

“I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).

White Lies - Lies Approved by God

“On hope of eternal life, which God, Who *cannot* lie, promised before the eternal times” (Titus 1:2 MKJV).

“On hope of eternal life which the God Who *does not* lie promised before the eternal times” (Titus 1:2 LITV).

“In the hope of eternal life, which was made certain before eternal time, by the Word of God Who is *ever true*” (Titus 1:2 BBE).

Is it always wrong to lie? Is there such a thing as an innocent lie or even a virtuous one? Are there instances when lies or deceptions are appropriate, justified, or at least to be overlooked? Or does God hate all lies (the deliberate imparting of inaccurate or false information with the intent of deception)? Would God ever reward lying? Would God ever lie, as we understand lying?

Perhaps we should ask ourselves if our idea of what constitutes a lie is right. Is the lie in the letter, in the motive, or both? Can deception for what might be judged a good or unselfish cause serve to undermine future trust between the liar and the one lied to? Who should be making these judgments?

Man has wrestled with many such questions from the beginning of time, ever since the serpent deceived Eve. We were lied to, and the deception being as a contagious disease, we've all lied ever since. But is it always wrong to deceive?

In her book, *The Hiding Place*, Corrie Ten Boom relates an incident in Holland during the Nazi occupation in WWII. The Nazis were rounding up young men for work duties at munitions factories. Corrie was visiting with her sister-in-law, Nollie, when her two nephews, potential labor candidates, came rushing into the house with ashen faces wanting to hide because the Germans were coming.

Nollie had a small potato cellar under the floor. Quickly, they opened the trapdoor and the two boys jumped in. They covered the trapdoor with a rug, and the kitchen table was placed over the spot. The ladies quickly covered the table with a long tablecloth and set tea places for five.

Suddenly, the Germans burst in with rifles leveled, commanding everyone not to move. They asked Cocky, Corrie's niece and the sister of the hidden brothers, where their men were.

The family had been brought up as Christians. As such, they were taught never to lie. Now was a time of testing in this crisis of conscience. What should Cocky do or say? Corrie believed that in such a case, it was right to lie.

Cocky tried evading and stalling, but the soldier pressed her.

"Where are your men? Where are your brothers?" he demanded.

Cocky continued to stall.

"Do you have brothers?" he asked.

She admitted she had three brothers and, upon demand, gave their ages - 21, 19, and 18. Continuing to avoid disclosure of her two hidden brothers, she said one brother was in theological college. The soldiers then demanded where the other two were.

What would she do? Would she lie or tell the truth, as she believed God would have her do? Again, they asked, "Where are they?"

"Why, they're under the table," she replied.

The Germans approached the table. One readied his rifle while the other tore back the tablecloth. Immediately Cocky "burst into spasms of high hysterical laughter," as Corrie put it. The soldiers were offended, thinking she was mocking them, and having already searched the rest of the house, they left.

The family then had a visit with thankfulness and soul searching. Did Cocky do the right thing? She told the truth, after all, but did it in such a way as to escape the consequences of the soldiers knowing the full truth. Was she lying while telling the truth? Was she telling the truth while lying? Was she *speaking* the truth while *doing* a lie? Was the speaking right and the doing wrong? Or was the speaking wrong and the doing right?

Wasn't hiding the boys sending a message that they weren't there, when they were? Cocky's mother, Nollie, was convinced her daughter did the right thing. She said, "God honors truth-telling with perfect protection!"

Is it possible to know what you might have done in that situation? As they say, "Talk is cheap." Idle words - "If that had been me..." - often come back to try us.

What if Cocky, after her life training to speak the truth, had deliberately lied to them? With her lack of conviction, might she have failed to convince them? What would she have said? And how would she have said it?

Perhaps her being extra evasive might have increased her stress of guilt, aroused the soldiers' suspicions, and intensified their determination to search the house more thoroughly. Is there a black-and-white right and wrong in such circumstances?

Meanwhile, some may be surprised at the lies and deception practiced in the Scriptures by several persons of faith, some in the service of God, even commissioned at His throne in Heaven.

We had debate with a fellow who stalwartly condemned falsifying information of any kind under any circumstances. "A lie is a lie is a lie," he insisted, "and any lie is sin."

"But, Akaid," I replied, "if a sin brings death, then a lie told to save a life would destroy the liar, wouldn't it? If any lie is sin, and the wages of sin is death, then why would God bless or keep someone who tried to do good by lying, or at least, wasn't trying to do harm, perhaps only trying to defeat the enemy and save himself by deception?"

Akaid would hear none of it. To him a lie was sin, period. I replied with several examples of lying in Scripture:

Abram (Abraham)

Genesis 12:10-20 MKJV

(10) And there was a famine in the land. And Abram went down into Egypt to stay there, for the famine was grievous in the land.

(11) And it happened, when he had come near to enter into Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "Behold now, I know that you are a beautiful woman to look upon.

(12) And it will be when the Egyptians see you, they shall say, 'This is his wife.' And they will kill me, but they will save you alive.

(13) I pray you, say that you are my sister, so that it may be well with me for your sake. And my soul shall live because of you."

(14) And it happened when Abram had come into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful.

(15) The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her before Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

(16) And he treated Abram well for her sake. And he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and male servants, and maidservants, and she-asses, and camels.

(17) And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

(18) And Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she is your wife?

(19) Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? And so I was about to take her to me as wife.

Now therefore behold your wife. Take her and go.”

(20) And Pharaoh commanded men concerning him. And they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

Twice Abraham told the same lie, both times also instructing his wife, Sarah, to lie:

Genesis 20:1-18 ESV

(1) From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar.

(2) And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

(3) But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife.”

(4) Now Abimelech had not approached her. So he said, “Lord, will you kill an innocent people?”

(5) Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this.”

(6) Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I Who kept you from sinning against Me. Therefore I did not let you touch her.

(7) Now then, return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, so that he will pray for you, and you shall live. But if you do not return her, know that you shall surely die, you, and all who are yours.”

(8) So Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told them all these things. And the men were very much afraid.

(9) Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things that ought not to be done.”

(10) And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What did you see, that you did this thing?”

(11) Abraham said, “I did it because I thought, There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.

(12) Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.

(13) And when God caused me to wander from my father’s house, I said to her, ‘This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, He is my brother.’”

(14) Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male servants and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and returned Sarah his wife to him.

(15) And Abimelech said, “Behold, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you.”

(16) To Sarah he said, “Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. It is a sign of your innocence in the eyes of all who are with you, and before everyone you are vindicated.”

(17) Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children.

(18) For the LORD had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Here was the father of all who believe. When he lies, God not only protects him, but blesses him.

Sarah

Did God charge Sarah with sin when she laughed, then lied about it, even directly to Him? No, instead, He kept His promise and gave her the miraculous son of promise:

Genesis 18:9-15 ESV

(9) They said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "She is in the tent."

(10) The LORD said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him.

(11) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah.

(12) So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?"

(13) The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?'"

(14) Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son."

(15) But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. He said, "No, but you did laugh."

"The LORD visited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as He had promised. And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac" (Genesis 21:1-3 ESV).

"Isaac" means "He will laugh." God had them name Isaac so as a result of Sarah's lie! Was that a rebuke or punishment? It wouldn't seem so.

Isaac

Isaac followed in his father's footsteps:

Genesis 26:6-14 ESV

(6) So Isaac settled in Gerar.

(7) When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he feared to say, "My wife," thinking, "lest the men of the place should kill me because of Rebekah," because she was attractive in appearance.

(8) When he had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac laughing with Rebekah his wife.

(9) So Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Behold, she is your wife. How then could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I thought, 'Lest I die because of

her.’”

(10) Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.”

(11) So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, “Whoever touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

(12) And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him,

(13) and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy.

(14) He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him.

Isaac lied to protect himself and God blessed him! One of the points of this paper: It’s not our righteousness!

Jacob and Rebekah

And what of Jacob obtaining his brother Esau’s blessing by deceit, with the help of his mother, Rebekah? Isaac, by the Spirit of God, prophesies and blesses Jacob, who pretends to be Esau!

Genesis 27:1-29 MKJV

(1) And it happened when Isaac was old and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called his oldest son Esau and said to him, “My son.” And he said to him, “Behold, I am here.”

(2) And he said, “Behold now, I am old, I do not know the day of my death.

(3) And now please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me.

(4) And make tasty meat for me, such as I love, and bring to me so that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.”

(5) And Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game in order to bring it.

(6) And Rebekah spoke to her son Jacob, saying, “Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying,

(7) ‘Bring me game, and make me delicious things so that I may eat and bless you before the LORD before my death.’

(8) And now, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you.

(9) Go now to the flock, and bring me from there two good kids of the goats. And I will make them delicious things for your father, such as he loves.

(10) And you shall bring it to your father so that he may eat, and that he may bless you before his death.”

(11) And Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, “Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man.

(12) My father will perhaps feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver. And I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.”

(13) And his mother said to him, “Your curse be upon me, my son, only obey my voice

and go bring them to me.”

(14) And he went. And he took them and brought to his mother. And his mother made delicious things such as his father loved.

(15) And Rebekah took the clothes of her older son Esau, the costly ones which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son.

(16) And she put the skins from the kids of the goats on his hands, and on the smooth of his neck.

(17) And she gave the delicious things and the bread which she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob.

(18) And he came to his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am; who are you, my son?”

(19) And Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your first-born. I have done as you asked me. Arise, I pray you, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.”

(20) And Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the LORD your God brought it to me.”

(21) And Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near, I pray you, so that I may feel you, my son, whether you are truly my son Esau or not.”

(22) And Jacob went near to Isaac his father. And he felt him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands the hands of Esau.”

(23) And he did not know him because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands. And he blessed him.

(24) And he said, “Are you truly my son Esau?” And he said, “I am.”

(25) And he said, “Bring it to me, and I will eat of my son’s game, so that my soul may bless you.” And he brought it near to him, and he ate. And he brought him wine, and he drank.

(26) And his father Isaac said to him, “Come near now and kiss me, my son.”

(27) And he came near and kissed him. And he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him, and said, “See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed.

(28) And may God give you of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine.

(29) Let people serve you, and let nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and let your mother’s sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone that curses you, and blessed be he that blesses you.”

Jacob

Here is more lying, in which God prospered Jacob. Does God reward deceit and trickery, which are “lying” as some define it, calling it sin?

Genesis 30:31-43 MKJV

(31) And [Laban] said, “What shall I give you?” And Jacob said, “You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flock.

(32) I will pass through all the flocks today, taking out all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all of the black sheep among the lambs, and the spotted and the speckled among the goats. And these shall be my hire.

(33) And shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, and it shall come for my hire before your face. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, shall be counted stolen with me.”

(34) And Laban said, “Yes, truly let it be according to your word.”

(35) And that day he took out the he-goats that were striped and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the black from among the lambs, and gave them into the hand of his sons.

(36) And he set three days’ journey between himself and Jacob. And Jacob fed the rest of Laban’s flocks.

(37) And Jacob took rods of green poplar, and of a fresh tree, and the almond and plane tree. And he peeled white streaks in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods.

(38) And he set the rods which he had peeled by the troughs, by the water troughs, where the flocks came to drink, across from the flocks, and the flocks were in heat when they came to drink.

(39) And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth striped cattle, speckled, and spotted.

(40) And Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped, and all the black in the flock of Laban. And he put his own flocks by themselves, and did not put them with the flock of Laban.

(41) And it happened when the stronger flocks conceived, Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the flocks in the troughs, so that they might conceive among the rods.

(42) But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put them in. And usually it came to be, the weak ones were Laban’s and the stronger ones Jacob’s.

(43) And the man increased exceedingly, and had many flocks, and maidservants, and male servants, and camels, and asses.

We need to repent of carnal man’s creeds and believe the clear testimony of the Scriptures. God needs no defense or justification of man. **He is sovereign over all things.**

I can tell you why Jacob got the blessing by deceit, not by conjecture or speculation, but by revelation and Scripture. It is to demonstrate God’s grace at work even through the unrighteousness of men.

Simeon and Levi

Simeon and Levi, two of the twelve sons of Jacob (Levi’s lineage would become the Levitical priesthood of God for Israel), deceived the inhabitants of Canaan to get a physical advantage over them.

“And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, speaking with deceit because he had defiled Dinah their sister” (Genesis 34:13 MKJV).

They acted in revenge because Shechem, a prince of Canaan, defiled their sister, Dinah. They killed all the men and took their possessions, wives, and children.

Were Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, held accountable for their deception in avenging Dinah? Jacob did rebuke and curse these two sons, in his prophecy just before he died:

“Simeon and Levi are brothers; tools of violence are their weapons. Oh my soul, do not come into their secret. Let not my honor be united with their assembly. For in their anger they killed a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung a bull. Let their anger be cursed, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel” (Genesis 49:5-7 MKJV).

But was the curse for lying or murder?

The Sons of Jacob

At least ten sons of Jacob conspired to sell their brother, Joseph, into slavery. They then lied to their father about what they had done. This was no small lie, leading their father to believe Joseph had been slain, yet it was God's way of sending Joseph to Egypt to save those same brothers and their families in a severe drought.

Genesis 37:23-36 MKJV

(23) And it happened when Joseph had come to his brothers, they stripped Joseph out of his tunic, the tunic reaching to the soles of his feet that was on him.

(24) And they took him and threw him into a pit. And the pit was empty, with no water in it.

(25) And they sat down to eat bread. And they lifted up their eyes, and looked. And behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spices and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

(26) And Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it if we should kill our brother and hide his blood?

(27) Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him. For he is our brother, and our flesh.” And his brothers listened.

(28) And men, Midianites traders, came by. And they drew up Joseph and took him out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt.

(29) And Reuben returned to the pit. And behold! Joseph was not in the pit! And he tore his clothes.

(30) And he returned to his brothers and said, “The child, he is not. And I, where shall I go?”

(31) And they took Joseph's tunic, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood.

(32) And they sent the tunic reaching to the soles of the feet, and they brought it to their father. And they said, “We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's coat or not?”

(33) And he knew it, and said, “It is my son's tunic. An evil beast has eaten him. Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces.”

(34) And Jacob tore his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his

son many days.

(35) And all his sons, and all his daughters, rose up to comfort him. But he refused to be comforted. And he said, “For I will go down into the grave to my son mourning.” And his father wept for him.

(36) And the Midianites sold him into Egypt to Potiphar, a eunuch of Pharaoh, the chief of the executioners.

Did these men suffer consequences for lying to their father? Here’s what Joseph said to them, over two decades later:

Genesis 45:6-8 MKJV

(6) “For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be no plowing nor harvest.

(7) And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

(8) And now you did not send me here, but God. And He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler over all the land of Egypt.”

Genesis 50:18-21 ESV

(18) His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.”

(19) But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?

(20) As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

(21) So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

God was working their lying and treachery for their own good. Who would have known? Did that exonerate them from the evil they did their brother? No; they suffered with guilty consciences over the matter. They were judged, not for condemnation, but salvation.

Judah and Tamar

How about this piece of deceit, which God didn’t condemn, but used to produce the lineage of King David, leading to the Messiah?

Genesis 38:1-30 MKJV

(1) And it happened at that time, Judah went down from his brothers and turned in to a certain Adullamite, named Hirah.

(2) And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite man named Shuah. And he took her and went in to her.

(3) And she conceived and bore a son. And he called his name Er.

(4) And she conceived again, and bore a son, and she called his name Onan.

(5) And she yet again conceived and bore a son. And she called his name Shelah. And she was at Chezib when she bore him.

- (6) And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar.
- (7) And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD. And the LORD killed him.
- (8) And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to your brother."
- (9) And Onan knew that the seed would not be his. And it happened when he went in to his brother's wife, that he spilled on the ground, not giving seed to his brother.
- (10) And what he did was evil in the eyes of the LORD. Therefore He killed him also.
- (11) Then said Judah to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow at your father's house until Shelah my son is grown." For he said, "Lest perhaps he die also, as his brothers did." And Tamar went and lived in her father's house.
- (12) And the days were many, and Judah's wife, the daughter of Shuah, died. And Judah was comforted, and went up to shearers of his sheep, he and his friend Hiram of Adullam, to Timnah.
- (13) And it was told to Tamar, saying, "Behold, your father-in-law goes up to Timnah to shear his sheep."
- (14) And she put off her widow's clothes, and covered herself with a veil, and wrapped herself. And she sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah was grown and she was not given to him as wife.
- (15) When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face.
- (16) And he turned aside to her by the wayside, and said, "Come now, let me come in to you." For he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, "What will you give me, so that you may come in to me?"
- (17) And he said, "I will send a kid of the goats from the flock." And she said, "Will you give me a pledge until you send it?"
- (18) And he said, "What pledge shall I give you?" And she said, "Your signet, and your bracelet, and your staff that is in your hand." And he gave to her, and came in to her, and she conceived by him.
- (19) And she arose, and went away, and laid away her veil from her, and put on the clothes of her widowhood.
- (20) And Judah sent the kid of the goats by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand. But he did not find her.
- (21) Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the harlot who was by the wayside?" And they said, "There was no harlot here."
- (22) And he returned to Judah, and said, "I cannot find her. And also the men of the place said, 'There was no harlot here.'"
- (23) And Judah said, "Let her take it to her, lest we be ashamed. Behold, I sent this kid, and you have not found her."
- (24) And it happened, about three months afterward, that it was told Judah, saying, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot, and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom." And Judah said, "Bring her forth, and let her be burned."
- (25) When she was brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "I am with child by the man whose things these are." And she said, "Please observe. Whose things are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff?"
- (26) And Judah acknowledged them, and said, "She has been more righteous than I

have, because I did not give her to my son Shelah.” And he never knew her again.
(27) And it happened, in the time of her travail, behold, twins were in her womb.
(28) And when she travailed, it happened that one put out a hand. And the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, “This one came out first.”
(29) And it happened as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, “How have you broken a break for yourself? And his name was called Pharez.”
(30) And afterwards his brother came out, on whose hand was the scarlet thread. And his name was called Zarah.

Who can understand the ways of God, or charge Him with wrongdoing? Judah was tricked by Tamar, which led to his admission of wrongdoing and the birth of an heir of the promises of God:

“And let your house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give you of this young woman” (Ruth 4:12 MKJV).

Tamar wasn't punished for her lie, but rewarded because her cause was just, and the Lord judges the heart, not the appearance.

The Midwives in Egypt

And here is the event of the Hebrew midwives, where God blessed them for lying to save the male Hebrew children at birth. Would you accuse God of rewarding sin? Was it evil of the midwives to save lives?

Exodus 1:15-21 MKJV

(15) And the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah.
(16) And he said, “When you midwife the Hebrew women, and look on the birth stools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him. But if it is a daughter, then she shall live.”
(17) But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved alive the male children.
(18) And the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing, and have saved the male children alive?”
(19) And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women. For they are lively, and are delivered before the midwives come in to them.”
(20) And God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and became very mighty.
(21) And it happened, because the midwives feared God, that He made them houses [families].

Moses, under God's Command

God instructed Moses as follows: “...and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and you shall say unto him, ‘The LORD God of the Hebrews has

met with us: and **now let us go**, we beseech you, **three days' journey into the wilderness**, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God” (Exodus 3:18 KJV).

What is this? Wasn't God intending to take His people out of Egypt altogether, to the land of milk and honey? He had said earlier:

“And I am coming down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, to bring them up out of that land, to a good land, a large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites and the Jebusites” (Exodus 3:8 MKJV).

Why the deception? But Moses obeyed and Pharaoh refused. Thereafter Moses never revealed God's true purpose for Israel, nor was he commanded to. But all of God's words were fulfilled: “And the LORD said to Moses, Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For with a strong hand he shall let them go, and with a strong hand he shall drive them out of his land” (Exodus 6:1 MKJV).

Rahab the Harlot

Joshua 2:1-24 MKJV

- (1) And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, “Go look over the land, even Jericho.” And they went and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab. And they stayed there.
- (2) And the king of Jericho was told about it, saying, “Behold, men from the sons of Israel came in here tonight, to search out the country.”
- (3) And the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men that have come to you, those who have entered into your house. For they have come to search out all the country.”
- (4) And the woman took the two men and hid them. And she said, “Two men came to me, but I did not know from where they came.
- (5) And it happened when it was dark, at the time of shutting the gate, the men went out. Where the men went I do not know. Go after them quickly, for you shall overtake them.”
- (6) But she had brought them up on the roof, and had hidden them with the stalks of flax which she had laid in order upon the roof.
- (7) And the men went after them on the way to Jordan, to the fords. And when they who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.
- (8) And before they had laid down, she came up to them on the roof.
- (9) And she said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that your terror has fallen on us, and that all those who live in the land faint because of you.
- (10) For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.
- (11) And we had heard, and our hearts melted, nor did any more spirit remain in any man, because of you. For the LORD your God, He is God in Heaven above and in earth

beneath.

(12) Now therefore, I pray you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt with you in kindness, that you will also deal with kindness to my father's house. And give me a true token,

(13) and shall save alive my father and my mother, and my brothers and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."

(14) And the men answered her, "Our life shall be for yours, if you do not tell our business. And when the LORD has given us the land, we will deal kindly and truly with you."

(15) Then she let them go down by a cord through the window. For her house was on the town wall, and she lived on the wall.

(16) And she said to them, "Get up into the mountain lest the pursuers meet you. And hide yourselves there three days until the pursuers have returned. And afterward you may go your way."

(17) And the men said to her, "We will be blameless of this oath to you which you have made us swear.

(18) Behold, when we come into the land, you shall set this line of scarlet thread in the window from which you let us down. And you shall bring your father and your mother, and your brothers, and all your father's household, home to you.

(19) And it shall be, whoever shall go out of the doors of your house, his blood shall be on his head, and we will be blameless. And whoever shall be with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is on him.

(20) And if you tell our business, then we will be free of the oath which you have made us swear to you."

(21) And she said, "Let it be according to your word." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she set the scarlet line in the window.

(22) And they went and came to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers had returned. And the pursuers looked for them throughout all the way, but did not find them.

(23) And the two men returned and came down from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun. And they told him all that happened to them.

(24) And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for even all those who live in the country faint because of us."

Rahab lied in faith, and not only so, she was praised of God and rewarded for it. God doesn't reward sin, does He?

Samuel and God

1 Samuel 16:1-3 MKJV

(1) And the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse of Bethlehem. For I have seen a king for Me among his sons."

(2) And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears, he will kill me." **And the LORD said, "Take a heifer of the herd in your hand with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'**

(3) And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for Me whomever I name to you.”

What? Does God instruct His servants, the prophets, to practice deception?

David, the Man after God’s Heart

1 Samuel 21:1-6 MKJV

(1) And David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and said to him, “Why are you alone, and no man with you?”

(2) And David said to Ahimelech the priest, “The king has commanded me a business and has said to me, ‘Let no man know anything of the business about which I send you, and what I have sent you. And I have sent servants to such and such a place.’”

(3) And therefore, what is under your hand? Give five loaves of bread in my hand, or what there is to be found.”

(4) And the priest answered David and said, “There is no common bread under my hand, but there is holy bread if the young men have kept themselves at least from women.”

(5) And David answered the priest and said to him, “Truly women have been kept from us for about three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and in a way the holy bread is common. Also surely today it is sanctified in the vessels.”

(6) And the priest gave him holy bread. For there was no bread there but the Bread of the Presence that was taken from before the LORD, in order to put hot bread in on the day when it was taken away.

In fact, David wasn’t in King Saul’s service; he was running for his life from him. Not only was David lying, he was lying to the priest of Israel. And Jesus referred to the event in which David lied, and used this story as a lesson:

Matthew 12:1-4 MKJV

(1) At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath day. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck the heads of grain and to eat.

(2) But when the Pharisees saw, they said to Him, Behold, your disciples do that which it is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day.

(3) But He said to them, Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him,

(4) how he entered into the house of God and ate the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?

David lied; he was deceitful, but there was no sin because there was no evil.

David also lied to save himself from the Philistines:

1 Samuel 21:10-15 MKJV

(10) And David arose and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of

Gath.

(11) And the servants of Achish said to him, “Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances, saying, ‘Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?’”

(12) And David laid up these words in his heart, and was very much afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

(13) And he changed his behavior before them, and pretended himself to be mad in their hands, and marked on the doors of the gate and let his spittle fall down on his beard.

(14) Then Achish said to his servants, “Lo, you see the man is mad. Why have you brought him to me?”

(15) Do I have need of mad men, that you have brought this one to show madness in my presence? Shall this one come into my house?”

And David lied to his hosts who were providing him shelter from King Saul:

1 Samuel 27:1-12 MKJV

(1) And David said in his heart, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul. Nothing is better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines. And Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any border of Israel, and so I shall escape out of his hand.”

(2) And David arose and passed over, he and the six hundred men with him to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath.

(3) And David lived with Achish of Gath, he and his men, each one with his household; David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal’s former wife.

(4) And Saul was told that David had fled to Gath. And he never again looked for him.

(5) And David said to Achish, “If I have now found grace in your eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country so that I may live there. For why should your servant live in the royal city with you?”

(6) And Achish gave him Ziklag that day. And Ziklag belongs to the kings of Judah to this day.

(7) And the number of days that David lived in the field of the Philistines was a year of days and four months.

(8) And David and his men went up and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites. For they were the inhabitants of the land from the past days, as you come into Shur, even into the land of Egypt.

(9) And David struck the land, and did not keep alive man nor woman, and took away the sheep and the oxen and the asses and the camels and the clothing, and returned and came to Achish.

(10) And Achish said, “Where have you made a raid today?” And David said, “Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.”

(11) And David did not keep alive man or woman to bring news to Gath, saying, “Lest they should tell on us, saying, ‘So David did,’” and so has been his custom all the days he lived in the fields of the Philistines.

(12) And Achish believed David, saying, “He has made himself to be hated among his people Israel, and has become my servant forever.”

David’s General Joab and the Woman of Tekoa

These people lied to their king. What shall be done with them? What did David do?

2 Samuel 14:1-21 MKJV

(1) And Joab the son of Zeruiah saw that the king’s heart was toward Absalom.

(2) And Joab sent to Tekoah and brought a wise woman from there. And he said to her, “Please pretend yourself to be a mourner, and put on mourning clothes now, and do not anoint yourself with oil. But be like a woman who has mourned for the dead a long time.

(3) And come to the king, and speak in this way to him.” And Joab put the words in her mouth.

(4) And the woman of Tekoah spoke to the king, and bowed and said, “Save, O King!”

(5) And the king said to her, “What ails you?” And she answered, “I am indeed a widow, and my husband died.

(6) And your handmaid had two sons, and the two of them fought together in the field. And there was no deliverer between them, but the one struck the other and killed him.

(7) And behold, the whole family has risen against your handmaid. And they said, ‘Deliver him who struck his brother so that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he killed. And we will destroy the heir also.’ And so they shall put out my coal which is left, and shall leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the face of the earth.”

(8) And the king said to the woman, “Go to your house, and I will give command concerning you.”

(9) And the woman of Tekoah said to the king, “My lord, O king, may the iniquity be on me and on my father’s house. And may the king and his throne be without guilt.”

(10) And the king said, “Whoever speaks to you, you also bring him to me, and he shall not touch you any more.”

(11) Then she said, “Please let the king remember the LORD your God, that you would not allow the avengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they should destroy my son.” And he said, “As the Lord lives, there shall not one hair of your son fall to the earth.”

(12) Then the woman said, “Please let your handmaid speak one more word to my lord the king.” And he said, “Say on!”

(13) And the woman said, “Why then have you thought such a thing against the people of God? For the king speaks this thing as one who is at fault, in that the king does not bring his banished one home again.

(14) For we must all die, and we are as water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. And God does not take a life, but has devised plans so that the outcast is not cast out from Him.

(15) And now I have come to speak of this thing to my lord the king, because the people have made me afraid. And your handmaid said, ‘I will now speak to the king. It

may be that the king will do what his handmaid has asked.

(16) For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man who would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.'

(17) And your handmaid said, 'The word of my lord the king shall now be comforting. For as an angel of God, so is my lord the king, to see what is good and bad. And the LORD your God will be with you.'

(18) And the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide from me the thing that I shall ask you." And the woman said, "Let my lord the king now speak."

(19) And the king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?" And the woman answered and said, "As your soul lives, my lord the king, none shall turn to the right hand or to the left from anything which my lord the king has spoken. For your servant Joab commanded me. And he put all these words in the mouth of your handmaid.

(20) Your servant Joab has done this thing to change the face of the matter. And my lord is wise according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all that is in the land."

(21) And the king said to Joab, "Behold now, I have done this thing. Go therefore and bring the young man Absalom again."

David's Direction to Hushai the Archite

How much clearer does it get that all lies are not sin, when David counsels others to lie, as in the following episode?:

2 Samuel 15:31-34 ESV

(31) And it was told David, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

(32) While David was coming to the summit, where God was worshiped, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn and dirt on his head.

(33) David said to him, "If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me.

(34) But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so now I will be your servant,' then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel."

And here's what happened by David's deliberate deceit, which God blessed:

"And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, 'The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel.' For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil on Absalom" (2 Samuel 17:14 MKJV).

It didn't stop there. God also prospered a woman who lied in order to hide David's messengers from Absalom:

2 Samuel 17:15-21 ESV

(15) Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and so did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so have I counseled.

(16) Now therefore send quickly and tell David, ‘Do not stay tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over, lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.’”

(17) Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel. A female servant was to go and tell them, and they were to go and tell King David, for they were not to be seen entering the city.

(18) But a young man saw them and told Absalom. So both of them went away quickly and came to the house of a man at Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard. And they went down into it.

(19) And the woman took and spread a covering over the well’s mouth and scattered grain on it, and nothing was known of it.

(20) When Absalom’s servants came to the woman at the house, they said, “Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?” And the woman said to them, “They have gone over the brook of water.” And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

(21) After they had gone, the men came up out of the well, and went and told King David. They said to David, “Arise, and go quickly over the water, for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you.”

What is this about “bringing evil on Absalom”? Carnal minds argue that God doesn’t bring evil on anyone. His Word, however, dismisses the arguments of self-appointed do-gooders who parade their righteousnesses by presuming to defend or exonerate God. All they do is demonstrate that their trust isn’t in God, but in the letter according to their own interpretation.

Nathan the Prophet and Bathsheba

1 Kings 1:1-34 ESV

(1) Now King David was old and advanced in years. And although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm.

(2) Therefore his servants said to him, “Let a young woman be sought for my lord the king, and let her wait on the king and be in his service. Let her lie in your arms, that my lord the king may be warm.”

(3) So they sought for a beautiful young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

(4) The young woman was very beautiful, and she was of service to the king and attended to him, but the king knew her not.

(5) Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, “I will be king.” And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

(6) His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, “Why have you done thus and so?” He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom.

(7) He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. And they followed Adonijah and helped him.

(8) But Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and Nathan the prophet and Shimei and Rei and David’s mighty men were not with Adonijah.

(9) Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened cattle by the Serpent’s Stone,

which is beside Enrogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah,

(10) but he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the mighty men or Solomon his brother.

(11) Then Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king and David our lord does not know it?"

(12) Now therefore come, let me give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon.

(13) Go in at once to King David, and say to him, 'Did you not, my lord the king, swear to your servant, saying, "Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne"? Why then is Adonijah king?'

(14) Then while you are still speaking with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words."

(15) So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber (now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was attending to the king).

(16) Bathsheba bowed and paid homage to the king, and the king said, "What do you desire?"

(17) She said to him, "My lord, you swore to your servant by the LORD your God, saying, 'Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.'

(18) And now, behold, Adonijah is king, although you, my lord the king, do not know it.

(19) He has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the commander of the army, but Solomon your servant he has not invited.

(20) And now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

(21) Otherwise it will come to pass, when my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be counted offenders."

(22) While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in.

(23) And they told the king, "Here is Nathan the prophet." And when he came in before the king, he bowed before the king, with his face to the ground.

(24) And Nathan said, "My lord the king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne?'

(25) For he has gone down this day and has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest. And behold, they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!'

(26) But me, your servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon he has not invited.

(27) Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not told your servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

(28) Then King David answered, "Call Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence and stood before the king.

(29) And the king swore, saying, "As the LORD lives, Who has redeemed my soul out of every adversity,

(30) as I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel, saying, 'Solomon your son shall

reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' even so will I do this day.”

(31) Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground and paid homage to the king and said, “May my lord King David live forever!”

(32) King David said, “Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.” So they came before the king.

(33) And the king said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon.

(34) And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’”

In this last example, Nathan counsels Bathsheba to present herself to King David as though it was her idea and initiative, naturally coincidental with Nathan’s coming in and speaking the same message. While this is a strategy for good, isn’t it a form of leading one to believe or perceive something that isn’t true? As a result, Solomon is enthroned by the will of God! Sin? I don’t think so!

Solomon, in His Wisdom, Lies

1 Kings 3:16-27 MKJV

(16) Then there came two women, harlots, to the king, and stood before him.

(17) And the one woman said, “O my lord, this woman and I live in one house. And I bore a child with her in the house.

(18) And it happened the third day after I gave birth, this woman bore a child also. And we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, except the two of us in the house.

(19) And this woman’s child died in the night, because she laid on it.

(20) And she arose at midnight and took my son from beside me, while your servant was sleeping, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

(21) When I arose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead. And when I had looked at it in the morning, behold, it was not my son whom I bore.”

(22) And the other woman said, “No, but the living is my son, and the dead is your son.” And this one said, “No, but the dead is your son, and the living is my son.” So they spoke before the king.

(23) And the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son who lives, and your son is the dead.’ And the other says, ‘No, but your son is the dead, and my son is the living.’”

(24) And the king said, “Bring me a sword.” And they brought a sword before the king.

(25) And the king said, “Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.”

(26) And the woman whose son was the living child said to the king, for her womb yearned over her son. And she said, “O my lord, give her the living child, and in no way kill it.” But the other said, “Let it be neither mine nor yours; divide it!”

(27) And the king answered and said, “Give her the living child, and in no way kill it. She is the mother of it.”

Did Solomon truly intend to divide the baby in two? Can’t lies serve for great good?

A Prophet Creates a Ruse

Not only does this prophet come to the king of Israel deceitfully, but the serious cause for this artifice is solemnly backed by the Lord.

1 Kings 20:35-42 MKJV

(35) And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to his neighbor, “By the Word of the LORD, please strike me!” And the man refused to strike him.

(36) And he said to him, “Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as you have departed from me, a lion shall kill you.” And as soon as he had departed from him, a lion found him and killed him.

(37) And he found another man and said, “Please strike me.” And the man struck him, so that he wounded him in striking him.

(38) And the prophet went and waited for the king by the wayside, and disguised himself with ashes on his face.

(39) And as the king passed by, it happened he cried to the king. And he said, “Your servant went out into the middle of the battle, and, behold, a man turned aside and brought a man to me and said, ‘Keep this man. If he is missing by any means, then your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.’

(40) And it happened as your servant was busy here and there, he was gone!” And the king of Israel said to him, “So shall your judgment be; you yourself have decided it.”

(41) And he hurried and took the ashes away from his face. And the king of Israel saw that he was one of the prophets.

(42) And he said to him, “So says the LORD, ‘Because you have let go out of your hand a man whom I devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall be for his life, and your people for his people.’”

Jehu, King of Israel

Did Jehu sin in using deception in order to do God’s will, destroying Baal worship in Israel, a worship for which capital punishment was prescribed?

2 Kings 10:18-28 MKJV

(18) And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said to them, “Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu shall serve him much.

(19) And now call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants and all his priests. Let no one be lacking. For I have a great sacrifice to Baal. Whoever shall be lacking, he shall not live.” But Jehu was acting with cunning, to the end that he might destroy the worshipers of Baal.

(20) And Jehu said, “Call a solemn feast for Baal.” And they called it.

(21) And Jehu sent through all Israel. And all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. And they came into the house of Baal. And the house of Baal was full from one end to another.

(22) And he said to him who was over the robe-room, “Bring out robes for all the worshipers of Baal.” And he brought them out for them.

(23) And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal. And he

said to the servants of Baal, "Search and look, that there may not be here with you any of the servants of the LORD, but only the servants of Baal."

(24) And they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. And Jehu had appointed eighty men outside, and said, "If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, his life shall be for the life of him."

(25) And it happened when he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, Jehu said to the guard and to the commanders, "Go in. Kill them! Do not let any come out!" And they struck them with the edge of the sword. And the guard and the commanders threw them out. And they went to the city, to the house of Baal.

(26) And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal and burned them.

(27) And they broke down the image of Baal, and broke down the house of Baal and made it a sewer-house until this day.

(28) And Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

Appointed by God to do so.

Jeremiah

In the book of Jeremiah, we see that he obeyed God at the peril of his life, yet we see here that he told a lie, and lived:

Jeremiah 38:24-28 MKJV

(24) Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Let no man know of these words, and you shall not die.

(25) But if the rulers hear that I have talked with you, and they come to you and say to you, 'Declare to us now what you have said to the king; do not hide it from us, and we will not put you to death; also what the king said to you';

(26) then you shall say to them, 'I presented my cry before the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there.'"

(27) Then all the rulers came to Jeremiah and asked him. And he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they quit speaking with him; for the matter was not known.

(28) So Jeremiah stayed in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was captured. And he was there when Jerusalem was captured.

The Apostle Paul Confesses Guile

The apostle Paul said he caught men with guile for the Gospel's sake. So is guile, a form of lying, necessarily evil? Don't the self-righteous give glory to the letter without justification, not considering the spirit and motive?

Men are Indeed Held Accountable by God for Lying

Were not men held accountable for lying? What about Ananias and Sapphira?

Acts 5:1-10 MKJV

(1) And a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

- (2) And he kept back part of the price, his wife also knowing, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet.
- (3) But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart for you to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land?"
- (4) While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own authority? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."
- (5) And hearing these words, Ananias fell down and expired. And great fear came on all those who heard these things.
- (6) And the younger ones arose, wound him up, and carrying him out, they buried him.
- (7) And it was about the space of three hours afterward, when his wife (not knowing what was done) came in.
- (8) And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" And she said, "Yes, for so much."
- (9) Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door and they will carry you out."
- (10) Then at once she fell down at his feet and expired. And the younger ones found her dead, and, carrying her out, buried her beside her husband.

Does God Lie, or Is He Responsible for Lying?

Will you also tell me that God sins by directing spirits to lie? We need to put away the thoughts and words of men, which come from the darkness of their self-righteousness. Read what the Word of God says here:

1 Kings 22:19-23 MKJV

- (19) And he said, "Hear therefore the Word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left.
- (20) And the LORD said, 'Who shall entice Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead?' And one said this way, and another said that way.
- (21) And there came forth a spirit and stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.'
- (22) And the LORD said to him, 'With what?' And he said, 'I will go forth and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And He said, 'You shall entice him and succeed also. Go forth and do so.'"
- (23) And now, behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets, and the LORD has spoken evil concerning you.

There are yet other examples of lies, judged in the letter as sin, but judged in the spirit as righteousness.

A lie isn't a lie in the act so much as in the motive. Several of the faithful lied, as we pointed out, but why did they lie? That's the question that determines a lie from a lie and good from evil. Rahab, Jeremiah, Jehu, David, Nathan, Sarah, Abraham, Isaac,

Rebekah, and Jacob all lied, but they didn't lie. They weren't withholding the truth to do evil, but to avoid it.

On the other hand, Satan often speaks the truth to do evil - such conduct is a specialty of his, as in Eden - "You'll become as God, knowing good and evil," which was true! He also quoted truly from Psalms when tempting Jesus. He takes the truth of the letter and applies it with devious motive. Men in his stead do that all the time.

So while one condemns lying by the letter for goodness' sake, will he also commend one for telling the truth for evil's sake? You can't have it both ways.

So the points of this paper:

- It's not about our righteousness.
- One can't judge by appearances.
- One mustn't be bound by the letter.
- One can't discount the value of a lie, if done for good.
- One must receive true understanding of what is a lie.
- Finally, you'll notice that the opening verses of this paper show a significant, not-to-be-ignored difference in translations concerning God lying:
 - "On hope of eternal life, which God, Who **cannot lie**, promised before the eternal times" (Titus 1:2 MKJV).
 - "On hope of eternal life which the God Who **does not lie** promised before the eternal times" (Titus 1:2 LITV).
 - "In the hope of eternal life, which was made certain before eternal time, by the Word of God Who is **ever true**" (Titus 1:2 BBE).

You see the difference between *inability to lie*, as expressed in the MKJV, the *practice of not lying*, as expressed in the LITV (which doesn't mean the inability to do so), and the fact that God is *ever true*, as the BBE renders it (even while God may lie as men perceive it). According to man's thinking, *God does lie*, as in the case of sending a lying spirit to deceive Ahab. However, it is not lying in motive. Let's learn wisdom and embrace His perspective and ways.

A word of warning: Anyone who decides to take this paper and lie to do any evil will perish in his evil-doing. Hypocrites and evil workers can't lie to God or man for evil's sake and get away with it. God isn't to be deceived. One reaps multiplied what he sows.

Victor Hafichuk

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