

The exception to lying in scripture. When is lying accepted in Scripture?

It is evident in the Word of God that God has nothing to do with lies and that it is not in His nature (John 8:44; Acts 5:1–11; Col. 3:9; Rev. 21:27).

Nonetheless, there are times when lying is ethically permissible. This might come as a shocker to some, but it is true as we examine scriptures.

If someone came in and was asking for me to reveal where my wife and kids are so he could murder them, I am not telling them the truth. It would be insane for me to reveal their location just so I do not lie to the killer. Lying to a killer or having one of your loved ones killed because of telling them the truth, what would you choose?

In the article about Corrie Ten Boom on <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/corrie-ten-boom> goes:

“After World War II began, members of the ten Boom family became involved in resistance efforts. Two nephews worked in resistance cells. Various family members sheltered young men sought by the Nazis for forced labor and assisted Jews in contacting persons willing to hide them. Corrie became directly involved in these efforts when, along with her father and sister Betsie, she decided to hide Jews in the family home in Haarlem, the Netherlands. Using her job as a watchmaker in her father's shop as a cover, Corrie built contacts with resistance workers, who assisted her in procuring ration books and building a hiding place in the family home.

Six people, among them both Jews and resistance workers, hid in this hiding place when the Gestapo (German secret state police) raided the house on February 28, 1944. Those in hiding remained undiscovered. Several days after the raid resistance workers transferred them to other locations. In the meantime, however, the Gestapo had arrested Corrie ten Boom, her father, her brother, and two sisters, and other family members. In addition, the Gestapo arrested several resistance workers who had unwittingly entered the house during the raid, as well as many family acquaintances who had been attending a prayer meeting in the living room. Altogether, the Gestapo arrested some 30 people in the ten Boom family home that day."

The number one thing that I see in scripture why people lied was to save lives.

a) Midwives

Exodus 1:19 And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

- i) These midwives were brought in to the king for not killing the Hebrew babies that were being born at their watch. They lied to the king saying, *"the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them."*
 - This lying was to protect or save lives.
- ii) On the other hand, it is possible that it is true that the Hebrew women were giving birth quickly before the midwives showed up.
- iii) This verse shows that God blessed the Midwives for saving the lives of the Hebrew women while lying to the king.

b) Rahab

Joshua 2:1-9 And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into a harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither tonight of the children of Israel to search out the country. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I knew not whence they were: And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I know not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

- i) Simply put, Rahab lied to the king's men and the king, but she did that to save life—the lives of the men (spies).
- ii) She was later rewarded by saving her life and household when the children of Israel attacked and overthrew Jericho.
- iii) She is again written about as a woman of faith (Hebrews 11:31).
- iv) As much as we need to be truthful across the board, it is madness, to tell the truth, that would lead to murder. Some people under certain circumstance may give up their right to know the truth.

One other point you are okay to lie about is when your wife asks you if the dress, she is wearing makes her look fat. Saying the truth could cost you your life. This lie could save your life! Just kidding!! 😊

c) Michal

1 Samuel 19:11-19 *Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life tonight, tomorrow thou shalt be slain. So Michal let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped. And Michal took an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth. And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick. And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him. And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster. And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee? So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth. And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.*

- i) During this time, Saul was constantly hunting for David's life. Michal tipped David off about the plan of Saul to kill him and let him through the window and he escaped.
- ii) When the messengers came to her looking for David, she lied saying he was sick. Had she revealed that he had left, these men would be on their way chasing him down.

d) Jonathan

1 Samuel 20:28 *And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem: 29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table. 30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die. 32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done? 33 And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.*

- i) Jonathan was David's very close friend who sought out for his wellbeing. He also knew that his father hated David and had continual plans to kill him.

- ii) Here in the above verses Jonathan tells a lie to protect the life of David. This is acceptable.
- iii) I do not know about you, but I'm not telling the murderer where my wife and kids are hidden. I will lie to him. I will not tell him the truth to kill my family, neither should you. Telling him where they are hidden in the name of speaking the truth is stupid and nonsensical.

Lastly, many could cite the example of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) saying they lied and were killed. Although it is true, they lied, it was more of the motive and their heart issue. These lied unto the God (Holy Ghost), not man, and they were lying for selfish reasons not to preserve life by any stretch.