

word study – blasphemy
(G987 G988 G989)

The word 'blasphemy' is translated in different ways: blasphemy, hurling abuse, slandering, abusive language, reviling, maligning, speaking of as evil and speaking against. The word basically means to slander.

The unforgiveable sin is mentioned in Matthew 12:31-32, Mark 3:27-28 and Luke 12:10 as **blasphemy** against the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is said to have committed **blasphemy** when he claimed to be the son of man who would sit at God's right hand (Mat 26:65; Mar 14:64), when he said the lame man's sins were forgiven (Mat 9:3; Mar 2:7; Luk 5:21) and when he claimed that he and the Father were one (Joh 10:30-33,36).

The men who blind folded and hit Jesus "**said many other things against him, blaspheming**" (Luk 22:65). While Jesus was on the cross those who passed by, including the thieves, '**hurled abuse**' at Jesus (Mat 27:39; Mar 15:29; Luk 23:39).

In Acts, Stephen is accused of having '**spoken blasphemous words against Moses and God**' (Acts 6:11). Jewish opponents of Paul contradict his words, **blaspheming** (Acts 13:45; 18:6). Paul is found not guilty of **blaspheming** Artemis (Acts 19:37). Paul, before his conversion, tried to make believers blaspheme (Acts 26:11).

The word blasphemy is sometimes translated as '**slander**' (Mat 15:19; Mar 7:22; Eph 4:31; Col 3:8), '**abusive language**' (1Ti 6:4), '**reviling**' (2Ti 3:2) or '**maligning**' (Tit 3:2), all of which is to be avoided by God's people.

Paul states that in the OT, Israel being sent into exile caused the nations to **blaspheme** God (Rom 2:24).

Paul is **slandered** when people spread the word that he teaches grace is a licence to sin (Rom 3:8).

Paul does not think meat which is good should be '**spoken of as evil**' (Rom 14:16) nor does he think he should be '**slandered**' over what he gives thanks for (1Co 10:30).

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Paul describes himself pre-conversion as a **blasphemer** (1Ti 1:13). Paul regards Hymenaeus and Alexander, having rejected gospel truths, to be men who **blaspheme** (1Ti 1:20).

Slaves are to show respect to their masters so that the gospel is not '**spoken against**' (1Ti 6:1). Wives are to ensure their conduct does not cause the gospel to be '**dishonoured**' (Tit 2:5).

James states that it is the rich who **blaspheme** God's name (Jas 2:7).

Unbelievers '**malign**' believers (1Pe 4:4). Christians who follow sensuality cause the gospel to be '**maligned**' (2Pe 2:2). False teachers '**revile**' angelic beings (2Pe 2:10-12; Ju 1:8,10). On one occasion Michael the archangel avoided making '**a railing judgment**' against Satan (Jud 1:9).

In Revelation, Jesus says that he knows the **blasphemy** that is being spoken against the Christians in Smyrna (Rev 2:9), the beast has **blasphemous** names written on him (Rev 13:1; 17:3), the beast has a mouth which speaks **blasphemy** (Rev 13:5) and **blasphemes** God's name, his dwelling in heaven and God's people (Rev 13:6). In response to the plagues, men **blaspheme** God (Rev 16:9,11,21).