

CONNECTED

with Pastor Jacquie

In The Beginning Genesis: Lesson Twenty-Nine

Sunday School

January 25, 2026

What is divination and did Joseph practice it?

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary states “Divination, the art of obtaining secret knowledge, especially of the future, is a pagan counterpart of prophecy. Careful comparison of Scripture will reveal that inspirational divination is by demonic power whereas genuine prophecy is by the Spirit of God. The biblical attitude toward divination is by demonic power, whereas genuine prophecy is by the Spirit of God.”

In Genesis 44 verse 15, Joseph accuses his brothers in person, saying, “What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me can indeed practice divination?” Joseph’s claim to have knowledge by divination seems to conflict with the Bible’s condemnation of divination as evil (Deuteronomy 18:10; 1 Samuel 15:23). Did he really use divination?

The most likely scenario is that Joseph owned a silver divination cup as did all Egyptian nobility at that time. The context is not clear that Joseph ever used this cup in divination. It is clear that Joseph’s use of the “divining cup” is part of his test for his brothers. This statement (made to attach special significance to the cup) was part of the situation Joseph contrived/schemed to test his brothers. Would they seize on this opportunity to get rid of Benjamin, or had their hearts indeed been changed so that they would stand with him? He planted evidence that would link them to a serious crime.

Since the cup was part of a setup, it may have not been used in divination at all. There is no indication in the passage that Joseph actually used the cup for

divination. Instead, Joseph may have claimed he used it to divine matters in order to raise the stakes and incite more fear in his brothers' hearts.

Joseph had no need to use a cup for divination. Joseph did not practice divination because he followed God's commands in everything. God had enabled him to have prophetic dreams himself and to interpret the dreams of others. Joseph found his success in God without the use of props.

God forbids divination. "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable things, the LORD your God will drive them out before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God." Deuteronomy 18:10-13

Keep away from divination, magicians, horoscope, and everything related to them, and walk in faithfulness to God as Joseph did.

APPLICATION QUESTION:

Do you read your horoscope or follow your star sign? Remember that it is not OK to read your horoscope even just for fun.

QUOTE:

As the most dangerous winds may enter at little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously than by little unobserved incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations. *John Wesley*

PRAYER:

Lord, I pray that I will never play around with the occultic world, knowing that it is dangerous. Help me to trust in You for my future. Amen

Read Genesis 43 and 44