Lying and Deceiving

Lying, deceiving, and bearing false witness is against the will of God

“A lie is any communication given to another with the intent to deceive.” Perjury is part of lying—it is “the wilful utterance of false evidence or swearing or supporting a statement known to be false”

D&C 42:21: “Thou shalt not lie; he that lieth and will not repent shall be cast out”

D&C 42:86-87: “And if he or she shall lie, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of the land. And if he or she do any manner of iniquity, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law, even that of God.”

D&C 63:17-19: “Wherefore, I, the Lord, have said that the fearful, and the unbelieving, and all liars, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, and the whoremonger, and the sorcerer, shall have their part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Verily I say, that they shall not have part in the first resurrection. And now behold, I, the Lord, say unto you that ye are not justified, because these things are among you.”

D&C 64: 38-39: “For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion. And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them.”

D&C 76: 103-105: “These are they who are liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and whosoever loves and makes a lie. These are they who suffer the wrath of God on earth. These are they who suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.”

Exodus 20:16: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour”

D&C: 10: 22, 25-28: “Satan stirreth them up, that he may lead their souls to destruction. And thus he has laid a cunning plan…. Yea, he saith unto them: Deceive and lie in wait to catch, that ye may destroy; behold this is no harm. And thus he flattereth them, and telleth them that it is no sin to lie that they may catch a man in a lie, that they may destroy him. And thus he flattereth them, and leadeth them along until he draggeth their souls down to hell; and thus he causeth them to catch themselves in their own snare……Verily, verily, I say unto you, wo be unto him that lieth to deceive because he supposeth that another lieth to deceive, for such are not exempt from the justice of God.”

Lies can be inherited from others:

D&C 123:7: “…..Urged on and upheld by the influence of that spirit which hath so strongly riveted the creeds of the fathers, who have inherited lies, upon the hearts of the children, and filled the world with confusion.”

Satan was a Liar from the beginning and deceived those around him. He became known as the father of Lies:
D&C 93:24-25: “And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come; And whatsoever is more or less than this is the spirit of that wicked one who was a liar from the beginning.”

Moses 4:4: “And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.” See Ether 8:25 and John 8:44

God cannot lie:

Ether 3: 11-12: “And the Lord said unto him: Believest thou the words which I shall speak? And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie.”

Enos 1:6: “And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie; wherefore, my guilt was swept away.”

2 Nephi 9:34: “Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell.”

Proverbs 12:22: “Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight.”

Proverbs 13:5: “A righteous man hateth lying…. ”

Proverbs 6:16-17: “Solomon, the son of David, says: “These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him.” The first two of the seven which he named are “A proud look, [and] a lying tongue.”

Psalms 120:2: “Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.”

Isaiah 63:8: “I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.”

Jeremiah 28:15: “Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie.”

Leviticus 6:1-5: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, ‘If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour; Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein: Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal,”
and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering.”

**Deceiving**

To deceive is to misrepresent or give a false account of something. This could apply to the intentional misuse of scripture. It is to mislead on purpose. “In the scriptures, to deceive is to cause someone to believe something that is not true.” (LDS.Org)

Satan is the master of Deception:

**Moses 4:4:** “And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.”

**D&C 50:3:** “And also Satan hath sought to deceive you, that he might overthrow you.”

**Revelations 12:9:** “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

**D&C 50:6, 9:** “But wo unto them that are deceivers and hypocrites, for, thus saith the Lord, I will bring them to judgment …… Wherefore, let every man beware lest he do that which is not in truth and righteousness before me.”

**Ephesians 5:6:** “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”

**Ephesians 4:14-15:** “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love”

**Note:** Anything that is not the truth is deceptive by nature.

**James 1:22:** “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

**Quotes**

**President Marion G Romney**

“We believe in Being Honest” Nov 1976 Ensign

Sin,” said Oliver Wendell Holmes, “has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all.” (The Chambered Nautilus) And William Penn counselled, “When thou art obliged to speak, be sure to speak the truth; for equivocation is half-way to lying, as lying the whole way to hell.” (From Fruits of Solitude) Note Equivocation is using ambiguous words to conceal the truth.
So far in these remarks we have considered several aspects of lying:

That Satan is the father of lying and inaugurated the practice in this world when in the Garden of Eden he lied to Eve. 2. That God cannot lie. 3. That God hates lying. 4. That liars are classified with major transgressors. 5. That they languish in this world. 6. That all unrepentant liars “shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (Rev. 21:8) (Rev. 21:1–8)

In the twenty-first verse of section 42 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which the Prophet Joseph Smith specified to be the law of the Church, it is written:

“Thou shalt not lie; he that lieth and will not repent shall be cast out”—meaning, of course, excommunicated from the Church. [D&C 42:21]

Robert J Matthews

“Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness” Oct 1994 Ensign

“Thou shalt not bear false witness” plainly is more than a prohibition against inventing falsehoods. The language of the commandment requires that an honest and straightforward answer be given whenever we are asked to share our knowledge of the truth, as in a court of law when being questioned under oath. Lying under oath is called perjury. The ninth commandment’s broad injunction forbids this and all other forms of giving false evidence or manipulating information. Our words are to agree with the facts.

An interesting case of breaking this commandment is found in the book of Acts. For those who had accepted the doctrines of Christ, it was an era when “all that believed were together, and had all things common: “And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need” (Acts 2:44–45). In Acts 5:1–11, however, we read of Ananias and Sapphira, husband and wife, who sold a piece of property and “kept back part of the price” (Acts 5:2), agreeing that they would say they had sold it for a smaller sum. In talking with Ananias about the transaction, Peter was able to discern the falsehood. “Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:4), he told Ananias. Whatever sacred covenants Ananias and Sapphira may have made in connection with having “all things common” were violated as both husband and wife lied under oath, so to speak. Their intent was to deceive the Lord’s authorized servant, which is the same thing as lying to God. Both suffered the same dire results; they were immediately smitten by death……” (See D&C 82:11 and D&C 104:1–8)

“Thus, the ninth commandment is a strong declaration against covenant breaking, oath breaking, and all forms of untruth, including exaggeration, gross understatement, fabrication, or the wilful giving of any explanation not supported by the facts. Even sharing the truth can have the effect of lying when we tell only half-truths that do not give a full picture. We can also be guilty of bearing false witness and lying if we say nothing, particularly if we allow another to reach a wrong conclusion while we hold back information that would have led to a more accurate perception. In this case it is as though an actual lie were uttered.”
“Lying and misrepresentation in all of their forms are wrong, no matter how they may be rationalized, and those who silently let these evils pass unchallenged are also doing wrong. James explained: “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17). On that basis, it is clear that when someone is slandered, or evil is spoken of them falsely, and we know an injustice has been done, we are morally and scripturally bound to step forward and defend the injured party. To keep silent in such circumstances is a type of bearing false witness ourselves.”

The seriousness of lying is not measured only in injury or pain inflicted on the one deceived. Lying has a devastating effect also on the perpetrator. It robs the liar of self-respect, and deadens his ability to recognize the difference between truth and error. When a lie is told often enough, even the one who knowingly spread it may begin to believe it. This was the case with the antichrist Korihor in the Book of Mormon (see Alma 30:52–53).

Furthermore, one who lies may also likely steal; someone who has little regard for the integrity of truth will probably have little regard for property rights. One sin leads to another. The Lord has said that unrepentant liars—“whosoever loveth and maketh a lie” (Rev. 22:15)—shall spend time in hell, and eventually be assigned to the Telestial Kingdom for eternity (see Rev. 21:8; 2 Ne. 9:34; D&C 42:21; D&C 63:17; D&C 76:103).

“…The Ten Commandments can provide the ethical bedrock necessary in any society, and that alone justifies our obedience to them. But in the light of gospel knowledge, their ethical content is not the most important reason to obey them. The larger reason is that we have been commanded to do so by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ or to suffer the spiritual consequences, and to shun the bearing of false witness is one of his saving doctrines. All that we know of our Heavenly Father and his kingdom teaches us that nothing false is acceptable to him—not lying, not withholding the truth, not manipulating facts in our favor. All such actions are unworthy of his children, and unworthy of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who was our beacon of truth. We must be true witnesses at all times and in all things and in all places (see Mosiah 18:9) if we would be among those that our Lord and Savior will count as his own when he comes again.”

Elder Marvin J Ashton

“This is no Harm” April 1982 Ensign

“A lie is any communication given to another with the intent to deceive.”

When I compare this definition with that found in the dictionary, which states, “A lie is an untrue statement made with the intent of deceiving,” I greatly appreciate her definition. A lie can be effectively communicated without words ever being spoken. Sometimes a nod of the head or silence can deceive. Recommending a questionable business investment, making a false entry in a ledger, devious use of flattery, or failure to divulge all pertinent facts are a few other ways to communicate the lie. After having us go through this daily ritual, this wonderful lady, who never married but who had such a motherly influence over many of us,
would teach with few words the importance of communicating truth under all circumstances. Often she simply said, “Don’t tell lies. Don’t share lies. Don’t participate in lies.”

How serious is lying? We have a clue when we read all through the scriptures that Satan is the father of lies. His method of teaching this evil practice is illustrated in the tenth section of the Doctrine and Covenants: “Yea, he [Satan] saith unto them: Deceive and lie … ; behold, this is no harm. And thus he … telleth them that it is no sin to lie. … And thus he … causeth them to catch themselves in their own snare. (D&C 10:25–26.)

Yet we can’t hide behind the father of lies and say, “Satan made me do it.” All he does is tell us, “This is no harm,” and then he lets us catch ourselves in our own snare.

It is a sin to lie. It is a tragedy to be the victim of lies. Being trapped in the snares of dishonesty and misrepresentation does not happen instantaneously. One little lie or dishonest act leads to another until the perpetrator is caught in the web of deceit. As Samuel Johnson wrote, “The chains of habit are generally too small to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.” (The International Dictionary of Thoughts, comp. John P. Bradley, Leo F. Daniels, Thomas C. Jones, Chicago: J. G. Ferguson Publishing Co., 1969, p 348)

“Perhaps if we analyze some of the reasons people lie, we can avoid or overcome this vicious snare. Sometimes we deceive and lie to avoid personal embarrassment. I recently heard of a young woman who had been released from her employment because of dishonesty. When she applied for another job, she told the prospective employer that her former boss had a family member he wanted to put in her place. She probably told her friends and family members the same story to avoid mortification.

Financial setbacks may be explained to others with untruths. Or have you ever heard someone say, “I was just too busy to get the job done,” when, in truth, he had forgotten? Others use dishonesty to delay, to gain advantage, to impress, to flatter, or to destroy….”

“Lies are often excuses for lack of courage. Sometimes lies are nothing more than excuses for poor performance. Usually one lie or deception has to be covered by another. Lies cannot stand alone. Each one must continually be supported by more and more of its own kind.

There are some who would have us believe there is no right or wrong—that everything is relative. We must never allow ourselves to think proper conduct and decision making are found in a convenient path somewhere between right and wrong.”

“Honesty is basic. It is true that lying is an accomplice to every other form of vice. Or, as someone has said, “Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all.” (O. W. Holmes, in The Home Book of Quotations, p. 1111.) Deceit, insincerity, cheating are forms of lying—and, young people, cheating doesn’t refer only to examination time.

Lying damages others. Lying subtly permits us to destroy ourselves as we are caught in the snare and shatter our own self-image and credibility. Freedom from deceit and lying improves self and gives all of us peace of mind……”
“He who lies is the servant of the lie. He who tells the lie must live with the results…..If a lie is any communication given to another with the intent to deceive, we will all do well to seek God’s constant help in understanding and finding the truth. People of integrity will neither foster, nourish, embrace, nor share the lie.” END