

A Perceived Threat

Scripture Reading — Joshua 22:10-20

“How could you break faith with the God of Israel ... ?”
—Joshua 22:16 —

It's true what a cartoon character—Pogo—once said: “We have met the enemy, and he is us.” It's not so much what others do to us but what we do to ourselves that gets us into trouble.

Having received rest from war on every side, the Israelite tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh headed back to the land of their inheritance east of the Jordan. But as they reached the Jordan, they set up an imposing altar, and that made the other tribes think they were violating the Lord's instructions for worship of the one true God alone.

But that turned out to be a misunderstanding. The eastern tribes had not built the altar for worship, but to stand as a witness for their descendants, reminding them “that the LORD is God” (see Joshua 22:21-34).

Though this matter was easily resolved, God's people need to be watchful, that sin may not enter in and cause division and trouble, as the Israelites experienced when Achan sinned (see Joshua 7). The apostle Peter writes that the enemy of God prowls constantly, “looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

At the same time, we need to realize that jumping to conclusions can lead to trouble as well. People can sometimes be their own worst enemies. As we gather for worship today, may we do so with integrity, our eyes opened and our hearts ready for God's Spirit.

Prayer

Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see ourselves as you see us. May we all serve you faithfully in Christ's name. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Bible Characters](#), [Joshua](#)

Written by Arie Leder — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/arie-c-leder>

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