

Big Lies Are Defeated by the Truth



by Rolaant McKenzie

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The Greek playwright Aeschylus (c. 524-455 BC) is credited with making the adage, “In war, truth is the first casualty.” This saying has certainly been true in the Russian-Ukrainian War. Over the course of the war, with conflicting news from both sides, it has often been difficult to tell what is true and what is propaganda.

On November 15, 2022, major news outlets reported that apparently two Russian missiles crossed into the Polish village of Przewodów near the border with Ukraine, striking a farm where grain was drying and killing two people.

With Poland being a member of the military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and a staunch supporter of Ukraine in its conflict with Russia, this incident could have had serious consequences extending much farther from the war in Ukraine.

A key provision of the NATO treaty is Article 5, which deems an armed attack on any member state to be an attack on all, requiring each state to assist in actions including military force to restore and maintain security.



The government of Ukraine (not a NATO member state) through its media channels, along with other Western news outlets, portrayed the incident as a military attack by Russia against a NATO country and called for Article 5 to be invoked. If this was done, the door to a wider, more direct armed conflict between NATO and Russia would commence, possibly leading to nuclear warfare.

Before the “Russian missile attack” narrative could gain more traction, the Polish government announced based on its preliminary assessment that the “attack” was likely from a Ukrainian air defense missile that unfortunately landed in Poland. It should be noted that even after this announcement the Ukrainian government continued to press the false narrative.

Others in Poland and elsewhere viewed this as a *false flag* event. This 16th century term originally described a ploy in naval warfare, often used by pirates and privateers, where a ship would fly the flag of a neutral or friendly country in order to deceive other vessels into allowing them to move closer before attacking them.

A *false flag* event today is typically defined as an act committed with the intent of disguising the actual source of responsibility and pinning the blame on another party. In the

context of this incident, a provocation on the part of Ukrainian authorities to draw NATO, especially the United States, into a direct war with Russia.

The famous Russian historian, novelist, and Soviet dissident, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008), is credited with saying, "One drop of truth can outweigh an ocean of lies." The revelation of the truth of the situation exposed the lies and caused them to unravel and lose their power to deceive.

Whether it was a false flag event or Ukraine and some NATO member states seeking to capitalize on an accident of war, the false information initially promoted could have led to disastrous consequences, such as World War III.

Some of the greatest tragedies of human history happened due to the dissemination of a big lie. For example, the false story promoted in late 2002 into early 2003 that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein possessed and was amassing biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction to use against the United States and its allies. This led to the March 2003 invasion of Iraq by the United States and its allies, resulting in the devastation of the country and tens of thousands of deaths.

One of the biggest lies ever uttered was by Satan to our first parents, Adam and Eve. He told them that if they wanted to be like God, the ultimate decider of what is good and evil, all they needed to do was disregard God's word and eat of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3). However, instead of gaining the power they sought, Adam and Eve became separated from God, infected with a sinful nature, and subject to death. This broken fellowship with its widespread and catastrophic results was passed down to all people since we are all descendants of Adam. This does not mean that we are as evil as we can be, but it does mean that sin has extended to every aspect of our being. Because of this inherited sin nature everyone naturally sins, causing human beings to hurt and kill one another, keeping us separate from

God and placing us under His condemnation (Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:22).

But God in His love for humanity provided **the** way – not **a** way – for salvation from this situation and reconciliation with Him through sending His Son Jesus into the world to die for our sins on the cross (John 3:16). This gracious gift is given by God to anyone who trusts in Jesus alone – His sinless life, death on the cross for sinners, and bodily resurrection from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

Jesus said in John 14:6,

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

There is no other way, and there is nothing any of us can do or bring to the table in addition to what God has granted through Jesus Christ -- only faith in what He has already done.

A key tool the devil uses in his efforts to keep people separated from God and salvation is the promotion of another big lie. He promotes the idea that if a person's good works outweigh his bad works, entrance to paradise after death is granted. All over the world and in many religions and philosophies, variations of this belief are common. He has even persuaded many professing Christians of a similar deception -- faith in Jesus plus the performance of certain rituals and good works will gain entrance into heaven.

This is the essence of one of two religions in the world. One portrays salvation as being achieved by a person's good works. The other proclaims that salvation is received by trusting solely in the merits of Someone else, Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of all sins, reconciliation with God, and entrance into His heavenly kingdom.

While salvation by personal performance may seem right to most

of the world, this big lie leads to some serious and permanent outcomes (Proverbs 14:12, 16:25). It is the broad way that Jesus talked about in Matthew 7:13-14:

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

In an illustration of the point that we must all come to God in the way He determines for salvation and not our own ways, Jesus told a parable of a king who gave a wedding feast for his son (Matthew 22:1-14). The king's servants were sent out to invite all they could find, and his wedding hall was filled with dinner guests. The only requirement for entry to the marriage celebration was the adornment of wedding garments supplied by the king. When the king saw a man among the guests not wearing the required attire, he confronted him about it and then had him cast out of the wedding hall into outer darkness. The wedding garments represented the righteousness of Christ. The man, rejecting the righteousness of Jesus, sought to enter on his own terms, according to his own righteousness, and was rejected.

In another parable, Jesus related the story of a tax collector and a Pharisee who went up to the temple to pray (Luke 18:9-14). The Pharisee boasted before God about all the good works he did that made him righteous and a better man than the tax collector standing a distance away. The tax collector recognizing his sinful state, sought God's mercy as he prayed. According to Jesus, it was the tax collector, not the Pharisee, who went home justified in God's sight.

The belief that a person does not need Jesus and can enter heaven due to his own good deeds, or that faith in Jesus is not enough and his righteous works are a needed supplement to gain salvation, is a big lie with personal, terrible, and

eternal results. In God's sight the best of our righteous deeds is like a filthy garment (Isaiah 64:6), so we cannot recommend ourselves to God by our performance (Titus 3:4-7).

It is a common saying that the best things in life are free. In this case that is certainly true. Forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and eternal life in His kingdom are the best things we can ever receive. And it is free to all who trust in Jesus. Do not let the big lie of the devil mislead you into the broad road by trying to pay for something that is freely given in Christ.

Just as the truth defeated the "Russian missile attack" lie and possibly prevented millions of deaths in expanded warfare between NATO and Russia, even more so the consequences of the big lie of salvation by one's own efforts is defeated by believing the truth of the gospel, the fruit of which is a desire and willingness to please God out of gratitude. All the credit, praise, glory, and honor for our salvation is due to God alone.

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