

第九戒における עֵד שֶׁקֶר
— שֶׁקֶר の意味を中心に —

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ABSTRACT Haruki HIRATSUKA, “What Kind of Witness is the ‘False’ Witness in the Ninth Commandment?” Should “lying” be considered a violation of the Ninth Commandment? If so, does a case like Rahab (Josh. 2), who told a lie to protect others, prove to be an exception? In the present study, I approach these questions by analyzing the meaning of שֶׁקֶר through a comparative study with its synonyms כַּחַשׁ, רַמְיָה and כִּזְב. A survey of the occurrences of these words in the Old Testament shows that שֶׁקֶר has, as its basic sense, an element of “inflicting personal damage on one’s neighbor or God,” in addition to “falsity” and “untruth.” שֶׁקֶר also differs from “lying” in that awareness or intentionality are not necessary components of its meaning. I conclude that cases like Rahab do not go against the ninth commandment. In the case of the ninth commandment, the observance of the command is extremely difficult since שֶׁקֶר is an aspect of the witness’s character, and this aspect often lies below the level of one’s consciousness.