

“Fake News”

Nehemiah 6:1-8



In this message, I want to deal with one of the greatest threats America is facing today (not ISIS, not Russia, not North Korea). I’m talking about **the liberal “news media/mafia”** and its proliferation of **“fake news.”**

- Fake news is “false information or propaganda published under the pretense of it being authentic news.”
- The word “fake” is of comparatively **recent origin**. The word “fake” comes from the slang word “fakir” in the 17th century—Often a reference to a “con-man.”
 - Text: Neh 6:5-8—*Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.* The modern word “feign” is FAKE.
 - 2 Pet. 2:3—*And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you...* The motive behind fake news is to make money off of you.

“FAKED YOU OUT” — My generation had an expression when we’d fool someone into believing something that was not true, we’d tell them, **“Faked you out!”** This expression means “to deceive someone; to fool or mislead someone.”

This is what the news media is doing. If they were honest, they would end their news cast saying, “Faked you out!”

- Galatians 3:1—*“O foolish Galatians, who hath BEWITCHED you, that ye should not obey the truth?”* The word “bewitched” means to be fooled or tricked. Paul was asking, “Who has faked you out?”
- Paul warned the Thessalonians about a false report that the rapture already happened. He said, *“Be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first...”* (2 Thess. 2:2-3). Paul is warning, “Don’t let someone fake you out!”

- Paul exhorted Timothy to “**shun profane and vain babbling; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already;** [fake news] **and over throw the faith of some**” (2 Tim. 2:16-18). Hymenaeus and Philetus had “faked some believers out” into believing the first resurrection was past. It was “fake news.”

➡ **Who is behind fake news?** Ultimately, Satan, “*the god of this world,*” “*the prince of the power of the air.*” He is the father of lies (John 8:44).

I. **The DISSIMULATION in fake news.**

- ➡ The **objective** of “fake news” is to get the listener to believe something that is false.
 1. The news media propagates and perpetuates information that is either untrue or half-true to promote their own biased and liberal agenda.
 2. They seek to influence how you should feel about a certain thing. They want to “program” you. [see Sharyl Attkisson’s new book: “*The Smear: How Shady Political Operatives and Fake News Control What You See, What You Think, and How You Vote*”]
 3. They seek to manipulate your thinking by picking and choosing only what they want you to hear and know.

For example: *The New York Times* recently ran an article titled *Why We Are On Hunger Strike in Israel’s Prisons*, by a Palestinian prisoner named Marwan Barghouti. *The New York Times* portrayed Barghouti as an innocent Palestinian unjustly imprisoned by Israel for his political views.

However, what *the New York Times* did not mention was Barghouti is serving five consecutive life sentences for multiple counts of murder against innocent Israeli civilians and making several terrorist attempts. Barghouti is not an innocent Palestinian activist—He is a convicted terrorist! But *the New York Times* left this out of the article! Typical!

- ➡ Here are a few other **examples of “fake news.”**

At a White House press briefing on May 12, 2017, Sean Spicer, the White House press secretary, rebuked the press corps for churning out bogus stories based on “leaks” and “anonymous sources.”

A leftist operative from CNN (Clinton News Network) then asked Spicer for an example. Spicer pointed out how a BBC reporter falsely reported that Trump was not wearing an earpiece to hear the translation from the Italian prime minister. In truth, Trump did wear the earpiece.



Then someone from the *New York Times* said, “Well, Sean, that’s just one single example of fake news. How about some more?”

Spicer shot back, “I didn’t come here with a list of things!” However, Spicer could have given many other examples:

- Spicer could have referred to a story from the *Associated Press* that falsely reported in February that Trump was planning to use “100,000 National Guard troops” to round up “millions” of illegal aliens. Untrue!
- *The Washington Post* reported that Atty. Gen Jeff Sessions described illegal aliens as “filth.” Sessions never said it.
- Again *the Washington Post* said Russians hacked into US electrical grid through Vermont utility. The truth was it was just an employee checking his email.
- *Washington Post* reported, Deputy AG Rod Rosenstein “threatened to resign.” Not true again!
- *Reuters* reported Kuwait spent \$60,000 at Trump International Hotel in DC on the same day Trump showed up at the hotel. Implication: “Pay to play?” Turns out Trump wasn’t even there at the hotel on the same day that the party took place.
- *Politico* reported that a mortgage company controlled by the Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin once foreclosed on a home owned by a 90-year-old woman because she was 27 cents short on a monthly payment. There was no foreclosure; the old lady didn’t lose her home; and Mnuchin didn’t own the bank.
- *Time* magazine reported Trump removed a bust of MLK Jr. from the Oval Office. Actually, it was just somebody standing in front

of the bust, and the “reporter” couldn’t be bothered walking across the room to check if it was still there. He just tweeted out the fake news.

- *TMZ* reported Trump renamed Black History Month. False—Trump never “renamed” it.
- *The Washington Post* tweeted that FBI director James Comey asked Justice Department for more money to run the Russian probe, just before he was fired by Trump. The acting FBI director denied the story – under oath.

➡ We could go on-and-on, but I think you see a pattern here.

II. The DISSEMINATING of fake news.

- ➡ We are inundated with stories filled with half-truths or outright lies. “Fake news” is everywhere spreading like a virus—It’s on all the networks and major news outlets.
 - ➡ Truth has certainly taken a beating in these last days! As Isaiah prophesied, “*truth is fallen in the street*” (Isa. 59:14).
 - ➡ Although the term “fake news” is fairly recent, the propagation of “fake news” has been going on since Genesis.
- A. The sons of Jacob used “fake news” to explain the whereabouts of their brother Joseph to their father (Gen. 37:28-36).
 - B. The adversaries of Israel used the tactic of “fake news” to paint a narrative against God’s work.
 1. Ezra (Ezra 4:5-6, 11-16),
 2. Nehemiah (Neh. 6:5-8).
 3. Esther (Esther 3:8-9), and Daniel.
 4. These techniques were also used in the New Testament (Acts 24:1-13).

III. The DISCERNING of fake news.

- ➡ Americans are more cynical than ever. People wonder if what they are reading or hearing as “news” is really the news.
- ➡ **HOW TO RESPOND TO THE LIBERAL NEWS MEDIA/MAFIA** (1 Kings 22:5-8). Three ways:

- A. **First**, Don't consult them. Don't listen to them.
1. Ahab, the wicked King of Israel, asked Jehoshaphat, king of Judah to join forces with him in a battle against Syria. Being a good King Jehoshaphat wanted to check with God first (v. 5).
 2. Ahab summoned the liberal news media of Israel (v. 6). They tell him "fake news" (v. 6). The news media wants to give you their version of events.
- B. **Second**, Demand to hear from a source you can trust. Honest journalists are in a minority (one against 400), but they are available if you seek them. They're not on at 5:30 or 6:00 or on the major networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN).
1. Jehoshaphat recognizes something doesn't ring true about the source of Ahab's news media. So he asks, "*Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?*" (v. 7). Jehoshaphat wanted to try another different news outlet that was in tune with the true God.
 2. Ahab wanted a news media that told him what he wanted to hear. Ahab says, "*There is yet one man, Micaiah, the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord, but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil*" (v. 8).
 - Jehoshaphat says, "*Let not the king say so*"—That's no way to talk about one of God's prophets!
 - The liberal news mafia hates any source of information that does not agree with them. They don't like anyone to "fact check" them.
 - If you do not agree with anything I say, I welcome you to "fact check" whatever I said according to Acts 17:11.
- ➡ Jehoshaphat repeated what he said in verse 7 again in 2 Kings 3:11-14. Jehoshaphat wanted his information to come from someone who knew God and His Word! He wanted the truth... the whole truth... and nothing but the truth, without anyone's "spin" put on it.

- v. 13—Elisha tells Jehoram, the king of Israel, “Go back to your own news source... go listen to CNN or ABC.” But Jehoram implies, “Nay, I know they’re liars and won’t tell me the truth!”
 - v. 14—If it were not for Jehoshaphat, one righteous king, Elisha wouldn’t give them the time of day!
- C. **Third**, God will give you the correct information if you seek it (James 1:5). You don’t need to go to the world’s news media to get an answer.

IV. The DISTORTION of the “good” news. (Gal. 1:6-12).

- ➡ I am more concerned about the “fake news” preached in the pulpits than I am over Russia’s involvement in the America’s election. One has temporary consequences; the other has eternal consequences!
- A. Paul’s **CONVICTION**—There is only ONE GOSPEL that can save (v. 6).
- B. Paul’s **CONCERN**— Perverting the “good news” into “fake news” (v. 7)
- ➡ They perverted the “good news” into “fake news”.
- C. Paul’s **CONDEMNATION** (vs. 8-9).
- D. Paul’s **CERTIFICATION** (vs. 11). Paul said the source of his information was God Himself.

SUMMATION (v. 10): Anyone preaching “another Gospel” is doing exactly what the liberal media in “fake news”—They are seeking to please men, not God. They are advancing their own agenda, not God’s.

1. Are you believing the TRUE Gospel or a “FAKE gospel”?
2. Jeremiah spoke of people who “*are not valiant for the truth*” (Jer. 9:3). Are you valiant for the truth? Are you resistant to what is untrue?
3. Are you standing for the truth? Spreading the truth?