

“Ninth Commandment—Part 5”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website(churchofgodbig sandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Aug. 23, 2025.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with our series. The topic is the Ten Commandments. The presentation was titled “Ninth Commandment—Part 5.”

The five presentations

Here is a list of the topics for the five presentations in this series.

1. False witness in a legal setting
2. Matthew 5:38-42
3. Five examples of dealing with false witnesses
4. The Son of God dealt with false witnesses
5. The story of Rahab was an exception

Foundational scripture

■ Exodus 20:2—“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

Then, the Lord proceeded to remind the children of Israel about the Ten Commandments.

Old Testament lesson = After God delivered them from Egypt, He reminded them of His expectations from them.

New Testament lesson = When God offers His bountiful grace to New Testament disciples, He still has expectations of them (Romans 6:1-2, Ephesians 2:8-10 and Titus 3:4-8).

Ninth Commandment

■ Exodus 20:16—“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Two major concepts

Following are two verses in the book of Proverbs that mention two major concepts associated with the Ninth Commandment.

■ Proverbs 19:5—“A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies will not escape.”

■ Proverbs 19:9—"A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies shall perish."

Many view the Ninth Commandment as dealing with being a false witness in the legal system and with speaking lies in general.

Did you notice that two of the seven things that God hates (found in Proverbs 6:16-19) deal with the Ninth Commandment?

■ The second behavior on the list = a lying tongue.

■ The sixth behavior on the list = a false witness who speaks lies.

General understanding—disciples should not lie

You have heard of the expression—"this is the exception to the rule." If we say that "the story of Rahab is an exception," what is the rule? What is the normal?

■ John 8:44—The devil is a liar and the father of lies.

■ Revelation 2:2—The Son of God said: "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not. You have found them liars."

■ Revelation 21:8—People who do the eight characteristics listed "shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death"—and the last characteristic mentioned was "all liars."

■ Revelation 21: 27—People who do the characteristics listed "shall by no means enter it [the New Jerusalem]—and the last characteristic mentioned was "lie."

■ Revelation 22:15—People who do the eight characteristics listed will be outside the New Jerusalem—and the last characteristic mentioned was "whoever loves and practices a lie."

That is only a glimpse of what the Father and the Son think about lying.

Biblical story of Rahab

Rahab is highly honored in the New Testament.

■ Hebrews 11:31—By faith, Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe—she had received the spies with peace."

■ James 2:14-26—James mentioned two people who revealed their faith by their actions.

■ James 2:21-24—His first example (Abraham) should not surprise anyone.

■ James 2:25—James wrote: "Was not Rahab also justified by works [actions, decisions] when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?"

Back in book of Joshua

■ Joshua 2:1—Joshua sent out two men and said: "Go, view the land, especially Jericho."

■ Joshua 2:2—When the king of Jericho heard about the spies, he said: “Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country.”

■ Joshua 2:3—The king of Jericho sent a message to Rahab: “Bring out the men who have come to you (who have entered your house) for they have come to search out all the country.”

Rehab hid the two men

Notice two important aspects before I mention Rahab’s response.

■ Joshua 2:4—“Then the woman took the two man and hid them.”

■ Joshua 2:6—“She had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.”

Notice what she said

With those verses in mind, now notice four aspects of Rahab’s response in verses 4-5.

■ “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.”

■ “It happened as the gate was being shut (when it was dark) that the men went out.”

■ “Where the men went, I do not know.”

■ “Pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them.”

Let’s repeat James 2:25.

■ James 2:25—James wrote: “Was not Rahab also justified by works [actions, decisions] when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?”

Rahab recognized the God of the spies

■ Joshua 2:8-11—Rahab acknowledged that the God of the two men on the roof was the “God in heaven above and on earth beneath.”

Rahab asked for an oath

■ Joshua 2:12-13—Rahab asked for an oath.

■ Joshua 2:14—The men responded: “Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be—when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you.”

■ Joshua 2:15-16—Rahab helped the two men down from the roof and suggested that they hide for three days in the mountains.

■ Joshua 2:17-19—The two men instructed Rahab to place a scarlet cord in her window.

■ Joshua 2:20—The two men said: “If you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear.”

■ Joshua 2:24—When the two men returned to Joshua, they said: “Truly, the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands. For indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us.”

Fall of Jericho

- Joshua 6:1-14—God told Joshua to march around the city for six days.
- Joshua 6:15-16—The fall of Jericho came on the seventh day.
- Joshua 6:17—On the seventh day when Jericho was to be destroyed, Joshua said: “Only Rahab (and her family) shall live—because she hid the messengers that we sent.”

Rahab and her family were spared

- Joshua 6:21—They destroyed all that were in the city with the edge of the sword.
- Joshua 6:22—Joshua told the two spies: “Go into the harlot’s house. And from there, bring out the woman and all that she has—as you swore to her.”
- Joshua 6:23-24—The spies brought out Rahab and all her relatives to leave them outside the camp of Israel, as the city was burned.
- Joshua 6:25—Joshua spared Rahab and her family—“because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.”