

- c) How shall we clear ourselves?
- d) God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants.

7) They all submitted to be Joseph's slaves.

c. Joseph said he would only take Benjamin as his slave (44:17).

- 1) Would they protect Benjamin or not? Would they sacrifice to help him?
- 2) Judah begged Joseph to let him become the slave so that Benjamin could return home and not grieve their father to death (44:18-34).
- 3) This final test was one of self-sacrifice, and Judah passed the test.
- 4) What was God doing through all these tests? He was looking for a change of heart, humility, brokenness, honesty, repentance, confession, a change in character, victory over jealousy, and a selfless willingness to sacrifice for others.
- 5) These chapters let us see that God tested Joseph's brothers until their repentance was proven. In their broken, selfless, sacrificial state, they were now able to receive Joseph's forgiveness and God's cleansing.
- 6) You know, that is just what God desires in our lives. Whether God is allowing us to endure trials as He did in Job's life or difficult testings as He did in the lives of Joseph's sinful brothers, both are for our good. Whenever we face testing or trials, **God's goal is for them to make us better, not bitter**. He desires to see our hearts broken, selfless, and sacrificial so that He can use us.

Conclusion: If you are going through a trial or testing right now, God is working to break your will and improve your character. Trials and testing are never enjoyable, but God uses them for our good. The very best thing we can do during trials or testing is to humbly submit and draw near to God.

If you have been resisting God's trials or tests in your life, let him have His way.

Song: His Way with Thee - 367

Tested Till Broken

23 January 2022 PM - Genesis 44 - Gen2022 - Scott Childs

Introduction: I have never broken a wild horse, but I have read about those who have. The rider must stay on that horse, though it bucks and kicks, until he breaks its stubborn will. The horse will be of no use until it has a submissive will. Once submissive, it can lead a peaceful, contented and useful life.

In many ways, this is true of us as well. Like a wild horse, we are proud, stubborn, selfish and very little use to God until we are broken. God uses tests and trials to break our wills. This is exactly what God was doing in the lives of Joseph's brothers.

Transition: In order to piece together some ways God tests us, I want us to compile a list of the tests Joseph gave his brothers.

1. Joseph tested his brother's character (Ge 42)

a. He spoke roughly to them (42:7).

- 1) He was testing their fear for authority.
- 2) How would they respond to rough treatment?

b. He accused them of spying (42:10)

- 1) He was testing their attitudes.
- 2) How would they respond to their lives being threatened?

c. He demanded that they bring their youngest brother down (42:15)

- 1) He was testing to see if they treated Benjamin like they had treated him. **Remember, they did not know he spoke their language.**
- 2) He was listening for selfishness and jealousy.

d. He locked them up for three days (42:19)

- 1) He was giving them time to think about their situation. Being accused of spying was a capital offence.
- 2) He was increasing their fear for his authority.

e. He bound Simeon and kept him in prison while the others returned home (42:24)

- 1) They discussed among themselves their guilt of selling Joseph. Reuben rebuked them for what they had done. They did not know Joseph could hear them.

- 2) He may have been testing Simeon to see if his harshness had changed in the past 21 years.
- 3) Simeon had plenty of time to think and perhaps get right with God.

f. He restored their money in their sacks (42:25).

- 1) He was testing their honesty.
- 2) Would they repay the money or rejoice in their good fortune?

2. Joseph tested his brother's repentance (Ge 43)

a. He took them to his house for lunch (43:16)

- 1) He was testing their response to fearful situations.
- 2) This tested their reaction to increased stress.
- 3) They offered to repay the restored money (43:22-23).
- 4) They gave Joseph their present from home (43:25-26).

b. He questioned them about their father (43:27)

- 1) He was checking on his father's welfare.
- 2) He was also seeing if their words were consistent.
- 3) They brought Benjamin down, as Joseph had commanded.

c. He blessed Benjamin in their hearing (43:29)

- 1) Benjamin was now a young married man.
- 2) Joseph did not bless any of the others. They had all sold him and lied to their father.
- 3) He was probably testing their jealousy again.

d. He arranged them around his table in order of their birth (43:33)

- 1) Such knowledge was beyond that of any man. It could not have been a coincidence.
- 2) This added to their fear that God was behind all this unusual treatment by the PM. Their guilt was eating them up.

e. He gave Benjamin five times more food than the others (43:34)

- 1) This may have brought to their minds how their father had favoured Joseph.
- 2) This may have been another test of their jealousy. Had their attitudes changed? Had they truly repented of the way they treated Joseph? Were they broken over their

sin? Were they truly sorrowful?

- 3) Remember, Joseph was not punishing his brothers. He could have easily done that if he hated them. Instead, God was using Joseph to test his brothers' repentance.

3. Joseph tested his brother's sacrifice (Ge 44)

Joseph had given his brothers at least 11 tests to try their character and their repentance. So far, they had discussed to each other their guilt in selling Joseph. They tried to repay the restored money. They brought a gift to Joseph. They brought Benjamin with them. However, God wanted Joseph to test their willingness to sacrifice. This was probably the greatest test of all.

a. He again restored their money in their sacks and put his silver cup in Benjamin's sack (44:1-2)

- 1) In this they would face the greatest test yet.
- 2) Would the brothers care for Benjamin or forsake him?

b. His servant accused them of stealing the Prime Minister's silver cup (44:4-6).

- 1) To assure the servant that they had not stolen the cup, they said that if the cup were found, the man who took it should die and the rest of them would become slaves to Joseph (44:9).
- 2) The cup was found in Benjamin's sack (44:12).
- 3) They tore their clothes and returned to the city (44:13). They realised that they were about to become slaves of the PM for the rest of their lives. They were all about to receive a life-sentence into slavery, just like the life-sentence they had given to their brother 21 years earlier. Their father and their families would starve to death back in Canaan, never knowing what happened to them. This was a VERY grim day for them. They must have trembled.
- 4) Judah led his brothers to Joseph's house, and they fell prostrate on the ground before Joseph (44:14).
- 5) Joseph rebuked them sternly (44:15).
- 6) Judah, speaking for all the brothers, spoke to their lord, Joseph (44:16).
 - a) What shall we say?
 - b) What shall we speak?