


"DECEIVERS YET TRUE!"

D.O.

--2 Corinthians 6:8




Hello, my name is Brother Andrew. For many years I have smuggled* Bibles into Communist** countries. Some people say I shouldn't do this, because it's against the law to take Bibles or other Christian literature into many Communist countries. But I answer, "Jesus Christ has commanded us to preach the Gospel in all the World, and when Man's laws forbid us to do that, then we ought to obey God rather than Men."—Mk.16:15; Acts 5:29. (Taken from Brother Andrew's book, "The Ethics of Smuggling.")

That was close, but the border guards didn't find the hidden Bibles!— Thank God!

723/S

VROOM!

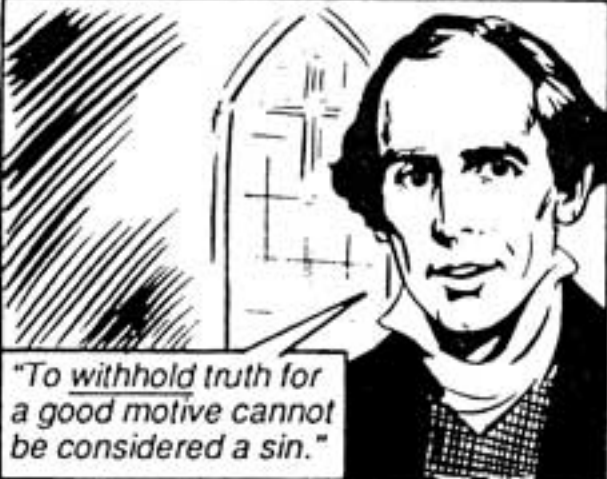
Often border guards ask,



Why are you coming to our country?—To bring in Bibles or other Christian literature?

(*Smuggled: Secretly brought in.)
(**Communist: The anti-religious system of government taught by Karl Marx.)

So I pray hard that I can conceal or hide the truth from them. Why? Because when they fight God's Truth, they are God's enemies. They are serving the Devil and they therefore have no right to know the truth. As the great Gospel preacher, Charles Finney, said,



"To withhold truth for a good motive cannot be considered a sin."

Along with concealing the truth, there is also the principle of telling partial truth. In other words, you do not have to tell the Devil's people everything you know. Some Christians ask, "Is this Scriptural?" Well, let me give an example from the Bible:

"Why Are You Going to Bethlehem?" (1Sam.16:1-13)



One of the greatest men of God in the Old Testament was the Prophet Samuel. He had anointed Saul to be King, but then Saul disobeyed God, so God rejected him from being King. Samuel wept all night about this, but the Lord told him:



How long will you grieve over Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being King? Fill your horn with oil, and go to Jesse in Bethlehem, and anoint one of his sons as the new King.

How can I do that? If Saul hears that I'm anointing someone else to be king, he will kill me!

So the Lord told Samuel—

Take a heifer with you, and if Saul's soldiers stop you and ask where you're going, just say, "Oh, I'm going to Bethlehem to sacrifice this heifer to the Lord."*



(*Heifer: A young cow.)

So that's just what Samuel did!—And he found David and anointed him to be King!

I'm just going to Bethlehem to sacrifice this heifer.

Umm, I guess it's ok... You may pass!

Was Samuel going to sacrifice the heifer? Yes! But that was not the main reason he was going to Bethlehem. God Himself told him to hide his real reasons from King Saul. And in our service for Christ today, we also must sometimes "conceal the truth". As anti-Christ forces continue to gain control of the World in the dark days to come, we may have to do this more and more to protect the cause of Christ. When I go into a strict Communist country with Christian literature to distribute, and they ask me:

What is the purpose of your visit?

And that's the truth! While witnessing in their country, I do enjoy the scenery and I do go swimming and enjoy resting just like any other tourist! It's not the whole truth, of course, but let me say again, men who are serving the Devil have no right to know the whole truth!

For tourism. I want to see your country.

Isn't this good advice from Brother Andrew? In the Bible this is called being "deceivers" yet true".—2Cor.6:8. Sometimes, to be true to the Lord and their mission to give people the Truth, Christians have to deceive the ungodly and hide the truth from them. Let's look at some other examples of this in the Bible:

(*Deceiver: Someone who tricks or misleads someone else.)

Going Secretly to the Feast

(Jn.7:1-10)

Even Jesus Himself sometimes had to be a "deceiver yet true" to avoid letting His enemies know His plans! Sometimes He even had to fool His Own family so they wouldn't know what He was going to do.

Jesus knew that the Jews in Judea sought to kill Him, so he stayed in Galilee. But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles came, His brothers—who did not believe in Him—mocked Him:



Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your Disciples there may also see the miracles that You do!

Yeah! James is right! Stop being so secretive! If You want everyone to believe in You, then show Yourself openly to the whole World!

My time is not yet come. You go up unto this Feast. I am not going up to this Feast yet, for My time is not yet fully come.

When He had said these words to them, He remained still in Galilee.

Too bad You're not coming with us, brother Jesus!



But when His brothers had gone, then He went up also to the Feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.



Good, they're gone! Now get the other Disciples together and we'll head to Jerusalem by a different road!

Peter, lend Me your cloak, please. I need to disguise Myself so that no one recognises Me on the way there.



Peter, I told them no lie. I merely said that I was not going up to this Feast yet, that My time was not fully come. They interpreted that to mean a long time, or that I wasn't going at all, but that's not what I said.



But....but, Master. You told Your brothers that You weren't going up to this Feast. And now You...I mean... You deceived them on purpose!

But wasn't that deceiving them, Lord?



Thomas, don't you understand? This is the same as I have often done with those who are not worthy to know the truth, or those who will not receive it. I hid the true meaning of My Words that they might not understand. (See Mat. 13:10-15,34,35; Jn. 10:6.)

Sometimes, like Jesus, we too must lead unbelievers and enemies to think one thing, although we actually mean something else. Although we tell them the truth, we do not need to tell them the whole truth.

"Tell No Man!"—Mat.16:20.

For 3-1/2 years Jesus went all over Judea and Galilee healing multitudes of people and preaching the Gospel. Many Jews, seeing His miracles & hearing His Words, began to believe that Jesus must be the promised Messiah, the Christ.

Yes, I do! And I tell you, it's dangerous! If all the people believe that He is the promised Messiah, then they'll listen only to Him! Why would they bother to listen to us religious leaders any more if the very Son of God is here?

Zerah, do you hear what the people are whispering to each other about Jesus?

Just look at all the miracles Jesus is doing! When Christ comes, will He do more miracles than these which Jesus has done? (Jn.7:31)

You're right! Jesus must be the promised Messiah!

Right, we'll lose our control over the people!

We must arrest Him immediately & accuse Him of blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God!



We can't arrest Him just because of what some people are saying about Him.—Only if He claims it Himself! And Jesus has been very careful to never say in public that He is the Christ.

What do we do then?



Just wait. Sooner or later we'll trap Him!

A year-and-a-half later, Jesus and His Disciples were alone near the town of Caesarea Philippi (Mat.16:13-20), and Jesus asked His Disciples:

Whom do men say that I am?

Some say that You are John the Baptist, resurrected from the dead.

Some say You are Elijah.

Or one of the other Prophets maybe.

Or the Prophet Jeremiah come back.

But whom do you say that I am?

You are the Christ,
the Son of the living
God!



Blessed are you, Simon Bar-jona, for
flesh and blood has not revealed this to
you, but My Father Who is in Heaven.
But I must warn you: Do not tell any
man that I am the Christ.

But Lord, why hide
Who You really are?



Lord, You can't just purposely leave
the people with the wrong impression,
and let them go on thinking that You're
just Jeremiah or some other Prophet.
Isn't that deceiving them?

Some months later,
Jesus was walking
through the Temple
at Jerusalem
(Jn.10:22-40):



Thomas, the time will come when you
shall preach from the very housetops
what I am secretly whispering in your
ears, and what I am telling you private-
ly in darkness, you may boldly proclaim
in the light!—But that time is not yet.
(Mat. 10:27)



Good, His Disciples aren't with Him!
Now's our chance! Surround Him!

Be careful! He's strong. He was a carpenter most of His life!

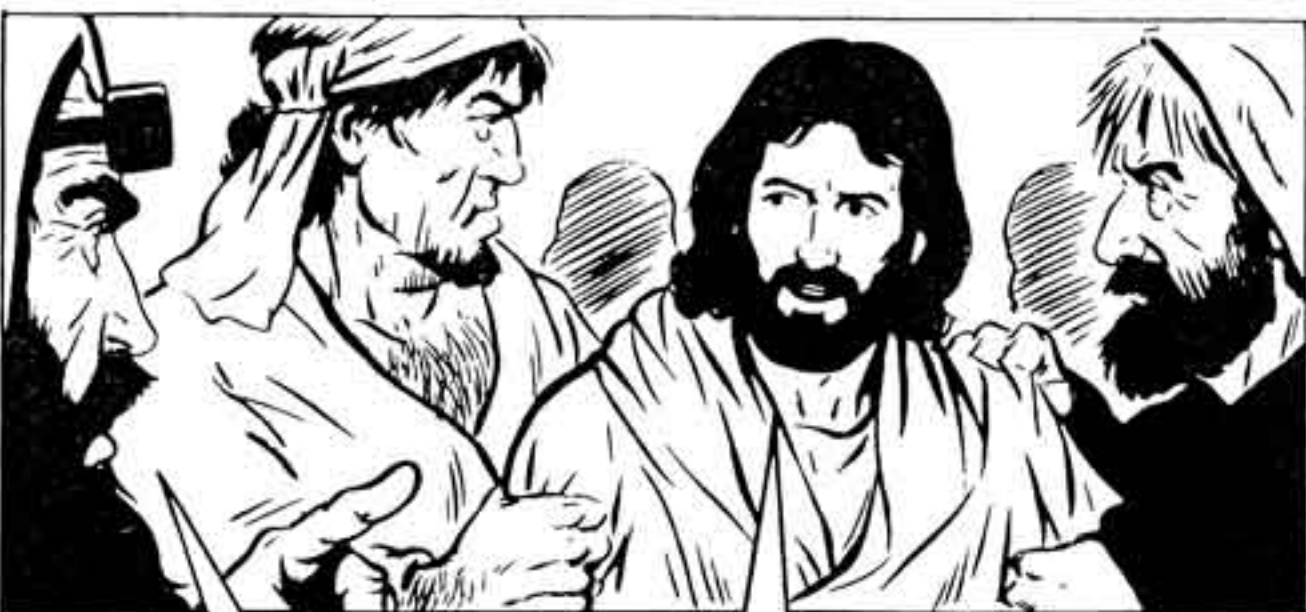
Now we've got You cornered!

How long do You make us to doubt and wonder? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly!

Stop hiding Your meaning in parables about sheep and shepherds and sparrows! Tell us! Are You the Christ, the Son of God?!

I told you, and you believed not. You believe not because you are not My sheep, as I said unto you.

I and My Father are One.

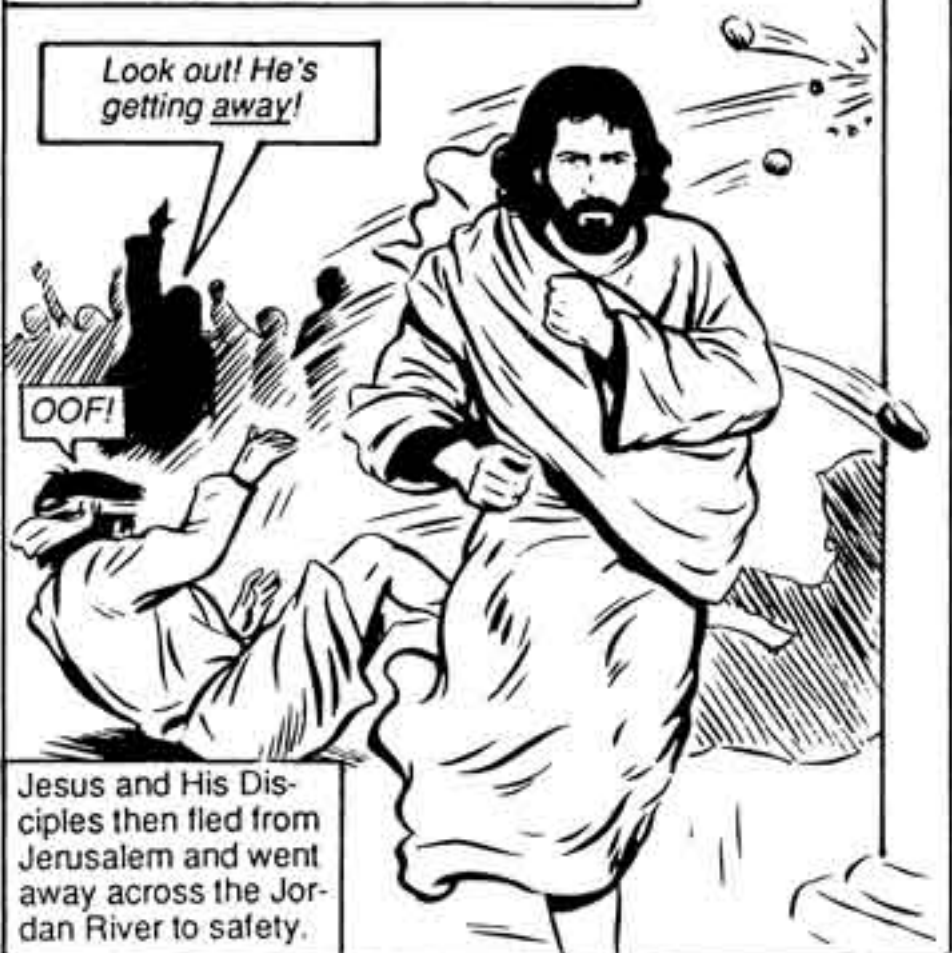


That's it! He finally said it! Grab him, men! Let's take Him out and stone Him.

Is it not written in your law, "You are gods"? If He called them gods, and they were just mere men, why do you say of Me, Whom the Father has sent into the World, "You blaspheme!", because I said, "I am the Son of God"?

Hey! Yeah, He's right....I mean, if...

Therefore they sought again to take Him: but He escaped out of their hands.



Look out! He's getting away!

OOF!

Shut up, you stupid fool! Don't let go of Him! He's just trying to confuse you with parables!

Jesus and His Disciples then fled from Jerusalem and went away across the Jordan River to safety.

Lord, that was close! They almost had You there!



Now I understand why it's so dangerous to tell people that You're the Son of God!

Yes, for Your safety it's important that we don't tell people until it's time.

What lessons did you learn from this story? Do you think it was right of Jesus to conceal Who He really was until He was ready to tell people? If you had been there back then and Jesus had commanded you not to tell anyone, would you have obeyed Jesus?—Or if an enemy had asked you Who Jesus was, would you have told them?



Tell no man Who I am!

Amen, yes Sir!

Surely you can tell me who Jesus is! — You do know who He is, don't you?

Can you apply these lessons to serving Jesus now, today? If you knew that enemies would persecute you and your family and all your brothers and sisters and chase you out of their city, if you didn't have to, would you tell them who you are?

"Is This Not David?"

(1Sam.21:10-15)

David was serving King Saul, but because David was more popular with the people than he was, Saul was afraid that David would try to steal the throne. Saul tried many times to kill him, so David and his men finally left Israel and fled to Gath in the land of the Philistines. The Philistines were enemies of the Israelites.

David, this is very risky. The Philistines want to kill you because you slew Goliath and used to lead Saul's armies against them. What if they recognise you?

Let's just hope they don't.

Hey! That Hebrew looks familiar! Isn't that David?

I don't know. Are you sure?

No, I'm not, but let's not take any chances!

Arrest that man! Take him to King Achish!

Wait here at the door!

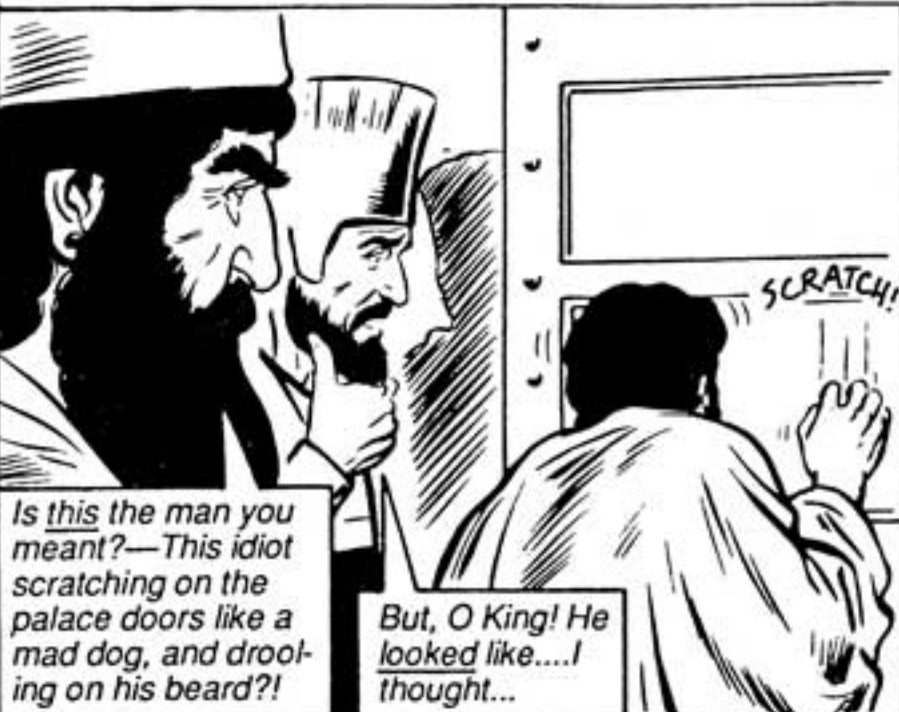
O King, is this not David, of whom it was boasted that he killed tens of thousands of Philistines?

What?! Let me have a close look!

The Bible says that when David heard these words, he was very afraid of what King Achish would do to him.

O Lord God, what shall I do? They'll kill me for sure!

David had a sudden inspiration and "changed his behaviour before them," pretending that he was not David, but rather some insane lunatic!



Is this the man you meant?—This idiot scratching on the palace doors like a mad dog, and drooling on his beard?!

But, O King! He looked like....I thought...

How disgusting! Can't you see that the man is insane? What did you bring him to me for? Get him out of my palace!



Here, take your crazy fool and get out of here!

David?!

What happened to David?

David escaped only by using outright deception. He pretended he was not David, but someone else in order to avoid being thrown in prison or killed. Was that right? What do you think? What if you were in a situation like David was in? It might not be best for you to act like a crazy person, but would you at least pretend you were someone else to save your life, as well as the lives of your brothers and sisters?

David and the Dummy! (1Sam.19:9-18)

Now here's a very interesting story! To tell it, let's go back to the time when King Saul first tried to kill David, before David fled to Gath. One night in the palace, Saul tried to kill David with a javelin, but David fled to his own house where he was living with King Saul's daughter, Michal. Saul then sent soldiers to watch David's house, ordering them to kill him in the morning.





There! That looks just like David sleeping under the blankets!—And this pillow of black goat's hair looks just like the back of his head!



The next morning—

Where is David?
We've come to take him to the King!

Shhhh. He's sick.

Was David sick? No. He wasn't even there! Not only did Michal deceive them with a dummy, but she also told an outright lie. Was that right? Keep reading and see!



Well, just bring him to me in his bed then, and I'll kill him!

Yes, O King!

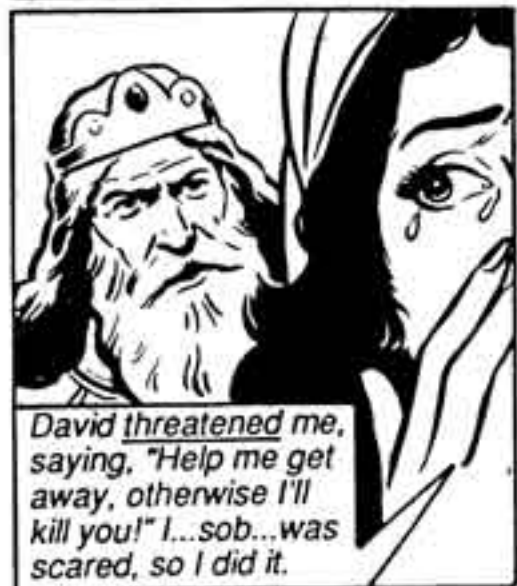
What is this?—A dummy?!



Come with us! Your father will be furious!

What shall I say? Father is mad enough to kill me now!

Michal! My own daughter!! Why have you deceived me like this by helping my enemy to escape?



David threatened me, saying, "Help me get away, otherwise I'll kill you!" I...sob...was scared, so I did it.

David, of course, had not said any such thing! Michal was telling wicked King Saul a lie. But it saved her life!



Poor girl, don't worry, you're safe now.


Because Michal had stalled King Saul's men by lying to them, David had a little more time, and he escaped to safety.

If you had been in Michal's place and loved David, what would you have done? Would you have made a dummy and lied to the King to help David escape?—Or would you have told wicked King Saul and his soldiers the truth, even if it meant that David would get killed?


"They Went Thataway!"

(2Sam. 17:1-22)


David finally did become King of Israel. But many years later, his bad son, Absalom, led a rebellion and stole the Kingdom from his father. Absalom marched into Jerusalem with his armies and King David and his followers had to flee for their lives. They camped out between Jerusalem and the Jordan River. Absalom and his council then made plans on how to pursue David and kill him. Fortunately, however, one of Absalom's counsellors was David's friend Hushai, who was still loyal to King David and was only pretending to be loyal to Absalom.



I need to tell King David about Absalom's plans right away! But how? I'm being watched and can't leave the city.



I'll tell Zadok and Abiathar the priests.



Send a messenger to King David quickly and tell him, "Do not lodge this night in the plains of the wilderness, but cross over the Jordan River speedily, lest you be killed, O King, and all the people that follow you!"

Two of King David's warriors are waiting in the village of En-Rogel just outside Jerusalem. Go quickly and tell them the message!

Yes, my lord!

Shortly—

So that's the message...

We'll tell King David at once!

But a neighbor boy saw David's warriors:

Those are two of *David's* men, Jonathan and Ahimaaz. I need to tell King Absalom!

Jonathan! Look!
We're being followed!
RUN!

There they go! Kill them!

We'll never get away in time! We need to hide! This family is still loyal to King David.



Woman! Cover the well quickly! Hide us!—And do not tell Absalom's men that we're here! King David's life depends upon it!

Yes, my lord!



There! No one will know there's a well underneath! It just looks like corn drying on this mat in the yard.



Where did they run?

Through that courtyard!

Look! A woman! She must have seen which way they went!

O Lord, what shall I say? They know I must have seen King David's men. I can't pretend I don't know where they went, or the soldiers will be suspicious and search the whole yard!


O Lord, what shall I do? I don't want to tell a lie, but if I don't, then David's men will be slain and King David himself may die!

Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?

They ran across that brook!


This way, men! Quickly!

Absalom's men searched beyond the brook but were unable to find David's men, so they gave up and returned to Jerusalem.




Forget it! It's getting dark now. We'll never find them.

It's safe now. They've headed back to Jerusalem.



I heard what you told them. God bless you. I know you don't like to lie.


Yes, but when I prayed, I remembered the story of Rahab the harlot,* how she told a lie to save the lives of God's two spies. And I thought, should I not also tell a lie to save you two spies, and the life of the King and the entire Kingdom as well!



(*See Joshua 2.)


Because this simple girl was willing to tell a lie to the King's enemies, David's men were saved and got the message to King David in time. David fled and the entire Kingdom was saved! He was later able to return to Jerusalem and reclaim the throne. What would you have done if you had been in that woman's place?

Protecting Baby Moses (A dramatisation of Exo.2:1,2; Heb.11:23)




Again, congratulations on the birth of your son, Amram and Jochebed.

Thank you so much for your help with the delivery!




Don't mention it! I'm glad to help.

And don't worry, I won't tell the Egyptians that you had a baby boy.




And make sure you don't tell anyone either, little man!


Later—




Why shouldn't we tell the Egyptians that we have a new baby brother?



Because Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, is a very wicked man who doesn't believe in the God of our Fathers, and he has made a new law saying that if we Hebrews have baby boys, they must be thrown into the Nile River!



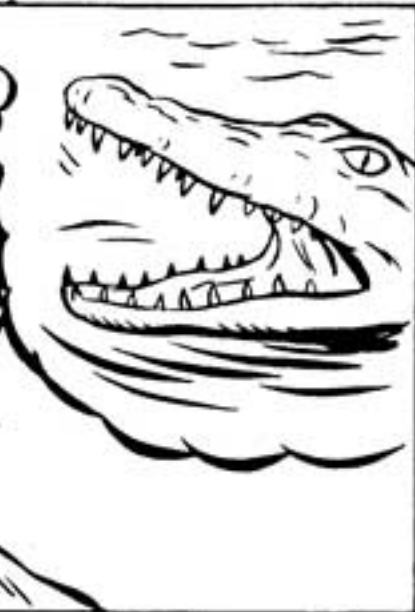
Oh, that's bad!





And Aaron, there are terrible, hungry crocodiles living in the Nile river! They are 15 feet long, and they would eat up the babies!

That's right. And you don't want that to happen to your baby brother, do you?

NO, Daddy, NO!



So if one of Pharaoh's soldiers comes to the door and asks, "Is there a baby boy in this house?", what would you answer?



I would say, "Yes there is, but don't throw him in the river, you bad, mean man!"

No, NO, Aaron! You can't tell them that, because if you say we do have a baby brother, then they will throw him to the crocodiles for sure!!

So what should I say?

You should say, "No, there are no babies in this house."

But Daddy, that would be a lie. You always said that we should never tell a lie.

Here, let me tell you something, children: Mommy and I have always taught you that it is wrong to tell a lie, and that's what we still believe. You should never tell a lie to your mommy and I or your family.

But the Egyptians hate God and they want to kill our little baby boy, so we can't tell them the truth. Sometimes we have to tell a lie to the Egyptians to save our lives, or to save the lives of our babies. Do you understand?

Yes, Daddy.

Some weeks later—

WAAH
WAAAHH

Mommy! The baby woke up! He's crying.

Oh no! He's very loud! I hope no soldiers are near!

WAAAHH
WAAAHH

Miriam, please go look out the door and make sure no soldiers are passing by.



Listen! I hear a baby crying!

Yes. It's coming from that house there! Let's go check!



Mama! Two soldiers are coming!

Quick! I'll hide behind this curtain! Don't let the soldiers know that the baby and I are here!



We heard a baby, where is it?

There's no baby here. That was just me! I was making crying sounds, pretending my dolly was crying.



Where's your mother?

Oh...she's at the market buying vegetables.



I was sure that was a real baby...

Come on! Let's go.

Just wait a second!



Do you have a little baby brother anywhere? You don't need to be afraid to tell me. I like little baby boys.

Aaron, the Egyptians hate God and they want to kill our little baby boy! We can't tell them the truth!

Well? Do you have a baby brother?

No, I don't.

Come on, this is a waste of time. Let's go.

Later that evening—

Miriam, you saved the baby's life! That was really a wise answer you gave the soldiers. And Aaron, good for you for not telling the soldiers you had a baby brother!

Do you think it was good for Aaron and Miriam to lie to the Egyptian soldiers? What would you have told the soldiers if you had been there? Why do you think the soldier asked little Aaron if he had a baby brother, when Miriam had already told them there was no baby there? There are still cold-hearted "Egyptians" today who would even try to take away children from God's people. So take a tip from this story about baby Moses & do your best to protect your Family! Amen? GBY!

Ahab & the Actor! (1Ki.20:26-42)

The Syrian armies under the wicked King Ben-hadad had invaded the land of Israel. But because Ben-hadad had mocked God, the Lord helped the Israelite king, Ahab, to defeat him in battle. Ahab was supposed to kill wicked Ben-hadad, but instead, he disobeyed and made a peace agreement with him and let him return home in peace.

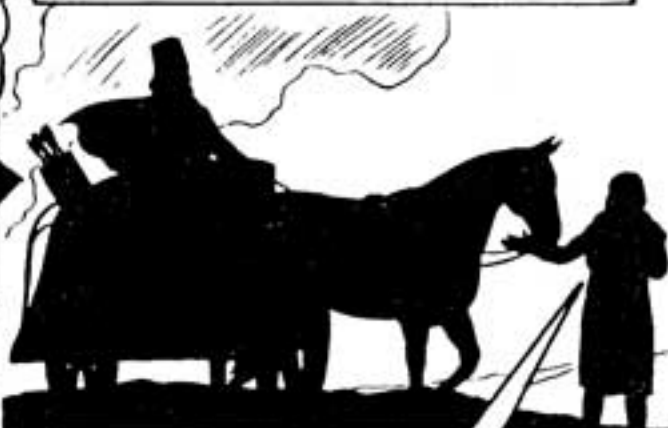
It's a deal!

The Lord was very angry with Ahab for this, and sent a Prophet to rebuke him. It would have been very dangerous for the Prophet to just walk up to the King and rebuke him, so the Lord inspired him to tell the king a made-up story.



With these ashes on my face, my disguise is complete. My face is bleeding and now it looks like it's blackened with the smoke of battle. The king will never recognise me.

The Prophet waited by the side of the road until the King rode by in his chariot. Then—



O King! I went out into the middle of the battle, and, behold, one of your men came my way. He brought a man to me, and said, "Keep this man! If he gets away, then you shall die in his place!" And as I was busy here and there, he did get away.

You yourself have decided your judgment! You shall die in his place!

What?! It's one of the Prophets!

Then the Prophet quickly removed his disguise, and the king recognised him.

Thus saith the Lord, "Because you have let a man go whom I wanted you to utterly destroy, therefore you shall die in his place!"

Ahab got the point of the Prophet's story. The Bible says he went home "heavy and displeased". He was killed in battle just a few years later.

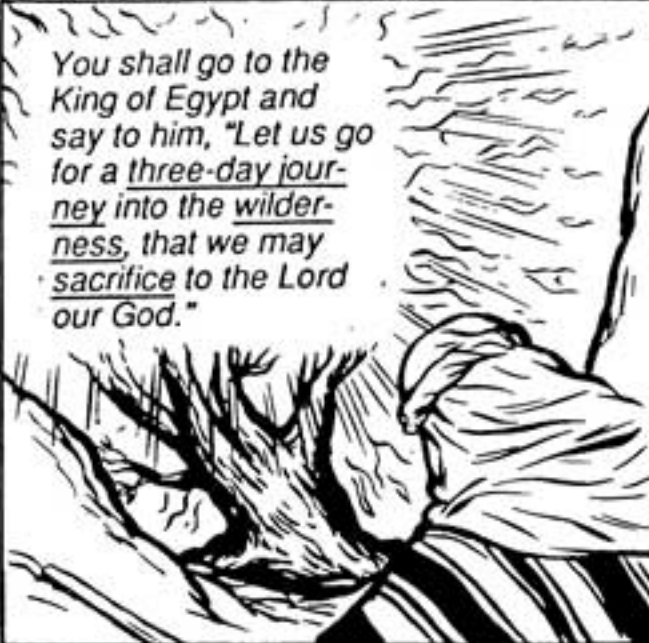
Every word of the Prophet's story was made up! It had never happened. The only reason he put on the disguise was to trick the King into believing his story. But was it right or wrong? Obviously it was right!—For the Lord Himself inspired the story! We too are like Prophets speaking God's message, but some people wouldn't want to listen to us if they knew we were God's Prophets. So sometimes we have to pretend we are not the Prophets we are so that we can safely tell them the truth they need to hear and get God's message to them.

Going to "the Religious Festival"! (Exodus Chapters 3-12)

The Lord had promised Moses:


I will bring you and your people up out of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites.

God wanted the Hebrews to leave Egypt forever and go to live in Canaan, but He knew that Moses couldn't tell that to Pharaoh, or Pharaoh would never let his Hebrew slaves leave. So the Lord told Moses—




You shall go to the King of Egypt and say to him, "Let us go for a three-day journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God."

Soon—



You just want to go on a short journey into the nearby desert?—For some religious festival?


Yes, O King.



I don't believe you! No, no! If I let all my slaves go, you'll keep going and never come back.

I'm only telling you what God told me to tell you.

Finally, after God sent His great plagues and judgements on Egypt, Pharaoh changed his mind.



Very well, then. I will allow the men to go sacrifice, but their wives and children and old folks and flocks must stay here! That way I can be sure the men will return.

No, we will go with our young and our old, with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds, for we must hold a feast unto the Lord.

After another plague hit—

Go then, hold your feast! All your families can go out with you! But leave your flocks and herds behind to make sure you come back!

Lord, we need to take our flocks and herds, because we're going all the way to Canaan and never returning! But I can't tell Pharaoh that! What can I tell him?

No, O King! We need to take them all with us, because we won't know which of them we should sacrifice to the Lord until we get there!

The happy ending of the story is that Pharaoh finally allowed them all to go and let them take their sheep and cattle as well. Once the Hebrews had left Egypt, they were gone "three days"—in fact, they never returned! So had Moses told Pharaoh the truth? Yes, but not the whole truth. And remember, it was God Who had told Moses what to tell Pharaoh. Did Moses do the right thing in answering Pharaoh the way he did?

A WORD OF CAUTION!

These stories show that the Lord allowed His people to deceive their enemies—and even tell them outright lies—when it was necessary to save His Work or the lives of His people. But you'd better watch out, because there are also many examples in the Bible which show what happened when people used lies or deception for wrong or selfish reasons.

If one of God's people is forced to tell a lie to save their life or to keep from being persecuted by the wicked, the Lord may allow it. But watch out if you start telling lies just for your own selfish reasons, because you want something that somebody else has, or you lie when you've been bad because you don't want a spanking or punishment!

Apparently someone tried to use the video player without permission, and now it's broken. Would any of you have any idea who it was?

If I admit it was me, I'm sure to get punished!

No, Sir!

No, Sir!


Uh, no, Sir!

In the Bible, when people deceived others for the wrong reasons, the Lord condemned it and made sure they suffered for it.

Tell me, Ananias, did you really sell your land for this much money? Is this all the money you received for it?

Yes, yes, that's all of it.

I'll keep this money for myself!




Ananias!—You have lied not only to men, but to God!

Oh, my heart!
...GASP!

Ananias and his wife both fell down dead for telling lies! They said they were giving all their money to God, but they were lying, because they were secretly keeping part of it for themselves. Read the story for yourself in Acts 5:1-13. For another story about how God punished people who lied for selfish reasons, read 2Ki.5:8-16,20-27.


Remember, just because in an emergency or desperate situation, God's people may sometimes have to use deception to save God's Work, this does not mean that we should lie to members of our own Family! Col.3:9 says, "Lie not one to another."



Son, did you ask Gabe for permission to use the bike?

No, I didn't, and Gabe's not here now!

Uh, yes! He said it was ok!



I accidentally broke your window while playing ball, Mr. Wilson. I'm very sorry and I'll be glad to pay for the damage!

Thanks for telling me, John! I appreciate your honesty!

For more on the "other-side-of-the-coin" of this "Deceivers" issue, please read the exciting sequel Comic, "Honesty Pays!"—Coming soon, DV!