Student Disciple Math Court: Module 1 Lesson 2

A Biblical Perspective: Responsibility, Settlement & Bullying

Understanding how biblical principles apply to situations involving harm, responsibility, and financial resolution can guide students in navigating complex situations like the case involving Alton, Keisha, and Helen. This factsheet explores key biblical perspectives on these matters. For ease of reference, the facts of the case involving Keisha and Alton are restated below:

Case Study (Fictitious) - Summary of Facts

Alton, a promising young artist, brought his prized painting to a school art exhibition. Tragically, during a period of ongoing tension, Keisha, known as a school bully, intentionally damaged Alton's artwork. The painting was independently valued at US\$23,525. Investigations confirmed that 64% of the painting's total value was directly compromised by Keisha's actions. Alton's legal representation, seeking full restitution and accountability, initially demanded that Helen, Keisha's mother, pay a sum equivalent to 150% of the damaged value of the painting. In addition to this, Alton sought reimbursement for his incurred legal fees, amounting to US\$1,650.

During the contentious proceedings, Judge Stern carefully considered the arguments and evidence presented. Ultimately, the Judge ordered Helen to pay Alton 135% of the damaged value of the painting. Furthermore, regarding legal fees, the Judge ruled that Helen must cover three-quarters (3/4) of the legal fees Alton incurred. In a gesture aimed at encouraging prompt resolution, Judge Stern included a special condition: a 5% discount would be applied to the total ordered amount if payment was made within 10 days from the date of the verdict. Helen is employed at JC's Place, where she earns 12% commission on sales. Her attorney has engaged in settlement talks with Alton's attorney. Alton proposes to give a 6% discount on the amount owed. Helen proposes to pay off the amount in 18 weeks.

1.0 Biblical Principles on Causing Harm and Responsibility

1.1 Love for Neighbour and Avoiding Harm (Matthew 22:39, Romans 13:10): A foundational biblical principle is to love your neighbour as yourself. This means actively seeking their well-being, protecting their property, and refraining from any action that would cause them harm, whether physical, emotional, or financial. Keisha's damage to Alton's artwork directly violated this principle, causing both emotional distress and financial loss.

1.2 Accountability for Actions (Galatians 6:7, Proverbs 10:4): The Bible teaches that a person reaps what they sow. This principle extends to our actions, both good and bad. If harm is caused, there is an expectation of accountability. For children, this accountability often extends to their parents or guardians, who have a God-given responsibility to train them in righteousness and guide them towards responsible behaviour. Helen, as Keisha's mother, faced legal and financial consequences, underscoring this parental responsibility.

1.3 Restitution and Making Amends (Exodus 22:5-6, Luke 19:8): When a wrong has been committed and damage has occurred, the biblical standard often calls for restitution – making things right or repaying what was taken or destroyed.
Alton's pursuit of damages and Helen's payment reflect this principle of making

amends for the harm caused. This process seeks to restore justice and heal relationships.

1.4 Integrity in Agreements and Debts (Romans 13:8, Psalm 37:21): The Bible emphasises the importance of fulfilling one's obligations and being faithful in financial dealings. When a settlement is reached, it represents an agreement that should be honoured diligently. Helen's commitment to paying off the debt through her commission and weekly wage demonstrates an effort to fulfil this obligation with integrity.

1.5 **Diligence and Hard Work (Proverbs 13:4, Proverbs 14:23):** Facing financial obligations, as Helen did, highlights the biblical value of diligence and hard work. Earning a commission through sales requires consistent effort, which is a commendable way to meet responsibilities. The Bible encourages hard work as a means to provide for oneself and to fulfil commitments.

2.0 Know Your Rights: Biblical Perspective on Bullying, Responsibility & Settlement Scenarios – Interactive Quiz

Here are 10 multiple-choice questions based on the biblical principles discussed, relating to the case of Alton, Keisha, and Helen. Click on the link below to take the quiz.

Take Interactive Quiz 2

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