, God makes believers more like Jesus in thoughts, words, actions, and attitudes. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Jesus’s Trade

- **Matthew 1:3** Judah belongs to the family line leading to Jesus. His offer points toward a greater substitute.
- **1 Peter 3:18** “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God...”
- **Substitutionary atonement** Jesus takes our place and bears our judgment to reconcile us to God.
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”
- **The Great Exchange** Our guilt is counted to Jesus; his righteousness is counted to us. He remains sinless; we receive his righteous standing through faith.

Reflection Questions

1. **Confession:** What sin have I been hiding or excusing that I need to confess and turn from?
2. **Transformation:** Where is the Holy Spirit making me more like Jesus, and how can I respond to his work this week?
3. **Faith:** Am I resting in Jesus’s finished work and righteousness to make me right with God, or trying to earn his acceptance?
4. **Sacrificial Love:** How can I follow Jesus’s example by loving someone this week, even when it costs me something?

Judah offered to take his brother’s place; Jesus took ours.