

FALSE WITNESS

It's a sin to bear **false witness** against your neighbor.

- **Exodus 20:16:** "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."
- **Deuteronomy 5:20:** "Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour."

God wanted the Israelites to put a stop to **false witnesses** by inflicting upon them whatever they tried to inflict upon the person they lied about. (For example, those who tried to frame someone for murder would be put to death, since that was the penalty for murder.)

- **Deuteronomy 19:16, 19:** "If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong; ... Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you."

One of the reasons God wanted **false witnesses** to be punished was to teach people not to give false testimony.

- **Deuteronomy 19:20:** "And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you."

Under the Mosaic Law, no pity could be shown a **false witness**. He *had* to be punished. Whatever he tried to do to someone else (through his lies) had to be done to him. (This included the death penalty.)

- **Deuteronomy 19:21:** "And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."

The **false witnesses** who Jezebel sent to have Naboth framed and put to death were referred to as "sons of Belial".

- **1 Kings 21:10:** "And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die."
- **1 Kings 21:13:** "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died."

Two **false witnesses** knowingly and deliberately hurled false accusations against Naboth for the specific purpose of killing him. This means they deliberately murdered Naboth.

- **1 Kings 21:13:** "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died."

Eliphaz was a **false witness**. He told lies about Job and accused him of terrible crimes that he hadn't committed. (Job did *not* spend his spare time beating up orphans in the street.)

- **Job 22:6, 9:** "For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. ... Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken."

When **false witnesses** rise up against us, we must cry out to God.

- **Psalm 27:12:** "Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty."

God hates **false witnesses**.

- **Proverbs 6:16, 19:** "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: ... A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

False witnesses spread lies and deceit.

- **Proverbs 12:17:** "He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit."

A witness who tells even one lie is a **false witness**.

- **Proverbs 14:5:** "A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies."

In the end, **false witnesses** will be punished. (If the wicked don't repent then God will punish them for *all* of their sins, and lies, and evil acts.)

- **Proverbs 19:5:** "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape."
- **Proverbs 19:9:** "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish."

The words of a **false witness** are deadly weapons.

- **Proverbs 25:18:** "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow."

Those who bear **false witness** have an evil heart.

- **Matthew 15:19:** "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:"

Bearing **false witness** defiles people.

- **Matthew 15:19-20:** "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man."

Jesus told the rich young ruler who was seeking salvation by works that one of the commands he had to obey was not bearing **false witness**.

- **Matthew 19:16-18:** "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest

thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,"

- **Mark 10:17-19:** "And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother."
- **Luke 18:18-20:** "And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother."

The chief priests and elders tried to use **false witnesses** to sentence Jesus to death, but they failed. The testimony of the false witnesses didn't agree.

- **Matthew 26:59-60:** "Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,"
- **Mark 14:56:** "For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together."

It seems the religious leaders weren't prepared to arrest Jesus and put Him on trial, because they had no **false witnesses** prepared to testify against Him. The false witnesses they produced didn't agree with one another. (This is evidence that the trial was thrown together unexpectedly at the last minute.)

- **Matthew 26:60:** "But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,"
- **Mark 14:56:** "For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together."

When two **false witnesses** testified that Jesus had said He could destroy the temple and build it in three days, Jesus was actually in the process of fulfilling those words *at that very moment*. The false witnesses unknowingly quoted what was actually happening. (That quote was about the death and resurrection of Jesus, which is exactly what the trial was leading toward.)

- **Matthew 26:61:** "And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days."
- **Mark 14:58:** "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands."

Under the Mosaic Law, being a **false witnesses** in a trial for someone's life was a crime that was to be punished by death. However, high priest ignored that (which the Law didn't allow him to do) and sought to find any excuse at all to sentence Jesus to death.

- **Matthew 26:62:** "And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?"
- **Mark 14:60:** "And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?"

When **false witnesses** testified against Jesus, He didn't respond to what they said. Instead He remained silent.

- **Matthew 26:62:** "And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?"
- **Mark 14:60:** "And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?"

The Pharisees told Jesus to His face that He was a liar and a **false witness**. (The people who passionately hated Jesus, and who relentlessly persecuted Him, wasn't the Romans. It was the religious leaders.)

- **John 8:13:** "The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true."

Since the enemies of the church couldn't find anything wrong with what Stephen was doing, they used **false witnesses** to testify against him.

- **Acts 6:13:** "And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:"

Although **false witnesses** claimed that Stephen said that Jesus was going to destroy the temple and change their customs, Stephen didn't address any of those points when he spoke. Instead he ignored their accusations and talked about the history of the Jews.

- **Acts 6:14:** "For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."

One of the ways **false witnesses** tell lies about the church is by distorting what the word of God actually teaches.

- **Acts 6:14:** "For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."

The **false witnesses** who testified against Stephen referred to Jesus as "Jesus of Nazareth".

- **Acts 6:14:** "For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."

At the trial of Stephen, the **false witnesses** spoke before Stephen did.

- **Acts 7:1:** "Then said the high priest, Are these things so?"

The Jews (including the high priest and the elders) bore **false witness** against Paul in court in order to have him killed.

Under the Mosaic Law this was punishable by death, and yet they did it anyway. (Paul hadn't profaned the temple in anyway, and had no plans to do so.)

- **Acts 24:6, 9:** "Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. ... And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so."

The Jews bore **false witness** in court in order to prosecute Paul. Their accusations against him were false.

- **Acts 25:7:** "And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove."

Bearing **false witness** is the opposite of love. Genuine love tells the truth.

- **Romans 13:9:** "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

It's a terrible thing to hurl false accusations at other people. Christians must not bear **false witness**.

- **2 Timothy 3:1-3:** "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without

natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers,
incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,"