

# Blasphemy

## of The Holy Spirit

To fully understand what Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is, we first must know who the holy spirit is and then read the whole passage before and after to understand what Jesus was saying and who he was referring too, Wouldn't you agree that for a person to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, he or she would have to understand exactly who or what the Holy Spirit is? In other words, how can anyone say he or she has blasphemed the Holy Spirit, when his or her understanding of the Holy Spirit's identity is unclear?

**John 14:16-17,26** 16 and I will request the Father and he will give YOU another helper to be with YOU forever, 17 the spirit of the truth, which the world cannot receive, because it neither beholds it nor knows it. YOU know it, because it remains with YOU and is in YOU... **26** But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, that one will teach YOU all things and bring back to YOUR minds all the things I told YOU.

## What Blasphemy of The Spirit Is NOT

Many if not most Christians have a completely wrong concept regarding blasphemy of the Spirit. Some people think it means to curse or use God's name in a vain or mention the name of Jesus in a repulsive manner. Others think it means to curse God's Holy Spirit in a fit of anger or rage. Whatever a person's belief, most everyone agrees that to blaspheme the Holy Spirit is an unpardonable sin.

To "blaspheme" the Holy Spirit means much more than cursing God, or using His name in vain. In fact, there are only a few places the Greek word blasphemía is transliterated as "blaspheme" in the New Testament. The Greek word blasphemía is a generic word used in ancient times to describe behavior and speech that vilifies another. The Jews accused Jesus of blaspheming when he claimed to be the Son of God. Jesus uses the Greek word blasphemía in context with the unpardonable transgression, but in a very LIMITED sense.

## What Exactly Is Blasphemy?

According to Strong's Concordance the following are definitions for every occurrence in the King James Version of your Bible for every variation "to Blaspheme:"

### **Blaspheme:**

(Hebrew) #5006, "Na'ats,"to cause scorn to flourish," Of course scorn means contempt or disdain.

(Hebrew) #1288, "Barak," (by implication) to sarcastically "Bless God."

(Greek) #987, "Blasphemeo," to vilify, speak impiously, defame, revile or speak evil of.  
(from #989)

### **Blasphemed:**

(Hebrew) #5344, "Nagab," (to figuratively) "shoot down," "pierce with holes" or "to curse."

(Hebrew) #2778, "Charaph," (to figuratively) defame as if by exposure.

(Hebrew) #1442, "Gadaph," (to figuratively) hack or cut with words.

31 Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy (Strong's #989 "Blasphemo," to vilify, speak impiously, defame, revile or speak evil of) will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the (Holy) Spirit will not be forgiven men. 32 Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man (Jesus/Yahshua), it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit (Power and Character of the "Mind of Yahweh"), it will not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come. **Matthew 12:31-32**

It is more than the words of "Blasphemy" that separate one from Yahweh; it is the mental "Unrighteous Attitude" behind the words of the "Blasphemer" that separates one from Yahweh. An unrighteous mental "Attitude" of "Blasphemy" is not a Mental Attitude" of "Love" expressed as willful obedience toward Yahweh, and is therefore a mental attitude of disdain towards Yahweh and His Holy Spirit.

The New Testament was originally written in the Greek language, and then translated in English and other languages. The term "blasphemy" translation from Greek to English. A transliteration is using a word in English that sounds similar to the original Greek word. Therefore, "blasphemy," is a transliteration of the Greek word, "blasphemeo."

In relation to blasphemy of the spirit blasphemeo (or its various word cognates, such as blasphemía) can be found in the gospel accounts in **Luke 12:10** and **Matthew 12: 30-32**, and **Mark 3:28-29**. Later I will harmonize all three gospel accounts, blending them into one continuous narrative to present a composite picture.

The word blasphemy is derived from the Greek blasphemeo (NT: 987); it is defined as meaning, "To revile or speak impiously (of divine things) or reproachfully (of human things)." When directed at a person, blasphemeo means, "to hurt someone's reputation by smiting them with evil or slanderous reports or words." It implies more than just cursing at another or other verbal abuse stemming from angry impulse; the word blasphemeo is the use of words and/or speech to deliberately slander another, particularly with self-serving motives.

The word blasphemeo is from a compound word bláspheмос (NT: 989) and bláspheмос means, “to BE abusive and revile another’s good name.” The word bláspheмос is a compound of two root words, “blapto,” (NT: 984) and “pheme,” (NT: 5345).

Blapto is a primary verb meaning, to hinder, i.e. to injure

PHEME (pronounced “fame”) is from a root word “phemi,” (NT: 5346) and means, “a saying, i.e. rumor,” and phemi originates from phos (NT: 5457) and “phaino” (NT: 5316), which means, “to reveal or make one's thoughts known thru speech.”

Combining all of the literal meanings of all the words that make up the Greek blasphemeo, a precise definition of the word translated as “blasphemy” in the NT is as follows:

**BLASPHEMY** – The use of slander to make one’s thoughts publicly known in an attempt to ruin the good name and reputation of someone else in order to hinder them.

According to the definitions above, to blaspheme the spirit of God is to make one’s thoughts known in a calculated and deliberately evil way. To blaspheme the Spirit, an evil person sets out with a plan devised to publicly vilify God with the aim of destroying His reputation and His credibility. This is done by contemptuously hindering the operation of God’s spirit and slandering His authority. You can see this is more involved than angrily cursing God, or using Jesus’ name in a profane or corrupt manner.

## **Gospel Accounts of Blasphemy**

The Jewish leaders blasphemed God when they spread a rumor that Jesus’ disciples had stolen his dead body after the resurrection. The only way to determine what blasphemy of the Spirit (of God) is, and the only way to discern who is or is not guilty of this unpardonable sin, you must acquaint yourself with the three gospel accounts that mention blasphemy of the Spirit or Holy Spirit.

- **Matthew 12:22-45**
- **Luke 11:14-36; 12:10**
- **Mark 3:20-29**

To understand blasphemy of the Holy Spirit you have to compile an accurate chronology of events occurring at the time Jesus taught about blasphemy:

1. Jesus heals the blind and mute man, and casts out the evil spirit making the man mute **Matthew 12:22; Luke 11:14**
2. The people witness this miracle and are amazed at the healing power; they begin to ask one another if Jesus might be the, “son of David”(or Messiah or Christ), because the

blind and mute man is healed **Matthew 12:23; Luke 11:14**

3. The scribes who came down from Jerusalem saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons." **Mark 12:22**. What they did was a form of blasphemy to discredit the miracle of God wrought thru Jesus' hands. They intentionally came down from Jerusalem to discredit Jesus and to hinder the gospel message from the people, who were beginning to believe Jesus was the Messiah.

4. The Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." **Matthew 12:24; Luke 11:15**

5. And others (probably other Jewish leaders, maybe even the Sadducees or Sanhedrin), to test Him, were demanding of Jesus a, "sign from heaven" **Luke 11:16**. This was a form of blasphemy because the evidence of a miracle was already there. They demanded a sign to try and embarrass Jesus and discredit him.

6. Jesus teaches about a kingdom divided, and proves that Satan cannot cast out Satan without dividing his kingdom **Matthew 12:25-26; Mark 3:23-26; Luke 11:17-19**. He also proves that he is doing miracles and casting out demons thru God's power, and then turns the tables on the Jewish leaders, and questions the source of their authority and questions what kingdom they act on behalf of (meaning they operate under the devil's power because they try to hinder God's work).

7. Jesus says if he casts the demon out of the mute man by the finger of God then that means the kingdom of God has come upon them **Matthew 12:27; Luke 11:20**. In other words, now these hypocritical Jewish leaders are very accountable to God because they have seen Him working thru His son Jesus.

8. Jesus teaches about the strong man being bound & cast out first **Matthew 12:29, Luke 11:21-22, Mark 3:27**.

9. Jesus says if they are not for him they are against him; not with him you scatter **Matthew 12:30; Luke 11:23**

10. Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come **Matthew 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-29**. The account in **Mark 3:29** makes it clear the reason for Jesus' warning about blasphemy and it was because they say he has an unclean spirit, which is tantamount to saying the miracle wrought was done thru Satan.

11. Jesus teaches about trees that bear good and bad fruit. He then summarizes by telling these wicked men to make the tree good or bad; he tells them a tree is known by its fruit and says that by your words you are justified or condemned **Matthew 12:33-37**.

12. Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." **Matthew 12:38**

13. Jesus responds and tells the Jewish leaders that the sign of Jonah is the only sign they will be given **Matthew 12:39-42, Luke 11:29-32**. The sign of Jonah will end up as the last miraculous sign these Jewish leaders will ever see while still having opportunity to repent. Once they witness the sign of Jonah, which is the resurrection, and refuse to repent, they will be so given over to Satan that they will not find room for repentance, and thus you have the fulfillment of blasphemy against the Spirit of God.

14. Lastly, Jesus warns the Jewish leaders of HOW the unpardonable sin is going to be committed. Jesus does this by teaching them that when an evil spirit leaves a man and later returns to find the house empty, the evil spirit returns with seven more spirits and 7 times stronger than the first. He warns these wicked scribes and Pharisees that the last state (spiritual condition) they will find themselves in will be worse than the first state, meaning the condition they are presently in, which was really bad. **Matthew 12:43-45, Luke 11:24-27** In other words, if they continue and persist in hindering the kingdom of God, after Jesus is gone, these wicked Jewish leaders will become so possessed of the devil they will be unable to repent in their gall of wickedness.

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. **Matthew 12:32**

The reason Jesus accused the Jewish Pharisees of blasphemy was because of what they were doing, not just because of what they, 'spoke.' These wicked religious zealots were in reality, working 'against God Almighty by their plots against God's son Jesus.

**Matthew 12:32** is an extension of verse 31, The words, "speaks against the Holy Spirit," in Greek are rendered, "éípee katá tou Pneúmatos tou Hagíou." As in verse 31, Pneúmatos is a variation of pneúma, adding the 'tos' to show the operation or working of the spirit. The definite article tou precedes pneúmatos, specifying "THE" operation of and/or activity of the spirit, as opposed to the spirit itself. The blasphemy against the activity of the spirit means to slander by hindering the work and the activity of the spirit. However, verse 32 adds another component following tou pneúmatos, which is the words, "tou Hagíou."

In **Matthew 12:32**, (and elsewhere in the New Testament), most Bible versions

mistranslate the Greek, “toú pneúmatos toú Hagíou,” as, “the Holy Spirit.” This error is easily noticed, because the words ‘Pneúmatos’ and ‘Hagíou’ are both Nouns.

The term, “holy spirit,” uses ‘Holy’ as an adjective to describe the noun, ‘Spirit.’ Since Hagíou is a noun, it cannot be used as an adjective (‘Holy’) to describe the Greek noun Pneúmatos (‘Spirit’).

The reason every single Bible version sold in Christian bookstores today mistranslates, “toú pneúmatos toú Hagíou,” as, “the Holy Spirit,” has more to do with doctrinal influences than good translation. Below are the correct rendering possibilities for these Greek words, including the definite articles toú.

1. toú = the, this, that
2. pneúmatos = activity of the spirit
3. Hagíou = morally blameless, sanctified and/or undefiled one
4. toú pneúmatos = the activity of the spirit
5. toú Hagíou = ‘the’ morally blameless, sanctified and/or undefiled one
6. toú pneúmatos toú Hagíou = The spiritual activity of the undefiled one, The spiritual activity of morally blameless one, The spiritual activity of the sanctified one

Item 6 in the list above provides three possible translations for **Matthew 12:32**; no matter which one is used, all refer to speaking against the activity of the glorified Christ in his spiritual form, which takes place after his ascension and onward. This shows the true meaning of, “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit,” which is blasphemy against God, as He works thru Jesus Christ, as Jesus Christ works thru his body of believers, the church.

On the other hand, **Matthew 12:31** refers to blasphemy against the, “Spirit,” of God, committed by the Jewish spiritual leaders known as the Pharisees. The Pharisees blasphemed against, “the Spirit,” of God, (Yahweh) as He healed the sick by performing miracles thru His son, Jesus the Messiah (the Christ).

### **Matthew 12:1-45**

**12:1-8** At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, “Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath.” He answered, “Haven't you read what David did when he and his

companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread — which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Notice it is the Pharisees that accuse Jesus' disciples of breaking the Sabbath; this begs a question: What were the Pharisees doing out in the fields following Jesus and his disciples on the Sabbath? The Pharisees' role as Jewish spiritual leaders on the Sabbath was typically to read portions of the Law or discourse about the Torah; they were always in the synagogue, but here in Matthew chapter 12, they followed Jesus for one reason alone... to ACCUSE and condemn him. Remember, this is part of what Jesus later identifies in the context as speaking, "against," the Spirit of God.

**12:9-14** Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

Instead of trying to avoid the Jewish Pharisees, Jesus leaves the fields and goes directly into their synagogue! Talk about courage! This would be no different from some legalistic group of Christian ministers or pastors hassling a true evangelist on the streets, and thereafter, having the same evangelist follow the ministers or pastors back into their own church building on Sunday morning! The true motive for blasphemy against the spirit of God is revealed in the words, "Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus..." To blaspheme the Holy Spirit a person must be actively looking for reasons to accuse God's people.

It is not enough to merely say, "I spoke those words against the Holy Spirit." This does not qualify him for the unpardonable sin; in order to blaspheme in a way that is unforgivable, his frame of mind cannot waver from the evil purpose in his heart. His entire lifestyle and purpose would be to control others thru the use of religious positions of power.

Notice also, the Pharisees were looking for reasons to accuse Jesus before he even healed the man with the withered hand. This shows a calculated plan of evil was unfolding; nevertheless, the true 'blasphemy' is revealed after Jesus heals the man in their synagogue. Instead of rejoicing, the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might

kill Jesus.

**12:15-21** Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. Many followed him, and he healed all their sick, warning them not to tell who he was. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope.”

**12:22-24** Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. All the people were astonished and said, “Could this be the Son of David?” But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, “It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons.”

The Pharisees said the healing of the demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was done thru the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. In other words, they were publicly defaming with slanderous lies God Almighty Himself! They witnessed His miraculous power of such awesome magnitude that a demon-possessed man that was blind and could not speak a word instantaneously healed at the command of the words spoken by the man of God, Christ Jesus (the Messiah). The Pharisees KNEW it was GOD’S power, yet they blasphemed against Him by saying it was done by Satan’s power.

**12:25-30** Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house. He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.”

First, and perhaps most important, is what is said in **Matthew 12:25**, “Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them.” The novice reader does not understand how vital these pronoun keys are in the interpreting of any scripture text. In Matthew 12, Jesus’ instruction about blasphemy is spoken directly, “to them,” (i.e. meaning ‘to’ the Pharisees). Every single pronoun that follows in **Matthew 12:25** refers back to the object, which is the Pharisees.

These pronouns are worded as, “your people, your judges, upon you,” and lastly, “He



who (male pronoun = Pharisees; females are not allowed to be Jewish leaders) is not with me (Jesus) is against me (Jesus), and he who (male pronoun = Pharisees) does not gather with me (Jesus) scatters.”

This specific use of male pronouns alone should convince any reasonable person reading the text that the blasphemy of the Spirit described refers to the Pharisee’s thoughts and the Pharisee’s actions.

Therefore, the Pharisee’s thoughts and actions must be the criteria for committing the unpardonable sin.

One other consideration commonly overlooked are words that include the possessive pronoun, “me,” which are used 3 times in **Matthew 12:30**, “who is not with me is against me not gather with me scatters.” In these phrases, Jesus uses, “me,” to illustrate that the Pharisees that worked, “against,” him are the same ones ‘who’ blaspheme the Holy Spirit in verse 32. This is another proof text that the term, “Holy Spirit,” in the New Testament refers to the glorified Christ, because when the Pharisees work against the activity of God’s spirit, they do so by working against God’s mediator, the man Christ Jesus.

Blasphemy in any form is slandering another person with defamatory words in order to discredit them in the eyes of others, with the motive being to further one’s own evil agenda, whatever that may be. Blasphemy of the, “Spirit,” is defined slightly different from blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, which I will explain later. When Jesus healed demon possessed man who was blind and mute, so that he could both talk and see, all the people were in awe as they witnessed this astonishing miracle. Immediately they began to ask each other if Jesus might indeed be, “the son of David.”

When the Jewish people used the term, ‘the son of David,’ this designation was a common expression referring to the Messiah. The term ‘Messiah’ is the Old Testament Hebrew transliteration and the New Testament equivalent of the Greek term ‘Christ,’ or Christós, meaning literally, “the Anointed one.”

When a king, a prince, a Magistrate or a Ruler was initiated into his official capacity, in days of old, he would be ‘anointed’ with costly, perfumed oil or salve. The ceremonial anointing might be likened to when the President of the United States of America is sworn into office to begin his term of Presidency.

In the Old Testament God made a promise to King David that from his descendents a ruler would be born to deliver the nation of Israel from its oppressors and then rule in justice and righteousness forever. Therefore, in anticipation of the time when Messiah would appear, the Jewish people spoke freely of ‘the son of David.’ Seeing Jesus perform this amazing miracle in the sight of all the people would certainly stir their

enthusiasm about the Christ.

Making sure his words of exhortation left no margin of error, Jesus supplements his teaching about blasphemy of the Spirit by saying, “He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.” To qualify as a true blasphemer against the Holy Spirit, the wicked person must be engaged in the active promotion of his evil scheme by working against God and against His Christ.

Because **Matthew 12:32** extends blasphemy of the Holy Spirit into the, “age to come,” the same kind of defamatory slander includes anyone today. For example, if a man or woman knowingly works against the spiritual activity of Jesus, by scattering those who seek the Way, actively plotting the demise of the members of the ‘body of Christ’ (i.e. – all true born-again Christians), it is considered blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. “And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.” **Matthew 12:31**

The words, “And so,” prove the narrative in **Matthew 12:31** is a continuation of Jesus’ rebuke to the Pharisees, and is not a generalized mandate applicable to all human blasphemy. **Matthew 12:31** provides three key explanations in this regard.

1. It lays the foundation by teaching what blasphemy, “of the Spirit,” is, versus what it is not. In other words, every sin and Blasphemy, including the type of blasphemy that is verbalized, can be forgiven. The only type of blasphemy that cannot be forgiven is, “the blasphemy against the Spirit.”
2. The term, “The blasphemy,” is distinguished from, “every blasphemy,” in verse 31. In Greek, the definite article (i.e. “the”) does more than specify the noun, as in English; in Greek, the definite article specifies and emphasizes identity. This sounds funny to us, but in Greek, it helps by individualizing the noun, and isolating its identity as unique. Thus, “The blasphemy of the Spirit,” is a unique and individual blasphemy, and one must meet all of the specific criteria in Jesus’ teaching to be guilty of committing such damnable transgression. The reason for such specific criteria is obvious; the consequence for this unique form of blasphemy, being unforgivable, has devastating implications for those involved.
3. **Matthew 12:31** is necessary; in the Greek text, the phrase, “the blasphemy against the Spirit,” reads as, “toú Pneúmatos blasfeemía.<sup>[1]</sup>” The typical Greek word for, “spirit,” is pneúma, not pneúmatos; pneúmatos is a variation of pneúma, adding the letters, ‘tos’ to this noun Pneúma, (as Pneúma-tos). This is commonly done to show the operation and working of the spirit. The operation or working of the spirit is better translated in **Matthew 12:31** as, “the activity of the spirit,” and is distinguished from the personal identity of the Spirit itself. Therefore, to blaspheme against, “the activity of the spirit,” means to work against the activity of God’s spirit by means of slander or other

defamatory language, intent on discrediting the legitimacy of God activity.

To blaspheme against, “the activity of the spirit,” does not mean to speak in an ugly or disgusting way to God Himself. If they repent for this type of cursing, God always forgives thru Jesus Christ. This is a different sin than continual efforts to thwart God’s activity thru His human servants on earth.

In **Matthew 12:37**, Jesus offers the choice of either pardon (acquittal) or condemnation, to anyone that has blasphemed in his words, “For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”