

# DOES GOD CONDONE LYING?

*Exd. 20:16, Prov. 1:7*  
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## INTRODUCTION

There are many times in the Bible where people (or spirits) acting on behalf of God, used deception as a means to an end. It was not automatically considered wrong and was even commended at times.

While this seems confusing or even contradictory at first, given such Biblical commands as *'thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor'* (**Exd. 20:16**) or statements such as 'Satan is the Father of lies, the Bible does not use a 'catch-all' definition for lying as modern English does to condemn or meet the approval of God.

Lies of the type the Bible condemns are those that stem from a malicious heart. False witness in court, false rumors, slander, gossip, malicious lies, distorted perception and action, lies to deceive into error, lies of false image/hypocrisy, course jesting, etc.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT LYING?

Just as you dislike when someone lies to you, so does the Lord. In fact, He is incapable of lying — *"it is impossible for God to lie"* (**Heb. 6:18**).

The Book of John explains the history of lying. "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do...he is a liar and the father of it" (**John 8:44**).

Lying without repentance and forgiveness leads to "the second death" described in Revelation, which says, "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (**Rev. 21:8**).

As Christians, we are required to be faithful to the Bible's teachings and if you have lied, seek forgiveness from those to whom you have lied, and obey the Gospel, for *"He is faithful and forgives us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (**1 John 1:9; Matt. 5:23-25**).

## CATEGORIZING LIES

“Have you ever told a lie?” Many would probably have to answer “yes” to that question at least once, maybe even many times. Lying is a subject that is almost universal in nature. And we have a tendency to classify lies.

Some lies we think of as big lies, while we deem other lies as insignificant. In the first part of this topic, we will start with examining the question, ***“What does God really think about lying?” Is being truthful or honest a big challenge?***

Certainly, we face challenges in our lives, but not always.

Studies indicates that the average person lies twenty-five times a day. How can this be? Think about the many situations in which people lie. Maybe a father comes home after a long day at work, and as the family is sitting down to relax and eat dinner,

the telephone rings. Another family member answers, and finds the call is for the father...and it's an unwanted person. It is so easy to say, “Tell him I'm not here!” Sometimes one might say it before they even stop to think about it as a lie.

If you start adding up incidents like that, then yes, perhaps the average person does lie twenty-five times a day. Hopefully, Christians should not, but the average person who does not think of the negative consequence does so without a second thought.

## DOES LYING HAVE AGE LIMIT?

At what age does lying become a problem to people?” This question was once asked of a group of people whose response was, “As soon as one learns to talk.” That seems quite accurate. Maybe even one of the first sins that young people commit in life is telling a lie,

because it is so easy to do with Children. They get caught doing something wrong and lie to avoid getting in trouble. And it certainly doesn't stop with children. Probably all of us can call to mind images of government officials or worker in various organization lying and committing perjury to keep themselves out of trouble.

Sadly, lying is one of those sins that people tend to think of as not a big deal. We think, “Ah, what's it going to hurt?” With that thought in mind, let's look at ***(Prov. 6:16-19)***

*“These six things the Lord hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.”*

Notice that in this short list of seven things God hates, two of the things mentioned are **“a lying tongue” and “a false witness that speaks lies.”** Two of the seven things God despises involve lying.

#### **LET US CONSIDER SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES IN THE BIBLE:**

##### **SITUATIONAL ISSUES:**

- **Exd. 1:15-22:** The midwives **feared God**, and therefore let the boys live and lied to Pharaoh about the circumstances. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (**Ps 11:10, Prov. 1:7**).

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God blessed the midwives and gave them families because they feared Him.

- **2Kings 10:18-31:** Jehu deceives the prophets of Baal by pretending to be a Baal worshiper and summoning all the prophets. He then has his men kill all of them, tear down the temple, and demolished the statue of Baal.

God commended him in this instance and did not admonish him for his deception.

- **Exd. 5:1, 8:20-28:** God and Moses both know that the plan is for pharaoh to drive the Israelites from the country - but God has Moses only give Pharaoh the repeated command to allow the people to go worship at a temporary festival.

- **1 Sam. 16:1-13:** **God** tells Samuel how to mislead Saul and say he's going to make a sacrifice and omit his going to anoint a new king.

- **2 Chron. 18:18-22:** God asks for someone to entice Ahab to war, then gives permission to a deceiving spirit to deceive Ahab's prophets.

- **Josh. 2: 1-15, Josh. 6:25, Jam. 2:25:** Rahab is considered **righteous** for hiding the spies and sending them off a different way, deceiving their pursuers.

- **Judges 4:18-22:** Jael promises safety and rest to Sisera, then murders him, thus receiving the glory for the victory.

- **John 7: 6-10:** **Jesus** tells his brothers he isn't going to the festival, then goes later in secret.

In the times when God seems to be condoning a lie, they fall under: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength and love your neighbor*

as yourself". **Mark 12:29-31:** On this hang all the law and the prophets. **Matt. 22:34-37.**

As wisdom and prayer is needed in these situations, it helps to remind us that we walk by the spirit not by lying.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Yes, it is true that God hates lying which is demonstrated in **Acts 5:1-11** in the deaths of Ananias and his wife, and, as the Bible says, "*it is impossible for God to lie*" **Heb. 6:18**. Our Lord has also said that devil is "a liar and the father of it" **Jn 8:44**. Also it is repeatedly said that no liar will enter the New Jerusalem **Rev. 2:18 & 22:15**.

So, the question is why God has condoned lies specially in the OT.? This is not very easy to answer.

Many godly people lied and also some people whose lying actions were accepted without criticism for the benefit of God's people.

Even lying of an evil spirit is used by God to misguide a king. **2 Chron. 18: 18-21**.

First, let us remind ourselves with who God is. According to the Bible it is concluded that in His Constitution God is Triune, Spirit and a Personality.

In His Ability God is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient. And in His Character God is holy, love and light. Moreover, nothing happens without God's knowledge. The fact remains that God is committed to the freedom of humans, other creatures and of natural laws.