

Doctrine of Blasphemy

1. The Hebrew word for blasphemy is ne'atsah (neh-aw-tsaw'; נִצְחָה) which means to scorn. The enemies of God scorned the children of Israel which caused King Hezekiah much concern. "Hezekiah discovered a deep concern at the dishonour done to God by Rabshakeh's blasphemy. When he heard it, though at second hand, he rent his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth" (Matthew Henry).

- *2 Kings 19:3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.*
- *Isaiah 37:3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.*

2. The Greek word used for blasphemy is blasphemia (blas-fay-me'-ah, βλασφημία) and refers to vilification (especially against God): evil speaking, railing. Jesus said that all manner of sin and blasphemy would be forgiven men except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

- *Matthew 12:31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.*

Special Note.

In context, to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is to ascribe unto Satan the works of God.

Care must also be taken to avoid a reverse blasphemy which is to ascribe unto God the works of Satan.

3. Prior to and following after His arrest on non legal grounds, Jesus was falsely accused of speaking blasphemy.

- *John 10:33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*
- *Matthew 26:65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.*

4. The sin of blasphemy was punishable by death.

- *Mark 14:64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.*

5. While Jesus did not commit the sin of blasphemy, wicked individuals do for the act of blasphemy comes out of a heart corrupted by sin.
 - *Mark 7:22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:*

6. Blasphemy is one of the many works of the flesh the Christian is to “put off”.
 - *Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.*

7. In biblical terminology “not all Israel is Israel”. Only those who have the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob constitute the “true Israel” of God. The Lord knows those who “blasphemy” by proclaiming to be a member of the household of faith, a ‘Jew’, while they are not.
 - *Revelation 2:9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*

8. In the Revelation, the Beast of the Sea of blasphemed against God.
 - *Revelation 13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.*
 - *Revelation 13:6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*

Special Note.

“The most conspicuous biblical reference point for John's beast from the sea is Daniel's dream of four great beasts from the sea, the first like a lion with eagle's wings, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard, and the fourth, different and more terrible than the others, with ten horns (Dan 7:1-7).

In John's vision the order of the first three is reversed (leopard-bear-lion), and Daniel's four beasts have been rolled into one. Or, to put it another way, Daniel's terrible, unidentified fourth beast seems to have "swallowed" its three predecessors and to have taken on the distinguishing characteristics of each.

This should further caution us against identifying John's beast too quickly or too exclusively with one specific empire or political system, whether past or future. We should first appreciate John's vision as a vision and should try to put ourselves inside the fascinating (though frightening) world it creates for us.

The beast's agenda corresponds to that of the dragon: the dragon was the deceiver of "the whole world" (12:9), and the beast throughout chapter 13 carries out that deception. John implies that the healing of the beast's mortal wound is itself a deception, producing amazement over *the whole world* (v. 3) and leading people on earth to worship both the dragon and the beast (v. 4).

The beast's authority prevails on earth *for forty-two months* (v. 5; compare 11:2), and by the end of that time *all the inhabitants of the earth* will worship it (v. 8).

The dragon's further goal of persecuting Christians (12:17) is also evident, though rather less conspicuous in the beast's career. The beast is given *a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies* (v. 5), and he opens it *to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who dwell in heaven* (v. 6).

The last phrase probably refers to angels, viewed as heavenly counterparts to Christian believers on earth.

The actual persecution of Christians is mentioned explicitly only in verse 7, yet persecution is clearly implied by the prophetic appeal to John's readers in verse 10: If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.

The appeal is based on Jeremiah 15:2: "Those destined for death, to death; those for the sword, to the sword; those for starvation, to starvation; those for captivity, to captivity" (compare the four horsemen of Rev 6:1-8).

The significance of the brief prophetic oracle in verse 10 can scarcely be overestimated. Time and again, from the ill-fated Muenster kingdom of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists to David Koresh at Waco in the 1990s, the book of Revelation has been linked in the public mind to violence, war and armed rebellion.

The book has been blamed for everything from social revolutions in Latin America to the nuclear arms race during the Cold War. John's oracle here gives the lie to all such interpretations, whether offered by those who would justify violence or those who would consign Revelation to the scrap heap because of the violent world it evokes.

The book is most emphatically *not* a call to arms, but a call *for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints* (v. 10)" (see Biblegateway.com).

9. In Revelation 17:3 the final reference to blasphemy is mentioned. John saw in vision form a woman, sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy.
 - *Revelation 17:3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*