

### Does the Bible Contradict Itself? (Part II)

Romans 15:4: (NASB) For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.



Several weeks ago, we began a journey down what might be considered a tricky path as we took the first step towards addressing an enormous subject - perceived Bible contradictions. This is a huge undertaking, not only because of the Bible's very nature, being ancient and authored by several over many centuries, but because of the emotional reactions from the opposing sides as well. Many people and groups have "exposed" what they have concluded to be blatant contradictions within its pages and are not shy about advertising their findings - just look online! Then there are those of us who do believe that the Bible

IS the inspired word of God and are convinced that the Scriptures are sound and harmonious. Part two of the task we are undertaking is simple - address these reported contradictions one at a time in an effort to clear up what we believe are errant conclusions.

Part I of this series revealed several causes for Scriptures to be misunderstood:

- A copyist error. Occasionally ancient scribes missed or misread letters resulting in skewed meaning.
- Different Scriptures often reveal different parts of a story. Always gather all accounts to compare.
- Clarity of context and an understanding of words within that context help find true meaning.
- The Bible is to be understood in the context of ages and dispensations. God's dealings with humanity do change as He shows us the step-by-step pathway back to Him.

Let's look at the first challenging Scriptures and their questionable meaning:





### The short answer is NO, He does not:

<u>Jeremiah 7:30-31</u>: (NASB) <sup>30</sup>For the sons of Judah have done that which is evil in My sight, declares the LORD, they have set their detestable things in the house, which is called by My name, to defile it. <sup>31</sup>They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, and it did not come into My mind.

This sacrifice of children is Satanic, not godly! We see God's heart when He said *it did not come into My mind*. This Scripture disproves the false doctrine of souls being tormented forever in hellfire. God is love and merciful, and it hurts our hearts when God is being misrepresented.

For more on this topic, please search our archives for Episodes #1021, #1024 and #1027: "Is the Hell of Christian Tradition Taught in the Bible?" (Parts 1-3).

#### What about this?

Genesis 22:1-2: (NASB) ¹Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, Abraham! And he said, Here I am. ²He said, Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.

What is the difference between the Scripture in Jeremiah and the situation with Abraham? Remember the awful heathen context of the world Abraham lived in. He came from an idolatrous background that practiced child sacrifice to false gods. God called him away from that to follow Him.

Abraham knew God. He had experienced God's wisdom leading him from his father's house and His justice when He rescued Lot and the king of Sodom. He experienced God's love when he was shown the Promised Land and His power when he was able to have a son under physically IMPOSSIBLE circumstances (Sarah was 90 and Abraham was 100 years old). Abraham KNEW Isaac was THE promised seed. He knew God kept His promises. He KNEW God had all power over life.



### Therefore, the Apostle Paul tells us:

Hebrews 11:17-19: (NASB) <sup>17</sup>By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; <sup>18</sup>it was he to whom it was said, In Isaac your descendants shall be called. <sup>19</sup>He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

Abraham knew Isaac had to live because of God's promise that he was the one through which the nation would be born. Abraham had faith in God.

Why would God make such a dramatic statement if He did not intend for Abraham to actually sacrifice Isaac? He did it for the sake of Abraham and all who followed.

<u>Conclusion</u>: Abraham knew God had given them Isaac from a dead womb and knew He could deliver Isaac again from death. God knew Abraham's loyalty and used it to show the world His love.



## Abraham and Isaac are just one example. What about other apparent Old Testament child sacrifice?

We began with the account of Abraham as it is not only the earliest challenged text in Scripture on the matter of human sacrifice but also the most significant.

God unequivocally showed that His plan would require *His own son* to be the Lamb of sacrifice on a hill in Moriah, which would be the same region Jerusalem was built upon centuries later.



### )) Jephthah, The Atheist Experience - God Doesn't Accept Human Sacrifice

• So basically, there's a warrior who prays to God and wants to win the battle. Jephthah - look it up. Anyway, he promises that if God lets him win the battle, he'll sacrifice the first thing that comes out of his house when he gets back home. The first thing he sees when he returns to his home. And it turns out to be his daughter. Now, when he gets back, he lets her visit with her friends for a little while - I think it's two months. And then of course he sacrifices her to God because that's the deal he made. So, if you believe that the Bible is accurate, we're talking about a God who knew in advance exactly what Jephthah was going to encounter when he got back home, being his daughter, because He's omniscient. And willingly accepted a human sacrifice in order to guarantee victory on the battlefield. So, if you say that God doesn't accept human sacrifice, then you're contradicting the Bible. So, I don't know how to resolve it.

Let's see what really happened. The story of Jephthah is found in <u>Judges</u> 11:29-40.

Jephthah vows to God that if his enemies are delivered into his hand, he will offer to God a special sacrifice. Here is how he framed it:

<u>Judges 11:30-31</u>: (NASB) <sup>30</sup>Jephthah made a vow to the LORD and said, If You will indeed give the sons of Ammon into my hand, <sup>31</sup>then it shall be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace..., it shall be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.

God gives him the victory and his only child, his daughter, comes out to meet him. She is, of course, destined to be this offering to God. Jephthah keeps his word to God. What does this mean?



# This does sound ominous as he said, "offer it up as a burnt offering." Continue reading:

<u>Judges 11:36-40</u>: (NASB) <sup>36</sup>So she said to him, My father, you have given your word to the LORD; do to me as you have said... <sup>37</sup>She said to her father, Let this thing be done for me; let me alone two months, that I may go to the mountains and weep because of my virginity, I and my companions.

The gentleman in the audio clip is building a conclusion around the phrase - offer it up as a burnt offering.

Notice her interesting response. She wants to mourn her virginity, meaning that her sacrifice was to never have a family. She was not mourning her life. Because Israel was commanded to never offer human sacrifice, this offering was for her to be put directly in service to God which meant forfeiting children - the crowning glory of the women of that day.

<sup>38</sup>Then he said, Go. So, he sent her away for two months; and she left with her companions and wept on the mountains because of her virginity. <sup>39</sup>At the end of two months she returned to her father, who did to her according to the vow which he had made; and she had no relations with a man. Thus, it became a custom in Israel, <sup>40</sup>that the daughters of Israel went yearly to commemorate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in the year.



#### Take note of the order of events:

- At the end of two months she returned to her father, who did to her according to the vow which he had made Jephthah fulfilled what he said in his vow.
- And as a result she had no relations with a man. She did not die. She was set aside for the worship and full-time service of God.

Notice Jephthah says first - It shall be the LORD'S - before he says - and I will offer it up as a burnt offering. Whatever comes through the doors of my house shall be the Lord's. A sacrifice does not have to mean death.

The tribe of Levi had no inheritance of the land and were to do all the sacrificial work for Israel.

<u>Numbers 8:16-17</u>: <sup>16</sup>For they (the tribe of Levi) are wholly given to Me from among the sons of Israel. I have taken them for Myself instead of every first issue of the womb, the firstborn of all the sons of Israel. <sup>17</sup>For every firstborn among the sons of Israel is Mine.

What did Jephthah say about his sacrifice - *It shall be the LORD'S*. Jephthah's daughter was his firstborn. He was referring to the fact that the firstborn were God's. Jephthah was giving his daughter to full-time service to God. *It had nothing to do with human sacrifice!* 

### A text that talks about us as a fragrance from a sacrifice:

<u>2 Corinthians 2:14-15</u>: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. <sup>15</sup>For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.



We are referred to as living sacrifices in Romans 12:1.

<u>Conclusion</u>: Reading the immediate and larger *context* makes it plain that her sacrifice was to remain single and continually in the Lord's service.

### What about the human sacrifice of Jesus himself? He was sacrificed:

Hebrews 10:10-12: (NASB) <sup>10</sup>By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. <sup>11</sup>Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; <sup>12</sup>but he, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God.



This is utterly different than the other examples mentioned. How often in our recent history have we looked upon someone who stood in the way and lost their lives so others could live? Are they not considered selfless heroes?





Kendrick Castillo

- This is Thomas Costello. Kendrick Castillo had told his parents if a shooter ever walked into his school, he would not hesitate to act. On Tuesday he kept his word.
- He charged the shooter and immediately was on top of him. A complete disregard for his own safety. He was immediately there to respond. He was immediately on the shooter. And he was ready to end the threat.
- Brendan Bialy rushed the shooter with Kendrick and another student. The latest young Americans to demonstrate uncommon heroism in the age of mass shootings.

John 15:13: Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

#### Jesus "took the bullet" for all of mankind:

<u>Hebrews 10:7</u>: (NASB) Then I said, behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of me) to do your will, O God.

Jesus came to do the will of God. He offered himself because he loved God's creation so much. Let's not confuse the idea of heroism with the idea of human sacrifice.



<u>Conclusion</u>: The Bible is based upon the will of God who gave humanity free will. Let's accept the outcome of man's free will and the heroism behind what Jesus did for humanity.



### Outside of human sacrifice is the issue of killing. Does the Bible teach us we should or should not kill?

This is another large matter that requires a lot of attention to detail. For those who would tear down the Bible's credibility, a statement like this can be easily interpreted as "here come the excuses." In reality, it is a statement of wanting to find and understand the truth. To get started with this section we will look at one more apparent human sacrifice issue that will actually help with groundwork.

# King David seems to be sacrificing the lives of seven men to appease the anger of the Gibeonites:

<u>2 Samuel 21:5-6</u>: (NASB) <sup>5</sup>So they said to the king, The man who consumed us and who planned to exterminate us from remaining within any border of Israel, <sup>6</sup>let seven men from his sons be given to us, and we will hang them before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of the LORD. And the king said, I will give them.

The Gibeonites asked King David for seven men so they could kill them, And the king said, I will give them. Why would he agree to that?



This is not a matter of human sacrifice; it is a matter of ancient justice. Israel had entered into a treaty with the Gibeonites back in Joshua's day (<u>Joshua 9:1-27</u>). Even though God told them to never enter into treaties with others, they did it and He expected them to honor those treaties.

### King Saul did not honor the treaty:

<u>2 Samuel 21:2</u>: (NASB) ... (now the Gibeonites were... of the remnant of the Amorites, and the sons of Israel made a covenant with them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the sons of Israel and Judah).

The price of Old Testament justice was *a life for a life*. God WAS hard with Israel. His Law for them was justice and generationally based so the sinfulness of sin would easily and often be revealed.

<u>Numbers 14:18</u>: (NASB) The LORD is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generations.

Why following generations? Because that is the way sin works and God was not stopping it...yet.

Conclusion: God expects integrity from His people while allowing and directing the natural consequences of sin to have their full effect. This event was simply ancient justice being carried out.

### (1) Cannot find Adam, The God of the Bible is Incompetent, Gorbix Lucavi

• Then something rather odd happens in Genesis 3:8-10. At this stage Adam and Eve appreciate that they're naked and have made clothes from fig leaves. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, where art thou? And he said I heard thy voice in the garden and I



was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself. I find this absolutely extraordinary. An omnipresent God can't find Adam even though he knows he's somewhere in the garden of Eden. So, next time you're threatened that God is watching everything you do, just bear in mind that he seemed unable to find one person in a garden.

Mr. Lucavi does not take the time to understand the context of the Scriptures. God in His wisdom was teaching his son, Adam, a lesson of accountability. God knew where Adam was but wanted Adam to admit his sin.



Exodus 20:13: (KJV) Thou shalt not kill.

Exodus 20:13: (NASB) You shall not murder.

<u>Leviticus 24:17-22</u>: (NASB) <sup>17</sup>If a man takes the life of any human being; he shall surely be put to death. <sup>18</sup>The one who takes the life of an animal shall make it good, life for life. <sup>19</sup>If a man injures his neighbor, just as he has done, so it shall be done to him: <sup>20</sup>fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he has injured a man, so it shall be inflicted on him. <sup>21</sup>Thus the one who kills an animal shall make it good, but the one who kills a man shall be put to death. <sup>22</sup>There shall be one standard for you; it shall be for the stranger as well as the native, for I am the LORD your God.

What was the standard? Follow God's Law. Do not take a man's life. The penalties were severe and were equal for all. What about this? Do not kill within the community - until God says to kill within the community.



### After they built the golden calf in Moses' absence:

Exodus 32:25-27: (NASB) <sup>25</sup>Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control—for Aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision (a scornful whispering) among their enemies— <sup>26</sup>then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Whoever is for the LORD, come to me! And all the sons of Levi gathered together to him. <sup>27</sup>He said to them, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, Every man of you put his sword upon his thigh, and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp, and kill every man his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbor.

The idolaters were all slain. Moses returned, they saw him, and they had the opportunity to repent because they knew he stood with the God of their deliverance. He created a natural divide. Those who defied God died. This was a nation under God and the people were treasonous.

<u>Conclusion</u>: Thou shalt not kill is really about taking matters into one's own hands. In matters of national protection against things like war and treason, God saw fit to allow the rules of a sinful world to affect how His chosen people would maintain their spiritual and national integrity.



# The Bible is simple - do not kill. But what about lying? Isn't that more of a subjective challenge?

The same basic principle of not taking things into your own hands will apply here, though it is definitely harder to be clear. Lying, telling half-truths, sarcasm - all these things can be factors in this next conversation, so let's focus on the obvious issues of blatant lies and God's perspective.



### Should we tell lies? NO:

Exodus 20:16: (NASB) You shall not bear false <8267> witness against your neighbor.

Leviticus 19:11: (NASB) You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie <8266> to one another.

<u>Proverbs 6:16-19</u>: (NASB) <sup>16</sup>There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: <sup>17</sup>Haughty eyes, a <u>lying <8267</u>> tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, <sup>18</sup>a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, <sup>19</sup>a false witness who utters <u>lies <3577</u>>, and one who spreads strife among brothers.

Lie: Strongs #8266 shaqar to cheat, i.e. be untrue

Lying: Strongs #8267 sheger from #8266; an untruth; by implication, a sham

Lies: Strongs #3577 kazab a lie, untruth, falsehood, deceptive thing

There are a lot of lies recorded in Scripture, especially in the Old Testament. Several of them are spoken by David or at his suggestion. It is important to note the distinction between *lying* and *the allowance for deception* in the context of war and national spiritual integrity.

### Lucifer and the universe, The God of the Bible is Incompetent, Gorbix Lucavi

• Finally, you would imagine that if God could get one thing right, it would be the creation of angels. But apparently not. He even messed up there when he created Lucifer. It really is a shabby record for an almighty and perfect being. There are other matters that make me think that God's perfect creation was far from perfect. Firstly, if He created the universe, what a shocking waste of space. The universe is billions of light years in diameter. He made all of that just to allow us to live on a small part of the crust of an average planet.

God did not make a mistake when creating angels. He gave them free will.





ChristianQuestions.com/youtube - CQ Kids Videos -

"Is it Ever Okay to Lie?" Viewer response: Jesus never lied. "Ask and ye shall receive." That's a lie, though, isn't it? And yet Jesus said it. According to Jesus you can move mountains by prayer alone. Give it a shot. If it works, post it on YouTube!

People pick statements they do not understand, and out of the lack of understanding of context, meaning and facts, they draw a wrong conclusion.

Rahab hid the Jewish spies before the invasion of Jericho. Did God bless Rahab for lying when she hid them? No, He blessed her for her faith, though she did lie. Her story is found in <u>Joshua 2:1-14</u>.

Rahab was not of Israel; therefore, her background was not founded in the principles of God's Law. She was heathen. Rahab's occupation was one that was shrouded in darkness, gray areas and half-truths.

<u>Joshua 2:4-5,9,11-12</u>: (NASB) <sup>4</sup>But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.

### You could argue that this was true, but not complete. But what about what comes next:

<sup>5</sup>It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.

Classic deception - "They went that-a-way!" This certainly fulfills the definition of a lie, but where does

it stand relating to what God hates? He hates a lying tongue and uttering lies as a witness to hurt others. Rahab's intention was obvious - protect the strangers from capture.



<sup>9</sup>and said to the men, I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you....<sup>11</sup>for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

Rahab knew of God and His deliverance of Israel and BELIEVED in God based on her very limited observations and experience. Rahab hid the spies because she respected them as representatives of God.

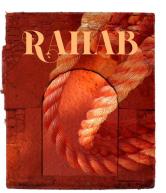
<sup>12</sup>Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household and give me a pledge of truth.

She asked to be remembered and protected.

<u>Hebrews 11:31</u>: (NASB) By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

Rahab was honored and blessed for her faith - not her lies!

<u>Conclusion</u>: God can and will bless and use imperfect people based upon what they know and what they are capable of. This is a VERY welcoming biblical principle.





### It is obvious that we should not lie, especially as Christians. What about God? Can He lie and deceive?

To put ourselves in a position to judge God is at the very least tricky. What we can do is look at Scripture to determine how the verses called into question actually fit into what we know of His omnipotent character. This is an exercise worth doing and should be a basis for all Bible discussion.



### The account of Ahab and Micaiah, a true prophet of God:

1 Kings 22:3: (NASB) Now the king of Israel said to his servants, Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and we are still doing nothing to take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?

King Ahab was notorious for wanting to take what was not his. He wanted to invade Ramoth, so he sought his prophets to tell him if he should. Because they were not godly, they all said, "Go."

### Ahab and Jehoshaphat talked about getting a second opinion:

1 Kings 22:8: (NASB) The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. He is Micaiah son of Imlah. But Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

# They bring Micaiah before them, and his initial response was a sarcastic, "Sure, go, it will all be great:"

1 Kings 22:15-16: (NASB) <sup>15</sup>When he came to the king, the king said to him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain? And he answered him, Go up and succeed, and the LORD will give it into the hand of the king. (This is an important part of this context. Micaiah clearly knows that Ahab will NOT listen!) <sup>16</sup>Then the king said to him, How many times must I adjure you to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD? (Ahab knew this was not what Micaiah really thought.)

# Micaiah then prophesied of Israel being without a leader and Ahab began to get irate, so Micaiah told them another story to illustrate the fact that all of Ahab's prophets are not of God and are lying:

1 Kings 22:19-23: (NASB) <sup>19</sup>Micaiah said, Therefore, hear 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 and on His left. <sup>20</sup>The LORD said, Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said this while another said that. <sup>21</sup>Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, I will entice him. <sup>22</sup>The LORD said to him, How? And he said, I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. Then He said, You are to entice him and also prevail. Go and do so. <sup>23</sup>Now therefore, behold, the LORD has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; and the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you.

God did not make them lie. He allowed them to follow their own hearts and minds.



(Source: Adam Clarke Commentary) Verse 19 - I saw the Lord sitting on his throne. This is a mere parable, and only tells in figurative language, what was in the womb of providence, the events which were shortly to take place, the agents employed in them, and the permission on the part of God for these agents to act. Micaiah did not choose to say before this angry and impious king, "Thy prophets are all liars; and the devil, the father of lies, dwells in them;" but he represents the whole by this parable, and says the same truths in language as forcible, but less offensive.

<u>Conclusion</u>: When an account seems out of character with general scriptural narrative, examine it and find out why. Ahab was notoriously opposed to God, especially with Elijah. The story here well illustrates what Ahab through his experiences with Elijah could not hear in any other way he was against God. His pride would cost him his life.

When we come across a Scripture that seems odd, we need to ask why. What is the character of God? Does it match the character of God? Does it match the narrative of God? Is the Scripture symbolic, prophetic, real, historic? If we do not exhaust all possibilities, we cannot find the truth.

Another interesting lesson in the story of Ahab is that when we read a text, we likely won't readily pick up on sarcasm, as we do not expect it.

# DOES GOD SEND OUT LIES TO TRIP PEOPLE UP?



<u>2 Thessalonians 2:11-12</u>: (NASB) <sup>11</sup>For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, <sup>12</sup>in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth but took pleasure in wickedness.

This delusion is not for the purpose of tricking anyone - it is a judgment upon those who have already decided to walk away from God - it is the result of their previous dedication to spiritual perversion and a logical conclusion.

Conclusion: Immediate context reveals what happened before this verse. (Verses 8-12)

The Bible is the inspired word of God and in the Bible, we have the promise of the wonderful kingdom to come in the future.

The Bible does not contradict itself.

So, does the Bible contradict itself?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!





Join us next week for our podcast on June 10, 2019: Ep. #1077: We are Christians but are we Unified?

#### **Bonus Material**

Truth searches for no one. It waits to be found. — Suzy Kassem

## The larger context of the account where David turns over seven of Saul's family to be executed:

<u>2 Samuel 21:1-7</u>: (NASB) ¹Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David sought the presence of the LORD. And the LORD said, It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he put the Gibeonites to death. ²So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them (now the Gibeonites were not of the sons of Israel but of the remnant of the Amorites, and the sons of Israel made a covenant with them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the sons of Israel and Judah). ³Thus David said to the Gibeonites, What should I do for you? And how can I make atonement that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD? ¹Then the Gibeonites said to him, We have no concern of silver or gold with Saul or his house, nor is it for us to put any man to death in Israel. And he said, I will do for you whatever you say. ⁵So they said to the king, The man who consumed us and who planned to exterminate us from remaining within any border of Israel, ¹let seven men from his sons be given to us, and we will hang them before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of the LORD. And the king said, I will give them. ¹But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the oath of the LORD which was between them, between David and Saul's son Jonathan.

God, from the founding of Israel, was exacting as to their adherence to their promises. When there were some who engaged in idolatry and violated their allegiance to God, He had them executed.

(Source: Albert Barnes Commentary) Seven men: Seven was a sacred number not only with the Hebrews but with other Oriental nations, {Numbers 23:1,29} and is therefore brought in on this occasion when the judicial death of the sons of Saul was a religious act intended to appease the wrath of God for the violation of an oath. {Numbers 25:4}

Numbers 25:1-5: (NASB) ¹While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. ²For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the LORD was angry against Israel. ⁴The LORD said to Moses, Take all the leaders of the people and execute them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel. ⁵So Moses said to the judges of Israel, Each of you slay his men who have joined themselves to Baal of Peor.

Israel had entered into a treaty with the Gibeonites back in Joshua's day. Even though God had told them to never do that, He expected them to honor it. Saul did not.



(Source: J. Vernon McGee Commentary) This is quite a remarkable passage of Scripture. To understand it we must go back to the days of Joshua when the Gibeonites deceived him and Joshua made a treaty with them (Joshua 9:1-27). Israel had been told by God not to make a treaty with anyone. A treaty in that day (which some folk consider "uncivilized") was inviolate. When a treaty was made, the terms of the treaty were kept. Treaties were more than a scrap of paper. They were not made to be broken. But the other side of the coin is interesting. God did not forget that Saul, representing Israel, had broken the treaty with the Gibeonites. Because the Israelites are His people, they are not going to get by with it. The three years of famine came upon them as a judgment.

### The location of this event was important to the Gibeonites.

(Source: John Gill Commentary) ...in Gibeah of Saul, [whom] the Lord did choose; which was Saul's native place, and where he always lived; so that to hang them there was to the greater disgrace of him and his family; and he being chosen of the Lord to be a king of Israel, was an aggravation of his crime in violating the oath made to the Gibeonites.

<u>Verse 5</u> - There is no other history of this breach of treaty by Saul anywhere else. The fact that David is so agreeable indicates that the Gibeonites had a legitimate claim by Law to recompense their dead.

(Source: Matthew Henry Commentary) We are told of the injury which Saul had, long before this, done to the Gibeonites, which we had no account of in the history of his reign, nor should we have heard of it here but that it came now to be reckoned for. The Gibeonites were of the remnant of the Amorites (2 Samuel 21:2), who by a stratagem had made peace with Israel, and had the public faith pledged to them by Joshua for their safety. We had the story (Joshua 9) where it was agreed (2 Samuel 21:2, 3) that they should have their lives secured, but be deprived of their lands and liberties, that they and theirs should be tenants in villeinage to Israel. It does not appear that they had broken their part of the covenant, either by denying their service or attempting to recover their lands or liberties; nor was this pretended; but Saul, under colour of zeal for the honour of Israel, that it might not be said that they had any of the natives among them, aimed to root them out, and, in order to that, slew many of them.

The Ten Commandments: These are the basis for the Jewish community, for those who would live as part of the Nation of Israel. Their rules for dealing with those outside of the nation are discussed elsewhere:

Exodus 20:1-17: (NASB) ¹Then God spoke all these words, saying, ²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

<sup>4</sup>You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup>You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, <sup>6</sup>but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

<sup>7</sup>You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

<sup>8</sup>Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup>but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. <sup>11</sup>For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore, the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>You shall have no other gods before Me.



<sup>12</sup>Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

<sup>13</sup>You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup>You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup>You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup>You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.



### The larger context of Rahab:

Joshua 2:1-14: (NASB) ¹Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, Go, view the land, especially Jericho. So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there. ²It was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land. ³And the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab, saying, Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land. ⁴But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.

### We could argue that this was true, but not complete... But what about what comes next:

<sup>5</sup>It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them. <sup>6</sup>But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. <sup>7</sup>So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate.

Classic deception - they went that-a-way! This certainly fulfills the definition of a lie, but where does it stand relating to what God hates - a lying tongue and uttering lies as a witness to hurt them? Rahab's intention was obvious - protect the strangers from capture.

#### But why?

<sup>8</sup>Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, <sup>9</sup>and said to the men, I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. <sup>10</sup>For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. <sup>11</sup>When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

# Rahab knew of God and His deliverance of Israel and BELIEVED in God based on her very limited observations and experience.

<sup>12</sup>Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth, <sup>13</sup>and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death. <sup>14</sup>So the men said to her, Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.



### Her belief was deep enough to put her own life on the line.

<u>Hebrews 11:30-31</u>: (NASB) <sup>30</sup>By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup>By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

### Rahab was honored for her faith - not her lies!

# The larger context of 2 Thessalonians and the dedication to evil of those who were sent "a deluding influence:"

2 Thessalonians 2:7-12: (NASB) <sup>7</sup>For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup>Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; <sup>9</sup>that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, <sup>10</sup>and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. <sup>11</sup>For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, <sup>12</sup>in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth but took pleasure in wickedness.

