

## THE BIBLE VIEW

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### **\*?#@\* Is Not God's Last Name**

*Bill Brinkworth*

Swearing is, unfortunately, too much a part of language today. It continuously pollutes television and radio programs. Children's and adult programs alike are saturated with unnecessary filthy expletives. Many teachers and other speakers, who were once expected to be exemplary speaking examples, now feel they need to include profanity in their vocabulary. Modern speech has digressed to a filthy "norm." To make matters worse, vulgarity has de-escalated to a lower level. Profanity now openly includes cursing with God's name included, usually as a prefix or an adjective.

When reprimanding someone that curses using God's name, they usually retort, "I didn't mean anything by using it!"

"Exactly, what the Bible says not to do," I usually respond. At this point, they often look a little confused, as few know what the Bible says. I then quote the third of the Ten Commandments: *"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

The word "vain," according to Webster's 1828 dictionary, means "empty, worthless; having no substance, value, or importance." Exodus 20:7 commands us not to take God's name lightly, and without meaning. That is exactly what people are doing when they curse using God's name in their profanity.

Besides, who believes that they do not mean it when they curse with God's name included? If I swore every time I was angry or hurt myself using your wife's or mother's name before the filthy word, you would certainly get the message that I did not respect them. After several foul expletives using your loved one's name you would, (or should), get mad at me for using their name in such a degrading manner. You may even want to take a swing at me for showing disrespect against one for which you cared. In like manner, God also does take it seriously when you curse, especially using his name lightly. The third command also states that anyone that uses the Lord's name vainly will be found guilty for using it! Gulp!

One of the best illustrations for using God's name respectfully is learned from the example of the early scribes who helped keep exact copies of the Bible. As the old Bibles wore out, new ones had to be re-copied. Printing presses were not invented, and the only means of preservation was by re-writing it by hand. When the scribes came to God's name, they had

such respect for His name they would not take it lightly. They threw out the quilled pen they were using. They reached for a new quill and took their “pen knife” (that is where the term comes from today) and carved it into a new sharp writing instrument. It was with this new pen that they wrote His name. They had such reverence for God’s name that they would only use an unused pen to record His name.

To this day, many Jewish writers still have such respect for God’s name that when they pen it, they will not spell it out entirely. They write it as “G\_d.” This attitude of the past towards respecting God has certainly gone downhill to what most verbalize today.

It is not necessary to define one’s anger or displeasure further with a filthy word, as the ungodly world does. We can respond with simply a “yes,” or “no” as the Bible commands: *“But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”* *Matthew 5:37*

One’s vocabulary should be more developed than one that has to resort to only using four-lettered words. Above all, one should never use God’s name vainly. His last name is not a filthy word.

***“Speech is a mirror of the soul. As a man speaks, so is he.”***—Syrus

## **“Vain”**

*“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.”* Ex. 20:7

“Vain” means to take the name of the holy God lightly, or not respectfully. Cursing with God’s name attached to the curse is vain. His name is not used respectfully when someone says “Oh my \_\_,” and includes His name in the blank. Tolerating swearing increases disrespect to our Creator.

## **What He Asked For**

*Sunday School Times*

One hot, summer day a young farmer came from his cornfield hot and tired. He took the name of the Lord in vain, cursing the cornfield for being such a grassy mess.

He finally succeeded in cleaning the field thoroughly. The rain came, the sun shone, but the field of corn refused to grow as it should. When harvest time arrived, the farmer complained that he did not make enough corn to pay the fertilizer bill.

His Christian wife calmly asked, “Didn’t you ask God to damn that field of corn?” Then the young fellow repentantly remembered his words. God does hear and answer us, and if many profanity users realized just what they were asking for, I believe they would be a little more careful.

**“What took you so long?” asked his wife.**

**“Well,” the farmer explained, “on the way home I had to pick up the preacher, and from there on, after having to change my language, those mules of ours didn’t understand one word I said.”**

### **What Would George Say Now?**

An order from George Washington’s Orderly Book of August 3, 1776, read:

“The general is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane swearing, a vice little known in the American army, is growing into fashion. He hopes the officers will be an example as well as influence to endeavor to stop it, and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our military efforts if we insult God by our impiety and profanity. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it.”

**“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.”**

*Proverbs 21:23*

### **President Wilson’s Father**

*Author unknown*

Woodrow Wilson liked to speak of his godly, minister father, Dr. Joseph R. Wilson. Among the anecdotes he related of him was this: “He was once in a company of men where they were having a heated discussion. In the midst of it, one let out a profane expletive. Then, seeing Dr. Wilson there, he offered him an apology, saying, ‘Sir, I had forgotten that you were present. Please pardon me.’”

“Dr. Wilson’s reply was, ‘It is not to me that you owe your apology, but to God.’”

### **How Haldane Was Converted**

*Triumphs of Faith*

James Haldane, when a young man, commanded the man of war, the *Melville Castle*. In a fierce battle with an enemy ship, he ordered new men on deck to take the place of those who had been killed or wounded. The men, seeing the mangled, bloodied bodies of their comrades, fell back in horror. Captain Haldane began to swear frightfully and wished them all in Hell.

At the close of the fight, a Christian soldier stepped up and said respectfully to the young captain. “Sir, if God had answered your prayer just now, where should we have been?” This faithful word of rebuke went home to the conscience of Haldane. It led to his sound conversion. He abandoned his career in the Navy and became a preacher of the Gospel and labored for 54 years in God’s service.

James led his brother Robert to Christ, who also became a preacher and an able commentator of the Bible. Robert Haldane was also the means of the conversion of Felix Neff, a philanthropic Swiss preacher, and leader in Christianity. What if that Christian soldier had remained silent instead of rebuking Captain Haldane?