

Then, too, some move to false witness as a means of revenge or ill-will. Unless one is marked by a spirit of forgiveness, it is easy to carry grudges and seek to settle them by some act of a harsh nature. Such acts usually result in injury to all parties and as with other sins, the perpetrator is more injured in the long run than is the victim. But whatever the cause, and none of these has any justification, the law is equally emphatic. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Illustrations

There are a few truly remarkable illustrations of this law and its violation in the Scripture. We may consider two of these as exemplary for our illustrative purposes. The first is found in 1 Kings 21 regarding the vineyard of Naboth, a prominent citizen of Israel. Ahab, the wicked Baal worshipping king of the northern kingdom, wanted the vineyard for himself and tried to buy it. But the property was the landed inheritance of Naboth's family and he had no desire to sell. Jezebel, the most evil queen in the history of the northern kingdom, arranged a feast for Naboth and hired two wicked men to give false testimony against him to the end that he had blasphemed. The penalty was death and when the false witnesses gave their voice, Naboth was doomed. Following his execution, the property fell to the throne and was taken by the king. Greed, ill-will, etc., all took part in the sin and although Ahab was severely judged by God the offense to Naboth could not be reversed.

A false witness account is given in the New Testament and it is in some ways even more heinous. The account is given in Matthew 26:57. Certain religious leaders of his time hated Jesus and when they had found a means to arrest him they discovered they had no just grounds of action against him. Their