

Uriah the Hittite. David — be upset? — Really? — He would? — That was the news David was not only expecting but hoping for. Now look at verse 25 again.

*“David told the messenger; ‘Say this to Joab: “Don’t let this upset you; the sword devours one as well as another. Press the attack against the city and destroy it.” Say this to encourage Joab.”*”

Encourage Joab?? Joab knew he had accomplished exactly what David had told him to do. He *knew* the King would be *pleased* at a job well done. *Both* Joab and David knew that what had happened was *exactly* what they had *planned* to have happened — but both “put a spin” on the news to make it *sound* like it was just an unfortunate incident when they both knew it worked *exactly* as *planned*. David’s order to Joab was *very* direct and clear. But from then on, it was all spin. That’s “spin” at it’s best — or should we say , at it’s worst. If *this* spin worked, David and Joab would keep their dirty little secret pretty well hidden — all they had to do was play along so that public opinion would never know about the “indiscretion” that had taken place between David and Bathsheba — much less about the plan to “off” Uriah for cover-up purposes. Of course — *public* opinion isn’t what really matters.

*“When Uriah’s wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the Lord.” (II Samuel 11:26-27 NIV)*

With a little help from Nathan, David eventually repented of the wrong he had done (II Sam. 12:1-13) but he nevertheless paid a great price for his sin (II Sam. 12:14-19).

We all know that since God sees man’s hearts, He couldn’t be swayed by spin. But that is obviously not the case with *us*. So in today’s political atmosphere, it’s relatively easy for candidates to sway public opinion one way or another by the spin placed on the story of the day. Since we’re living in an age when candidates have fine-tuned the art of spinning *any* story to make him or her look *good* in the eyes of the public, Christians *must* try our best to see *through* the spin and look at the candidate *as well as* the issues in question — and analyze them from a *Godly* perspective. That means *evaluating* the situation, statement, circumstance, issue, etc. from a *Biblical* standard. In other words — match whatever is in question to the Scriptures. What does *God* say about it? *That’s* what matters. We have a responsibility as Christians, to discern which candidate’s positions most closely align with what the Word of God has to say. The spin doesn’t matter. God’s opinion is what matters. So can we tell whether it’s a lie or spin? Sure. The *spin* stops at the Word of God. The better we know the Word — the easier it is to tell the difference.

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# DILIGENCE

*“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.” — Hebrews 6:11*

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## Spin — It’s Nothing New

Any of you who have watched the Fox News Channel probably know of the phrase “The Spin Stops Here.” It’s the often repeated mantra of *The O’Reilly Factor* on that channel. As an important political election draws near, we can be certain that there will be more and more “spin” put on just about every news story that concerns or involves any current candidate.

So what exactly is “spin”? Well, in relation to the context of this article, the *American Heritage Dictionary* gives this definition;

“To provide an interpretation of (a statement or event, for example), especially in a way meant to sway public opinion.”

So would we say then that “putting a spin” on an event, a circumstance or statements is the same as lying? Well, here’s the *American Heritage Dictionary* definition for “lie.”

1. A false statement deliberately presented as being true.

2. Something meant to deceive or give a wrong impression.

So to spin a story wouldn’t *necessarily* qualify as a “*false* statement” since it’s *based* on something that is actually true. The story isn’t *changed* — it’s just *interpreted* in a way “meant to sway public opinion”. But wait a minute — wouldn’t definition # 2 above for “lie” be getting awfully close to the definition for “spin” since “spin” is often *intended* to “sway public opinion” into having a *wrong* impression of any given situation? This is getting a bit confusing — the line between an “innocent spin” and an outright lie are starting to intermingle with each other.

We all know that the same event seen by several individuals is usually re-told in a variety of ways — and more often than not — *without* any *malicious* intent. Take for example an auto accident. Everybody who witnesses it has a different perspective. Each one “sees” the accident from his or her own vantage point causing *different interpretations* of the *same* event. So is that “spin”? No. It’s just a case of different *perspectives* of the *same* incident. This is *sometimes* similar to what we see in the political arena nowadays. The words or actions of any given candidate is “interpreted” *differently* by different individuals — generally depending on whether or not the “interpreter” is a supporter or an opponent of the candidate in question. *This* perspective of course would be assuming that the “spin” put on any given incident is not “something *meant* to *deceive* or give a wrong impression.” Unfortunately however, in politics today the *intention* of spin *is* often just that — to deceive and give a wrong impression — *especially*

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if the occurrence in question is considered to be a *negative* incident for any given candidate and the person doing the spin is a supporter of that candidate. This is of course also true for the opposite side of spinning — a positive incident might be given a spin by a non-supporter to make it *appear* negative. As citizens of this great United States of America, it is important that every one of us *knows enough about* the candidates and the issues to be able to *discern* whether or not the “spin” fits into the “lie” category or is simply one interpretation among many that has been innocently influenced by the *perspective* of the observer or listener. It is our *responsibility* as good Christian citizens to be astute enough to see *through* spin and assess the incident, circumstance, issue or statement wisely.

While we might think “spinning” is something new to this day and age, it isn’t. We find several examples of “spinning” in the Bible. It’s just been in relatively recent years that we, as a society, started to *use* the term “spin” when facts are “slanted” in one direction or another to try make them *sound* different than they actually *are*. For example, the very first “spin” was attempted by Adam in the garden of Eden. When he was caught “red handed” by God what did He say? —

*“The man said, ‘The woman you put here with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it’” (Gen. 3:12 NIV)*

Adam tried to “spin” the incident so that blame would be placed on someone *other* than himself — in this case — either on Eve or on God. Adam was interpreting that incident in a way that would hopefully sway God’s opinion of what had happened. Well, *we know that* didn’t work so well for him.

Or how about Aaron and the golden calf. When Moses came down from the mountain and saw what Aaron and the Israelites had done — what was the spin Aaron tried to put on the incident? —

*“Do not be angry, my lord,’ Aaron answered. ‘You know how prone these people are to evil. They said to me, “Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.” So I told them, “Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.” Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!’” (Exodus 32:22-24 NIV)*

“Out came this calf...”?? — “You were gone for so long...”?? — “You know how evil these people are — don’t you Moses”?? Now *there’s* a spin that *anybody* should see through. That one *definitely* fit the “lie” category!

But, one of the *best* incidences of “spin” in the Scriptures involved more than just one person and is found in II Samuel, chapter 11. That chapter tells of David’s great sin with Bathsheba. In the first 13 verses we read that David saw Bathsheba bathing on the rooftop, sent for her and committed adultery with her. Bathsheba later sent word to David that she was expecting a child as a result of that sin with David. Since Bathsheba was married, David then attempted to cover up his sin by having her husband Uriah, sent home from war so that he would sleep

with Bathsheba and solve the problem. Well, we know that Uriah didn’t “play the game” the way David had planned. Uriah refused to go to his home and sleep with his wife while his men were still camped in the open fields. He said:

*“...How could I go to my house to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!” (vs. 11)*

Whoops! This was a bit of a problem for David so he invited Uriah to eat and drink with him — and got Uriah drunk — in hopes that he would *then* go to his house and sleep with Bathsheba.

*“...But in the evening Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master’s servants; he did not go home.” (vs. 13).*

Now — David had a *serious* problem on his hands. What would he do?

*“<sup>14</sup> In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. <sup>15</sup> In it he wrote, ‘Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die.’ <sup>16</sup> So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were. <sup>17</sup> When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David’s army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.”*

Now, here comes the beginning of the spin —

*“<sup>18</sup> Joab sent David a full account of the battle. <sup>19</sup> He instructed the messenger: ‘When you have finished giving the king this account of the battle, <sup>20</sup> the king’s anger may flare up, and he may ask you, “Why did you get so close to the city to fight? Didn’t you know they would shoot arrows from the wall? <sup>21</sup> Who killed Abimelech son of Jerub-Besheth? Didn’t a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you get so close to the wall?’ if he asks you this, then say to him, “Also, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.””*

*“<sup>22</sup> The messenger set out, and when he arrived he told David everything Joab had sent him to say. <sup>23</sup> The messenger said to David, ‘The men overpowered us and came out against us in the open, but we drove them back to the entrance to the city gate. <sup>24</sup> Then the archers shot arrows at your servants from the wall, and some of the king’s men died. Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.’”*

And the spin goes on —

*“<sup>25</sup> David told the messenger, ‘Say this to Joab: “Don’t let this upset you; the sword devours one as well as another. Press the attack against the city and destroy it.” Say this to encourage Joab.’”*

Spin? — Or just plain lies? Look at verse 15. David told Joab *exactly* what to do — *clearly!!* There was no spin there! But now re-read verses 18 through 21. Joab implied to the messenger that David would probably be *upset* at hearing the news that there had been some men lost in battle and one of those men was