

Shayla: May a believing officer deceive a criminal?

Responsum:

We must join Adonai in actively resisting wickedness.

- **Psalms 101:5-8 HCSB** I will destroy anyone who secretly slanders his neighbor; I cannot tolerate anyone with haughty eyes or an arrogant heart. (6) My eyes favor the faithful of the land so that they may sit down with me. The one who follows the way of integrity may serve me. (7) No one who acts deceitfully will live in my palace; no one who tells lies will remain in my presence. (8) Every morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land, eliminating all evildoers from the LORD's city.
- **Proverbs 8:13 HCSB** To fear the LORD is to hate evil. I hate arrogant pride, evil conduct, and perverse speech.
- **Ephesians 5:11-12 HCSB** Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead, expose them. (12) For it is shameful even to mention what is done by them in secret.
- **2 Corinthians 6:14-15 HCSB** Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? (15) What agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?

We are allowed to act deceitfully toward criminals in order to entrap them in their wickedness. How do we know this? We are to imitate God in all His ways. God behaves in accordance with our ways. He acts faithfully towards those who are faithful but He practices shrewdness toward the crooked.

- **2 Samuel 22:25-28 HCSB** So the LORD repaid me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in His sight. (26) With the faithful You prove Yourself faithful; with the blameless man You prove Yourself blameless; (27) with the pure You prove Yourself pure, but with the crooked You prove Yourself shrewd. (28) You rescue an afflicted people, but Your eyes are set against the proud--You humble them.
- **Psalms 18:24-27 HCSB** So the LORD repaid me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight. (25) With the faithful You prove Yourself faithful; with the blameless man You prove Yourself blameless; (26) with the pure You prove Yourself pure, but with the crooked You prove Yourself shrewd. (27) For You rescue an afflicted people, but You humble those with haughty eyes.
- **Psalms 145:20 HCSB** The LORD guards all those who love Him, but He destroys all the wicked.

Though generally God detests lying, we are allowed to practice deception, disinformation, or selective revelation of truth in order to bring down the wicked.

- **Psalms 146:9 HCSB** The LORD protects foreigners and helps the fatherless and the widow, but He frustrates the ways of the wicked.
- **Proverbs 12:23 HCSB** A shrewd person conceals knowledge, but a foolish heart publicizes stupidity.
- **Judges 7:16-22 HCSB** Then he divided the 300 men into three companies and gave each of the men a trumpet in one hand and an empty pitcher with a torch inside it *in the other*. (17) "Watch me," he said, "and do the same. When I come to the outpost of the camp, do as I do. (18) When I and everyone with me blow our trumpets, you are also to blow your trumpets all around the camp. Then you will say, 'The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!'" (19) Gideon and the 100 men who were with him went to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch after the sentries had been stationed. They blew their trumpets and broke the pitchers that were in their hands.

(20) The three companies blew their trumpets and shattered their pitchers. They held their torches in their left hands, their trumpets in their right hands, and shouted, "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!" (21) Each Israelite took his position around the camp, and the entire *Midianite* army fled, and cried out as they ran. (22) When Gideon's men blew their 300 trumpets, the LORD set the swords of each man in the army against each other. They fled to Beth-shittah in the direction of Zererah as far as the border of Abel-meholah near Tabbath.

Note: In the confusion and darkness the enemy thought each torch and trumpet represented a huge company of men, rather than a single man. In their panic they ran, slaughtering whoever they encountered. In effect, the deception caused the enemy soldiers to kill each other!

Shrewdness is the sister of common sense. One cannot overcome great criminal conspiracies while being simple-minded.

- [Proverbs 1:4 HCSB](#) for teaching shrewdness to the inexperienced, knowledge and discretion to a young man--
- [Proverbs 8:12 HCSB](#) I, Wisdom, share a home with shrewdness and have knowledge and discretion.

The difference is the motive. If the motive of deceit is personal advantage, it is wrong and will make God our enemy. If the motive is harmless, seeking the advantage of society or the protection of life, then it is a pure and selfless act.

- [Matthew 10:16 HCSB](#) "Look, I'm sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as harmless as doves."