

# GOD'S ENEMIES

## A look at one identifying characteristic

The catch-phrase for many Christians, or those calling themselves Christians, is “*God is Love*”. I heard of a live radio program that started the broadcast with, “*God loves you*”. They would take caller’s questions and attempt to answer them from their “Christian” perspective. One day a caller got on just after their lead-in line of “*God loves you*”. The caller said, “Hi, my name is Esau, does God love me?” Apparently the host of the program was surprised and stumped. The passage the caller undoubtedly had in mind was:

*13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*  
*Romans 9:13*

Which was a quote from Malachi 1:2-3. This is just one of many passages showing us God does have enemies. He does not love indiscriminately.

### A severe warning in few words

A passage in the Psalms that jumped out at me one day, was identifying one characteristic of people who are God’s enemies:

*20 For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.*  
*Psalms 139:20*

The Hebrew word translated “enemies” means “enemies, adversaries, foes”. In the King James Bible, they indicate with italics the “and” along with “thy name” is inserted by the translators because they felt that was the idea behind what was said in the verse. Based on the first half of the verse and the lack of the “and”, I would have to agree that is a sound inference of the passage.

Many would have no problem with any acknowledgment that God’s enemies take his name in vain. That is easy to see if you haven’t lived in a real sheltered world. It isn’t that aspect that caught my attention. What sounded loud to me was the thought, “Can it be said that anyone who is not God’s enemy takes His name in vain?” “Do any who are His friends, who love

Him also carry on this same practice of taking His name in vain?”

### Position of enemies is two-fold

The position of “enemies” is also two-fold. The people, or person, in view treat God as his/their enemy. The other being God’s view towards an individual/people where He views him/them as hated of His soul. From the context of the verse under investigation, I would say it is fairly clear that the view of enemy is reciprocated from the person/persons to God and from God to the persons. There are also other numerous verses in the Psalms that make this two-way view quite clear.

Going back to the questions I raised, “Can it be said that anyone who is not God’s enemy, takes His name in vain?” “Do any who are His friends, who love Him, also carry on this same practice of taking His name in vain?”

In view of the kind of people I have seen, I would honestly have to say, the majority of those telling people they are Christians used the title of deity or the name of the Jesus in vain. These people are convinced they are not God’s enemies. They are active in their “churches”, they get involved in social ministry to help catastrophe victims and the like. None-the-less, they do not revere His name or titles referring to Him in a godly fear.

### The questions we need answered

**So I lift up the first question, “Can it be said that anyone who is not God’s enemy, takes His name in vain?”**

Before looking at further passages, I want it to be noted that being in the position of an enemy is not without possibility of change. Repentance, turning in fear from iniquity, will change one’s position from being an enemy. Likewise, going into iniquity will change one’s position from being approved of God into his enemy.

In search of an answer to the question

I posed, I looked to see if there were any passages in the Bible that gave further details of those who used His name in vain. Do we find passages noting those who were accounted His own also used His name in vain? Actually we do:

*5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. 6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.*  
*Isaiah 52:5-6*

*6 Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom, 7 Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.*  
*Isaiah 65:6-7*

We saw Yahowah addressing a people He called, “my people” in Isaiah 52:5-6. He tells us His name was blasphemed every day.

Using His name in vain is just one form of blaspheme. We are not told if the blaspheme was in the mouths of His people or if the blaspheme was the result of the enemies looking at wicked people who called themselves servants of God and on this account these enemies slandered God. For example they might say, “Look at these people who call themselves holy and servants of Yahowah, I want nothing to do with that kind of a God!”

The passage of Isaiah 65:6-7 give us more light into the kind of people we saw referred to in Isaiah 52:5-6. They had been called His people, but really they had become idolators. God’s wrath was destined to be poured upon them. In balance, these passages show that it cannot be said that those who take His name in vain are not his enemies. Their turning from Him changed their status into being His enemies.

■ Let us look at other passages I found:  
*9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain. Proverbs 30:9*

The “taking of God’s name in vain” referred to in this passage refers to that form of blasphemy that is occasioned by living ungodly, such as stealing, and calling oneself one of God’s family. That gives occasion to the world to make that accusation of, “I want nothing to do with your religion, thief! You said you’re what, a Christian?”

■ The following is the very foundation passage in reference to using God’s name in vain:

*7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Exodus 20:7*

It is found in the Ten Commandments. Apart from the simple instruction, it gives clear warning that such violation is not taken lightly. A man may live with someone’s flippant use of His name or title, but God will deal with the blasphemer in judgment.

■ An actual account of a man using God’s name as a curse word is recorded in Leviticus:

*10 And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp; 11 And the Israelitish woman’s son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother’s name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:) 12 And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them. 13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 14 Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. 15 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. 16 And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land,*

*when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death.*

*Leviticus 24:11-16*

This passage shows just how serious God takes the flippant use of that which refers to Him!

■ I found the following passage that also connected the term “enemy” and “blaspheme”:

*18 Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name. Psalm 74:18*

Whether the “foolish people”, who blasphemed God’s name were the enemies or those who called themselves “God’s people” is not clear, but one thing is certain. The blasphemy is on account of foolish people, and the enemy is close at hand. This passage speaks nothing of comfort for those involved in the transgression. No word of comfort, no word of fellowship with God.

■ We have some passages from the New Testament on the matter. The first is a stern warning:

*26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain. James 1:26*

This verse tells us clearly that the person claiming to be one of God’s own, is simply “deceiving his own heart”, flattering with lies would be another way to put it, if his tongue is not restrained. The passage applies to all uses of the tongue, but the use of God’s name in vain would be clearly included.

■ The following is a more lengthy passage. It clearly presents a strong lesson that the free use of God’s name in vain should not be used even once. It tells us that such people are in the enemy class as far as God is concerned, receiving His condemnation. The apostle Paul also put a strong finishing line to it of warning, “Don’t let yourselves be deceived by anyone who would say otherwise”. You live like that, you will be condemned as God’s enemy:

*3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving*

*of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. Ephesians 5:3-7*

After looking over these passages, I cannot but come to the conclusion that the answer to the question, “Can it be said that anyone who is not God’s enemy takes His name in vain?” is a clear, “No!”. To say otherwise, one would have to find something in scripture that says it’s “no big deal, just a slip of the tongue”. Such is completely missing from scripture. In fact, Ephesians 5:3-7 put it about as bluntly as could be asked for.

**The second question, “Do any who are His friends, who love Him, also carry on this same practice of taking His name in vain?”**

All the previous passages we looked over give the answer to this further probing question on the issue.

## Take serious consideration

I want to take one last look at the passage in the Psalms this message is based upon:

*20 For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Psalm 139:20*

Please take serious consideration of this verse. Rather, let me plead with you here. If you happen to be the person who calls himself/herself a Christian who flippantly uses titles of God, His name, His Son’s name or anything else that refers to God, let this message sink into your heart. The only testimony that scripture gives is that those who do such are “enemies of God”. Do not fool yourself that this isn’t important. Your soul is at stake. If you repent of this practice, call upon God to cleanse your heart and mouth in a truly humbled heart. He will deliver you from the position of being His enemy. His Son has died, resurrected and ascended to set us free:

*36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. John 8:36*



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The English version used is that from the King James Bible.

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