

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

September 2012

Joshua: Hope for God's People

Lesson #10: Conflict Resolution

Who is the peacemaker in your family when misunderstandings occur?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Note: Joshua told the Reubenites, Gadites and half tribe of Manasseh to return to their inherited land with his blessing and their share of the loot as a reward for their faithful fighting that lasted over 7 years. You can imagine how close they must have become after facing death together and seeing God at work. Shiloh was a center of Jewish religious activity since it had a large tabernacle there. All the warriors had experienced God's wrath when sin tainted the community. (Jos 7:25) "Adopting the formal legal style of accusation (vv. 16–20), defense (vv. 21–29), and resolution (vv. 30–34), the story shows how a people committed to God can work out differences." ¹

Read Joshua 22:1-12

Note: Mosaic Law commanded that sacrifices be made only at the altar of Israel's central sanctuary (Deut. 12), which at that time stood in the tabernacle court. Building another altar, of the unique design that God required for altars of sacrifice (Ex. 20:24–26), seemed an act of open defiance of the divine Law. The fact that the tribes west of the Jordan were willing to go to war over this issue shows how dedicated the people were at that time to obeying God completely. ²

1. How were the tribes east of the Jordan different that the other Israelites? Num 32
2. What was Joshua concerned about when he released the tribes? Vs 5
3. Why were the "western" Israelites upset?
4. What was their solution?

Read Joshua 22:13-20

5. Why was Phinehas a prestigious choice to lead the delegation? Num 25:7-8; Ps 106:30-31
6. Were the Israelites more concerned about the Transjordan Israelites or what God might do? Why? Num 25

Read Joshua 22:21-34

Note: The altar had not been built for offering sacrifices, but rather as a visible reminder that these two and a half tribes were part of Israel (vv. 21–29). S. G. DeGraaf writes of the two and a half tribes, "They had been afraid that the two communities, separated by the Jordan, might become estranged from each other, and that the tribes to the west of the river might someday refuse to allow the eastern tribes to participate in the service of the Lord at Shiloh." ³

7. What was the explanation of the Transjordan Israelites?
8. Why did the delegation rejoice that they had been wrong?
9. What can we learn about this conflict resolution? Matt 18:15-20
10. Why is confrontation sometimes necessary as a peacemaker? What role does humility take?

APPLICATION

Love for God sometimes calls for confrontation, often not to condemn, but to express. Both sides of *this* conflict were primarily concerned with pleasing God. What challenge is your spiritual community or family facing that might be solved by prayerfully seeking the truth at its source?

^{1 2} Richards, L. O. (1991). *The Bible reader's companion* (electronic ed.) (155). Wheaton: Victor Books.

¹ DeGraaf, p. 416.

³ Ellsworth, R. (2008). *Opening up Joshua*. Opening Up Commentary (106–107). Leominster: Day One Publications.