

The image features two large, thick black L-shaped brackets. One is positioned in the top-left corner, and the other is in the bottom-right corner. They are oriented towards each other, framing the central text.

GRACE THAT IS GREATER THAN OUR SIN

Genesis 20:1-18

Chiastic Structure

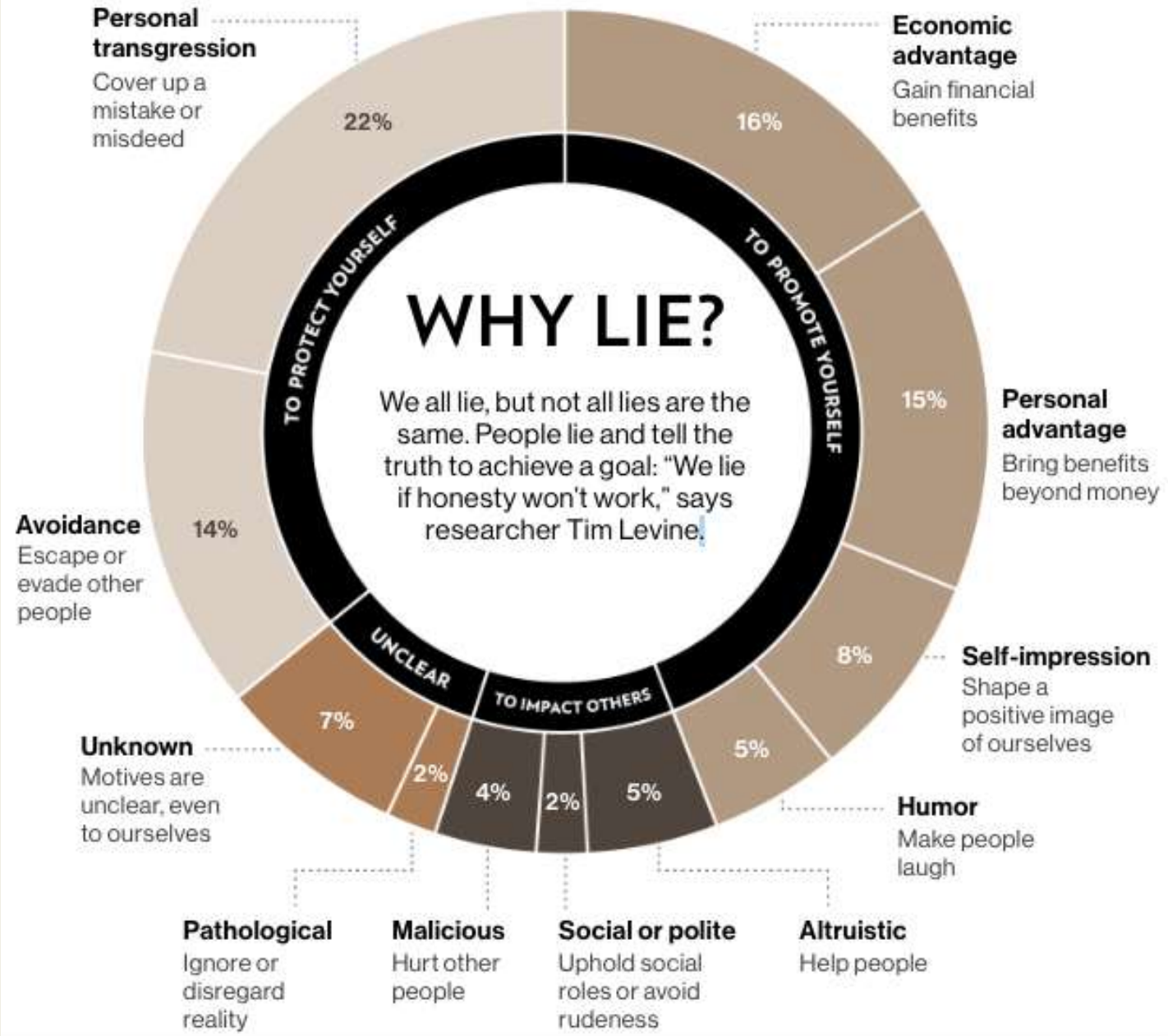
- A. Abimelech takes Sarah (1-2)
- B. God confronts Abimelech (3-7)
- C. Abimelech fears God (8)
- B. Abimelech confronts Abraham (9-13)
- A. Abimelech pays Abraham & Sarah (14-18)



Abraham Risked:

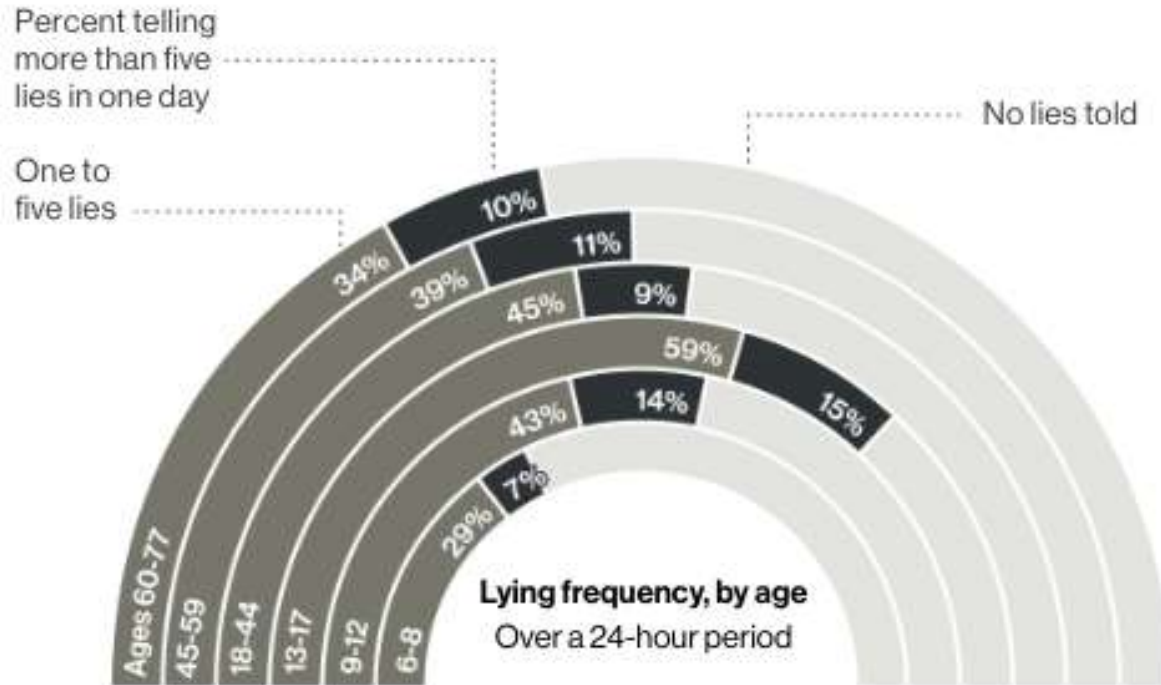
- **His Marriage** – his marriage to Sarah
- **His Family** – the birth of Isaac
- **His Integrity** – a man of his word





BENDING THE TRUTH

"The truth comes naturally," says psychologist Bruno Verschuere, "but lying takes effort and a sharp, flexible mind." Lying is a part of the developmental process, like walking and talking. Children learn to lie between ages two and five, and lie the most when they are testing their independence.



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SOURCES: TIMOTHY R. LEVINE AND OTHERS, *JOURNAL OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH*, 2016; EVELYNE DEBEY AND OTHERS, *ACTA PSYCHOLOGICA*, 2015; KIM SEROTA, OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

How not to lie: use double negatives

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CGyASDjE-U>

I. When We're In Danger, We're Tempted Solve The Problem Through Lies, Compromise And Pragmatism Instead Of Faith (1-2)

- 1 Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar, 2 and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, "She is my sister." Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.

The Land Gerar

Abraham and Sarah journeyed to Gerar.

The King of Gerar took Sarah



Genesis 20:1-2

The Great Pyramids of Kaiser Prime
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1 Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar, 2 and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, “She is my sister.” Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.

Proverbs 29:25

- The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.



II. When We Don't Forsake Sin, We Are Prone To Repeat It

- **Genesis 20:2** and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, “She is my **sister**.” Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.



Remember Genesis 12:11-13?

¹¹ When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, “I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, ¹² and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. ¹³ **Say you are my sister**, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake.”



“Hey Half Sister, don’t say I’m your husband to the Phar-a-oh, Phar-a-oh”



How to prevent habitual sin

- Why do we repeat our sins?
- There is a difference between **acknowledging our sin** and **confessing and forsaking our sin**

Proverbs 28:13

- Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

Ezekiel 6:9

- Then those of you who escape will remember me among the nations where they are carried captive, how I have been broken over their whoring heart that has departed from me and over their eyes that go whoring after their idols. And they will be loathsome in their own sight for the evils that they have committed, for all their abominations.

III. When We Get In Trouble, God Graciously Protects Us From Our Own Sins (3-7)

3But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman.” **4**Now Abimelek had not gone near her, so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation? **5**Did he not say to me, ‘She is my sister,’ and didn’t she also say, ‘He is my brother’? I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands.”



III. When We Get In Trouble, God Graciously Protects Us From Our Own Sins (3-7)

6Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her. 7Now return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all who belong to you will die.”



John Wesley's Understanding Of Grace



- *Preserving grace* – saved him from a fire
- *Preventing grace* – kept him from gross sin
- *Quickening grace* – created a thirst for holiness
- *Regenerating Grace* – heart warmed to salvation
- *Assuring Grace* – affirmed his justification in Christ

Grace, Grace, God's Grace

- God's **Preventing** Grace kept Abimelech from sinning against Sarah
- God's **Preserving** Grace preserved Sarah from harm



IV. When We Lie, We Will Have To Answer For It (8-13)

8Early the next morning Abimelek summoned all his officials, and when he told them all that had happened, they were very much afraid. 9Then Abimelek called Abraham in and said, “What have you done to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should never be done.” 10And Abimelek asked Abraham, “What was your reason for doing this?”



IV. When We Lie, We Will Have To Answer For It (8-13)

11 Abraham replied, “I said to myself, ‘There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’ 12 Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 And when God had me wander from my father’s household, I said to her, ‘This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, “He is my brother.” ’ ”



V. When We Sin, God's Grace Is Greater Than All My Sin (14-18)

14Then Abimelek brought sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and he returned Sarah his wife to him. 15And Abimelek said, “My land is before you; live wherever you like.” 16To Sarah he said, “I am giving your brother a thousand shekels of silver. This is to cover the offense against you before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated.” 17Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelek, his wife and his female slaves so they could have children again, 18for the Lord had kept all the women in Abimelek's household from conceiving because of Abraham's wife Sarah.

Conclusion:

- God deals with sin
- God heals with grace
- **Ephesians 1:7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Grace Greater Than Sin

Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt!
Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured,
There where the blood of the Lamb was spilled.

Refrain:

Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that will pardon and cleanse within;
Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that is greater than all our sin!