

Chapter 44

Iofeph caufeth their fackes to be filled with corne, and their money to be put againe therin, and in Beniamins fack alfo a filuer cuppe, 4. and when they were parted, fending after them, chargeth them with theft. 12. And the cuppe being fond in Beniamins fack, they al much afflicted returne to Iofeph. 17. Who threatning to kepe Benjamin, 18. Iudas intreateth, 32. and finally offereth himfelfe to feruitude for him.

And Iofeph commanded the fteward of his houfe, faing: Fil their fackes with corne, as much as they can hold: and put the money of euerie one in the top of his fack. ² And in the fackes mouth ^{a)}of the younger put my filuer cup, and the price which he gaue for the wheat. And it was fo done. ³ And when the morning rofe, they were difmift with their affes. ⁴ And they were now departed out of the citie, and had gone forward a litle way: then Iofeph fending for the fteward of his houfe, faid: Arife, quoth he, and purfew the men: and ouertaking them fay to them: Why haue you rendred euil for good? ⁵ The cup which you haue ftollen, is that wherin my lord doth drinke, and wherin he is wont to diuine: you haue done a verie euil thing. ⁶ He did as he had commanded. And hauing ouertaken them, he fpake to them in the fame order. ⁷ Who answered: Why doth our lord fpeake fo, as though thy feruantes had committed fo haynous a fact? ⁸ The money, that we found in the top of our fackes, we recaried to thee from the land of Chanaan: and how foloweth it, that we haue ftollen out of thy lordes houfe, gold or filuer? ⁹ With whom foeuer of thy feruantes that shal be found, which thou feekeft, let him die, and we wil be the bondmen of our lord. ¹⁰ Who faid to them: Be it done according to your fentence: with whom foeuer it shal be found, be he

^a By this Iofeph tried his bretherens affection, whether they would intrete for Benjamin, or fuffer him to be captiue: as they had before fold himfelfe to captiuitie. *Theod. q. 105. in Gen.*

my bondman, and you shal be guiltles. ¹¹ Therefore in hafte taking downe their fackes vpon the ground, euerie man opened. ¹² Which when he had fearched, beginning from the elder euen to the youngest, he found the cup in Beniamins fack. ¹³ But they ^a)renting their garments, and loading their asses againe, returned into the towne. ¹⁴ And Iudas foremofte with his brethren entred in to Ioseph (for he was not yet gone out of the place) and they fel together before him on the ground. ¹⁵ To whom he said: Why would you doe foe? know you not that there is not the like to me in the science ^b)of diuining. ¹⁶ To whom Iudas said: What shal we anfwere, my lord? or what shal we speake, or be able iustly to pretend? God hath found the iniquitie of thy seruantes: loe we are al bondmen to my lord, both we, & he, with whom the cup was found. ¹⁷ Ioseph answered: God forbid that I should so doe: he that stole the cup, the same be my bondman: and goe you free vnto your father. ¹⁸ And Iudas approching nearer, said boldly: I beseech thee my lord, let thy seruant speake a word in thine eares, and be not angrie with thy seruant: for after Pharao thou art, ¹⁹ my lord. Thou didest aske thy seruantes the first time: Haue you a father or a brother? ²⁰ and we answered thee my lord: We haue a father an old man, and a little boy, that was borne in his old age; whose brother by the mother is dead: and his mother hath him only, and his father loueth him tenderly. ²¹ And thou saidst to thy seruants: Bring him hither to me, and I wil set myn eyes on him. ²² We suggested to my lord: The boy can not leaue his father: for if he leaue him, he wil die. ²³ And thou saidest to thy seruants: Vnlesse your youngest brother come with you, you shal no more see my face. ²⁴ Therefore when we were gone vp to thy seruant our father, we told him al things that my lord

^a O torments of mercie! he vexeth whom he loueth. *S. Greg. ho. 22. in Ezech.*

^b Ioseph being in deede a prophet, knowing more then al forcerers in Ægypt spoke of himselfe as he was esteemed in that place. *S. Aug. q. 145. super Gen.*

did fpeake. ²⁵ And our father faid: Goe againe, and bye vs a litle wheate. ²⁶ To whom we faid: We can not goe: if our youngeft brother shal goe downe with vs, we wil fet forward together: otherwife he being abfent, we dare not fee the mans face. ²⁷ Wherunto he answered: You know that my wife bare me two. ²⁸ One went forth, and you faid: A beaft did deuour him: and hitherto he appeareth not. ²⁹ If you take this alfo, and ought befall him in the way, you shal bring downe ^amy hoare hayres with forow vnto hel. ³⁰ Therefore if I shal enter to thy feruant our father, and the boy be wanting (wheras his life dependeth vpon the life of him) ³¹ and he shal fee that he is not with vs, he wil dye, & thy feruants shal bring downe his hoare hayres with forow vnto hel. ³² Let me be thy proper feruant, that did take him into my protection and promifed faying: Vnleffe I bring him againe I wil be guilty of finne againft my father for euer. ³³ I therefore thy feruant wil tary in fteed of the childe in the feruice of my lord, and let the childe goe vp with his brethren. ³⁴ For I can not returne to my father, the childe being abfent; left I ftand by a witnes of the calamitie, that fhall opprefse my father.

^a See note for c. 42. v. 38