

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ

The one hoping for the mercy of his Master, Muhammad Abdul-Hayy Lucknowi, son of Haaji, Haafiz Muhammad Abdul- Haleem states:

I see in this era that the sin most committed is that of backbiting. The general people and even the pious regard it to be something trivial. By indulging in backbiting, one begins to incline towards other major and minor sins, and harm is caused to one in this world and the hereafter. I could not find any book regarding this matter which could guide one. Therefore, I decided to write this book which would be beneficial for the learned as well as the general masses, and by which people would be saved from the doubts created by Shaytaan. I therefore wrote this book and entitled it “Zajarush-Shubbaan-wash-Shaibati-an-Irtikaabil-Gheebah” (Rebuke for the young and old from indulging in backbiting).

I have divided the book into two sections:

- a.) Backbiting
- b.) Listening to backbiting and sitting in such gatherings.

Thereafter, for ease of people, I renamed the book, “What is backbiting?”

May Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ accept this tiny effort!

Servant Abdul-Hayy Lacknawi

IMPORTANT NOTES

For every point mentioned in the book, ahaadeeth, incidents and statements of the pious have been mentioned to back it up. A few additional points adhered to in this book are:

- 1.) The word hadeeth is written before the statement of Rasulullaah ﷺ.
- 2.) The word *hikaayat* [incident] is written before any incident is mentioned, whether it took place in the era of Rasulullaah ﷺ or after.
- 3.) The word *athar* [statement of sahaabi] is written before the statement of a sahaabi.
- 4.) The word *irshaad* [statement of the pious] is written before the statement of a taabi'ee or pious person.
- 5.) The word *islaah* [statement of the Ambiya] is written before the statements of Ambiya.
- 6.) The word *aayat* [verse] is written before mentioning a Qur'anic verse.
- 7.) The word naseehat [advice] is written when it seems necessary to explain the condition of people in today's times.
- 8.) The phrase *lateefah* [amazing point/incident] is written before some amazing point or incident.
- 9.) The word *daqeeqah* [fine point] is written before refuting some proof or objection, or when mentioning some masa'lah.
- 10.) The word *hidaayat* [guidance] is written when giving the meaning of some hadith, statement of a sahaabi or verse of the Qur'aan.
- 11.) The word *faaidah* [note] or *tambeeh* [warning] is given for other miscellaneous matters.

Keeping these points in mind whilst studying the book will make it easy for the reader to take benefit from the subject matter.¹

We make du'aa to Allaah ﷻ to grant us the ability to practise! Aameen.

¹ For ease, we have merely used the English words in the book, which is mentioned above in brackets.

The first section has nine chapters.

CHAPTER ONE – THE DEFINITION OF BACKBITING

According to the Shariah, backbiting refers to making mention of any bad quality of a person in his absence, in such a manner that if he comes to know of it, he will be upset. This is irrespective of whether the backbiting is done verbally, in writing, by means of signs or any other manner; and regardless of a person being a Muslim or non-Muslim. If such a fault is discussed which is not found in the person, then this is an accusation and slander. Some narrations will now be mentioned which clearly highlights this point:

Incident: A woman who was short in height came to Rasulullaah ﷺ. When she went away, Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا pointed out her short height. Rasulullaah ﷺ remarked, “O Aishah! You have backbitten her.” Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, “I have only mentioned that which is in her.” Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “You have mentioned the worst which is in her.” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 205)²

Statement of the pious: Ibrahim Nakhai رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

إِذَا قُلْتَ مَا فِيهِ فَقَدْ اغْتَبَيْتَهُ، وَإِنْ قُلْتَ مَا لَيْسَ فِيهِ فَقَدْ بَهَيْتَهُ

*If you make mention of something (an evil quality) found in a person, then you have backbitten him. And if you make mention of something (an evil quality) not found in him, then you have slandered him.*³

(Imaam Muhammad has narrated this in Kitaabul-Aathaar)

Incident: Once Rasulullaah ﷺ asked, “Do you know what is backbiting?” The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ replied, “Allaah and His Messenger know best.” He ﷺ said, “Speaking about your brother about something which he dislikes.” He ﷺ was asked, “What if what I am talking about my brother is really

² Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 205, see Shuabul-Imaan no. 6304 for a similar narration

³ This is also the statement of Masrooq as narrated in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaibah (no.25548), in which Ibrahim is the narrator.

found in him?” He ﷺ replied, “If what you say about him is really found in him, you have certainly engaged in backbiting about him. But if what you say is not found in him, you have certainly slandered him.” (Tafseer Ma’aalimut-Tanzeel)⁴

Amazing point: Rasulullaah ﷺ utilized the word ‘brother’, pointing to the fact that even though the person you are speaking ill of may not be your biological brother, in reality he is your brother. There are three reasons for this:

- a.) Your great grandfather and his is Aadam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.
- b.) Your great grandmother and his is Hawaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.
- c.) Both of you are Muslims and all Muslims are brothers. Just as one abstains as far as possible from backbiting about his brother and disgracing him, it is necessary for him not to speak ill of any other person, as he too is your Muslim brother.

Incident: Once Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِنَّ الْعَيْبَةَ أَنْ تَذَكَرَ الْمَرْءَ بِمَا فِيهِ

Backbiting means to make mention of a fault found in a person.

The sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ said, “We thought that backbiting refers to speaking something which is contrary to reality.” Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “That is slander.” (Abd ibn Humaid has narrated this as mentioned by Allamah Suyuti in Durre-Manthoor)⁵

Warning: Refutation of the concepts of the general masses

In this era, the general masses as well as the pious are involved in backbiting. They follow Shaitaan in this. Every person defines backbiting as he feels.

Some are of the opinion that backbiting refers to uttering such qualities of a person which cannot be uttered before him. Therefore, if one is able to utter these things before him, then this is not referred to as backbiting.

Incident: The author said to one person engaged in backbiting, “Why are you backbiting and mentioning the faults of others?” Since this person was uncultured,

⁴ Muslim no. 2589, Abu Dawood no. 4874

⁵ Also narrated in Musaawiul-Akhlaaq of Kharaaiti no. 201

he replied, “We will not hesitate to mention this person’s faults, in fact, we will mention it before him. Therefore, this is not backbiting.”

In the ahaadith mentioned before, there is no clause stating that there is no harm if one can mention the fault before the person. The ruling is general. When a person speaks ill of any person in his absence, then this is backbiting. Otherwise, whenever any elder speaks ill of any junior, then this will never be referred to as backbiting, as an elder generally does not fear stating matters before his junior.

Doubt: Some people state that backbiting refers to the condition when one mentions evil qualities not found in a person. However, if the evil quality is found in a person, then this is not backbiting.

Answer: The above hadeeth clearly states that this is referred to as slander. Such people’s statements are completely contrary to what Rasoolullah ﷺ has informed us.

Doubt: Some people state that backbiting refers to making mention of evil qualities of a person which are not known. However, if such faults are mentioned which are known, then this is not backbiting. Therefore, when they are asked, “Why are you backbiting?” they reply, “This is not backbiting, since this fault is not hidden from anyone. All are aware of this fault. It is not because of our speech that people will come to know of it.”

Answer: This is merely their misunderstanding. When a person publicises the fault of someone which was not known, then one receives two sins; one for backbiting and the other for exposing the fault. If the sin was known, then one will only receive one sin, which is for backbiting.

So how can something known be referred to as backbiting? The answer to this has passed already wherein Nabi ﷺ prohibited Aishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا from speaking ill of the woman who was short in height, as this is regarded to be a fault in a person, even though it is apparent.

CHAPTER TWO – THE TYPES OF BACKBITING

This is of several types:

a.) Backbiting of a Muslim, dhimmi (non-Muslim living in a Muslim state), and harbi (non-Muslim living in that country which opposes the Muslim state.)

Backbiting of a Muslim is clearly forbidden. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states, “None of you should backbite another.” The 2nd person pronoun (كُمْ) in this verse refers to the Muslims, which means that no Muslim should speak ill of another Muslim.

Backbiting of a dhimmi is also forbidden. Since he has become subservient to the Muslims, his life, wealth and honour has become sacred just as a Muslim. Just as it is forbidden to violate the honour of a Muslim, it is forbidden to violate the honour of a dhimmi. This ruling is clearly mentioned in Durre-Mukhtaar and other places.

Backbiting of a harbi is permissible. This ruling is found in the books of fiqh. When it is permissible to backbite about an open sinner, to a greater extent it will be permissible to backbite about a harbi.

Note: The author of Tafseer-Kabeer has written that it is permissible to backbite about a disbeliever. Perhaps he is referring to a harbi. And Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

b.) Backbiting of the living and dead

Just as it is forbidden to backbite about a living person, it is forbidden to revile, mention faults and backbite about a dead person, even if he had wasted his life in sin. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ severely prohibited us from engaging in this action.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

إِذَا مَاتَ صَاحِبُكُمْ فَدَعُوهُ، وَلَا تَقْعُوا فِيهِ

When one of you passes away, then leave him and do not speak ill of him.

(Abu Dawood)⁶

⁶ Abu Dawood no. 4899

لَا تَسُبُّوا الْأَمْوَاتَ، فَإِنَّهُمْ قَدْ أَفْضَوْا إِلَى مَا قَدَّمُوا

Do not speak ill of the dead since they have reached that which they had sent ahead. (Ibn Hibban) ⁷

اذْكُرُوا مَحَاسِنَ مَوْتَاكُمْ، وَكُفُّوا عَنْ مَسَاوِيهِمْ

Mention the noble qualities of the deceased and refrain from their evil qualities. (Abu Dawood) ⁸

Fine point: Leaving aside the hadeeth, even logic demands that it is forbidden to backbite the deceased. There are four reasons for this:

a.) The deceased cannot speak ill of the living. Therefore the living should not speak ill of the deceased.

Incident: Abu Darda رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to frequently sit at gravesides, and he used to regularly visit the graveyards. People asked him the reason, to which he replied, "I am sitting by such people who remind me of the hereafter. When I go away, they do not backbite me, [contrary to the living]." (*Ihya-Uloomid-Deen Kitaabul-Amwaat*) ⁹

b.) The deceased grant benefit to the living in this way that the living remember the hereafter when sitting by them and understand the temporary nature of this world. Therefore, the living should benefit them and recompense them. Just as the deceased people's tongues are controlled, the living should also control their tongues regarding them and not cause any harm to them.

Incident: People asked Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ why he frequented the graveyard. He answered by saying, "I find them to be the best of neighbours. I find them to be truthful neighbours. They do not complain regarding us, and they remind me of the Hereafter." (*Ihya-Uloomid-Deen*) ¹⁰

⁷ Ibn Hibbaan no. 3021, also in Bukhari no.1393, Nasai no. 1936

⁸ Abu Dawood no. 4900, also in Tirmidhi no.1019

⁹ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 486

¹⁰ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 485

c.) By backbiting about the deceased, the living close family members are distressed.

Incident: My respected father once said that a person used to recite Surah Lahab excessively. Even though Abu Lahab was a disbeliever, he was the paternal uncle of Rasulullaah ﷺ. In this Surah, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى curses Abu Lahab and makes mention of a severe punishment for him. Rasulullaah ﷺ disliked this person continuously reciting this Surah and said to him, “Do you not know of any other Surah besides this one?”

Guidance: For this reason, if at the time of death, a person’s face turns black, the kalimah does not emerge from his mouth or some fearful creatures appear in his grave, then it is necessary for those who are aware of these details to conceal these conditions, so that the family members of the deceased are not put to distress.

Incident: Amongst my elders, Moulana Muhammad Izhaarul-Haq passed away. At the time of death, the kalimah would not emerge from his lips. People placed a cloth over him and began preparations for his burial. When the people went outside, some people began passing remarks stating that outwardly he seemed very pious, but he could not even recite the kalimah at the time of death. All others present there were hurt by this statement. Suddenly Moulana folded his two legs in and in a loud voice recited the kalimah. When the sound of the kalimah was heard by all, then the people censured the detractors.

d.) If the person who passed away was an inhabitant of Jahannum, then this punishment is sufficient for him. There is no need to speak ill of him. If on the other hand, he is an inhabitant of Jannah, then it is forbidden to speak ill of him.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

لا تذكروا موتاكم إلا بخير فإنهم أن يكونوا من أهل الجنة تأثموا وإن يكونوا من أهل النار فحسبهم ما هم فيه

Do not speak but good of your deceased. If they are from the inhabitants of Jannah, you will be sinful; and if they are from the inhabitants of Hell, then the place in which they are, are sufficient for them. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹¹

Guidance: Therefore, it is not good to speak evil of Hajjaj and Yazeed, even though some are of the opinion that they are disbelievers, and Allamah Taftaazani openly curses Yazeed and his assistants. In Mataalibul-Mu'mineen, a similar subject matter is quoted from Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمہ اللہ, however the correct view in the mazhab is that silence is best in this matter.¹²

c.) Backbiting of the sane adult and children or insane people

Most books of jurisprudence are void of the ruling regarding backbiting of children and insane people. For this reason, Tahtaawi رحمہ اللہ has not given a clear ruling of permissibility or non-permissibility. Some jurists have mentioned that it is completely haraam to do so. Ibn Aabideen رحمہ اللہ has quoted Ibn Hajar رحمہ اللہ that it is forbidden to backbite children and insane people, just as it is forbidden to backbite adults. However the author feels that there is some detail in this: To backbite a child who has intellect and feels happy when praised and upset when dispraised is not correct. Similar is the case with a person who is insane but becomes pleased and displeased with good and evil. One cannot backbite about a child or mad person who has no understanding who has any inheritor, because even though they cannot understand, the inheritor will feel offended when any fault is made of the person concerned. However, if the object of mentioning the fault is to frighten people, then it will be correct to do so, whether one is before the person or in his absence.

¹¹ Allamah Iraqi states that Ibn Abid-Dunya has narrated this hadeeth in Kitaabul-Maut with a dhaeef sanad from Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا. However, Nasai (no. 1935) has narrated it from her with a jayyid sanad, only mentioning the first part with the word موتاکم in place of هلکاکم. (Takhreej of Ihya)

¹² The reason for this is that there is precaution in silence, and there is no reward in speaking ill of some-one.

Backbiting of the child or insane person who has no understanding, and no inheritors is correct. However, it is best to control one's tongue and not speak ill of anyone.

d.) Backbiting of the body, clothing, family lineage, habits, acts of worship and sin

This of six types:

1.) BACKBITING OF THE BODY

This is when says words similar to the following with the intention of disgracing the person: He is very fat, short, has a long nose, has small eyes, is very dark in complexion, is deaf (can't hear anything), is blind (can't see anything), his nose is cut, is very tall, looks ugly.

Statement of sahaabi: Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُغْتَابَ الْمُؤْمِنُ بِشَيْءٍ كَمَا حَرَّمَ الْحَرَمَ الْمَيْتَةَ

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has made forbidden that a believer be backbitten regarding any matter, just as He has forbidden carrion.

(Narrated by Ibn Jareer as well as Allamah Suyuti in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)¹³

Incident: Once Ibn Seereen رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ whilst mentioning a certain person said that he is very dark-skinned. Then he said, "I realize that I have backbitten about him when I said that he is very dark-skinned. I repent from this sin, and I ask forgiveness from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى." *(Narrated by Mulla Ali Qari in Aiyunul-Ilm)*

Incident: A woman came to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. After departing, Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا remarked, "How nice if she was not so short!" Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "You have backbitten her." Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, "But that quality is in her." Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "This is backbiting. If the fault was not found in her, then this is slander." *(Narrated by Abd ibn Humaid as mentioned by Allamah Suyuti in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)¹⁴*

¹³ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 570, Shuabul-Imaan no. 6330

¹⁴ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 571

Incident: Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا once asked Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, “Do you like Safiyya’s short height?” Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ remarked, “O Aishah, you have uttered such a statement that if it was mixed with the ocean, it would have overpowered it.” (Abu Dawood)¹⁵

Incident: Once the honourable wives of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ began laughing at Umme-Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا due to her short height. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى revealed the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ

O those who believe! Let no group of men mock another group, perhaps they are better than them; and let no group of women mock at another group, perhaps they are better than them. (Hujuraat verse 11)

(Suleiman Jamal has narrated it in the footnotes of Jalaalain)¹⁶

Statement: Muawiyah ibn Qurrah said,

لَوْ مَرَّ بِكَ أَقْطَعُ، فَقُلْتَ ذَاكَ الْأَقْطَعُ، كَانَتْ مِنْكَ غِيْبَةٌ

If a physically defect person passes by you and you mention his defect, then this is backbiting.” (Narrated by Abd ibn Humaid as mentioned in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)¹⁷

Incident: Once Ibrahim Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ went for a meal to someone’s house. When they sat down, people said that a certain individual had not arrived. One person remarked, “He is heavy. That is why he is delayed in coming.” When Ibrahim ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ heard this, he stood up and walked away, saying to his nafs, “It is because of you that I had to hear backbiting. If you were not hungry, the opportunity of going for an invite and listening to backbiting would not have occurred.” Thereafter, he did not eat for three days.” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁸

¹⁵ No. 4875, Tirmidhi no. 2502

¹⁶ Also mentioned in Tafseer Khaazin, Tafseer Samarqandi and Tafseer Baghawi

¹⁷ Ad-Durrul-manthoor vol. 7 page 571, also in Tafseer Tabari vol. 22 page 307

¹⁸ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 166 no. 211

Fine point: The reason he رَحِمَهُ اللهُ left is because it is not permissible to eat at that place or gathering in which backbiting is taking place, just as it is not permissible to go to a certain place where people are dancing. This ruling has been clearly mentioned in Tatarkhaaniyah and has been narrated in Raddul-Mukhtaar as well.

The author states, “If a person is aware from before that backbiting will take place, then it is not correct to go to such a place. If by going, people will abstain from backbiting, then in such a case, it is necessary that he goes there. If one did not know that there will be backbiting, and the people commence after he goes there, then if possible, he should prevent them, and if there is no fear of harm, then he should arise from the tablecloth and leave. If this is not possible, then he should not join them in the backbiting. And Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows best!

From these incidents, we learn that mentioning a bodily defect is regarded as backbiting and is forbidden. Intellect demands that speaking ill of any person’s form and looking down at him due to his features is contrary to logic. Moulana Rumi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ writes in the Mathnawi:

The Indian, Caucasian, Roman and Abyssinian will all be one colour in the grave so that you can realize that all these colours and forms are veils (to the Being of Allaah) and are Divine gifts.

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has created all forms. Some are pious and some are evil. In every person, there are some weaknesses. If the person backbiting ponders, he will realize that there are thousands of faults in his features. Yes, if a person is free from every fault, then he has a right to backbite.

O intelligent one! Do not expose the faults of the creation. Because of your faults, remain disconnected from the creation.

It is not correct to laugh at even the ugly looking forms of animals. Man is far more beautiful than animals.

Incident: Once Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام walking together with his companions passed by a dog carcass. His companions remarked, “How bad smelling is this dog!” Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

remarked, “How white are its teeth!” Here he was pointing out to them by expressing surprise that they were seeing the faults of the dog but failed to notice the goodness within it. (*Ihya-Uloomid-Deen*)¹⁹

Incident: Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام saw a dog with four eyes. Because of its ugly form, he regarded it to be lowly. By the permission of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, the dog spoke, “O Nuh! Are you finding fault with my form? Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى made me like this. If I had a choice to create myself, would I have been a dog? As for the Maker, no fault is found in Him.” On hearing this, Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was overcome with fear. He began crying and weeping before Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. From that time, he was known as Nuh (one who wails). (*Nuzhatul-Majalis from Haqaiq*)²⁰

2.) BACKBITING OF CLOTHING

This is when someone speaks of someone’s clothing in a disparaging manner. A few examples are mentioned below,

So-and-so is very stingy. He wears clothing of stingy people.

He wears prohibited clothing e.g. he wears silken clothing, he wears his trouser beneath his ankles.

She wears her scarf in such a way that her sarf is still exposed.

She walks in such a way that her private areas are exposed.

Incident: Once Aishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, “A certain lady’s dress is very long.” Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “(You have backbitten.) Spit out! Spit out!” When I spat, a piece of meat emerged. (*At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb*)²¹

One of the previous scholars used to say,

ذُكِرَ عَنْ بَعْضِ الْمُتَقَدِّمِينَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: لَوْ قُلْتُ إِنَّ فَلَانًا ثَوْبُهُ قَصِيرٌ أَوْ ثَوْبُهُ طَوِيلٌ يَكُونُ غِيْبَةً

¹⁹ *Ihya-Uloomid-Deen* vol. 3 page 143

²⁰ *Nuhatul-Majaalis Baabul-Adab* page 80 vol. 1

²¹ *At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb* no. 4288, *Dhammul-Gheebah* wan-Nameemah of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 78

“If you say that a certain persons clothing is too short or too long (looking down on him,) then this is backbiting.” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²²

3.) BACKBITING OF THE FAMILY LINEAGE

This is when a person says disparagingly, “The family lineage of a certain person, family or city is not noble. Their forefathers were lowly. Their family lineage is not known.”

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

لَيْسَ لِأَحَدٍ عَلَى أَحَدٍ فَضْلٌ إِلَّا بِالْدِّينِ أَوْ عَمَلٍ صَالِحٍ

No person has virtue over another except by religion and noble actions.²³

Therefore, to be proud over one’s lineage and to regard the lineage of others as lowly is evil. Allamah Abdul-Wahhaab Sha’rani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ narrated this hadeeth in Kashful-Ghummah an Ahwalil-Ummah in the chapter of the prohibition of looking down on people. In-sha-Allaah, more will be written regarding this later.

4.) BACKBITING OF HABITS

Examples of this are:

He is impotent.

He is very weak.

He sleeps a lot.

He eats a lot.

He cannot do any work.

He does not think of the consequences of his actions.

He is extremely foolish.

He takes advice from women.

He always obeys his wife.

He causes harm to people.

Incident: It was the habit of the Arabs to serve one another during travels. Once, a man accompanied Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to serve them. At one place,

²² Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 161 no. 204

²³ Musnad Ahmad no. 17313, Shuabul-Imaan no. 4782

they fell asleep. After awakening, they found that he had not prepared their food. They remarked, “This person sleeps too much.” They woke him up and sent him to Rasulullaah ﷺ, saying, “Abu Bakr and Umar convey salaams to you. They are requesting for some food.” Rasulullaah ﷺ replied, “Convey my salaams to them and inform them that they have already eaten.” When they heard this, they became worried and rushed to Rasulullaah ﷺ asking him what had they eaten. He ﷺ said, “The flesh of your brother. By Him in whose control my life lies, I see his flesh between your teeth.” Immediately they asked Rasulullaah ﷺ to seek forgiveness on their behalf, to which he replied, “Ask him to seek forgiveness on your behalf.” (*Durre-Manthoor quoting from Dhiyaa Maqdisi*)²⁴

Incident: Some Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ said regarding a certain person that he is weak. Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “You have backbitten him and eaten his flesh.” This incident will be mentioned later in detail.

Incident: Once the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ mentioned regarding a certain man in the presence of Rasulullaah ﷺ, “He will not eat until he is fed. He will not mount an animal, unless he is given one (in other words, he is completely dependent on others, he cannot do any work.)” Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “You have backbitten your brother.” The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ said, “We have only mentioned that which is found in him.” Rasulullaah ﷺ remarked, “It is sufficient (as backbiting) when you mention a fault which is within him.” (*At-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb*)²⁵

Incident: Once Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were on a journey with Rasulullaah ﷺ. They sent someone to request meat from Rasulullaah ﷺ, who remarked, “Have you not eaten meat to your fill?” They replied, “From where? By Allaah! For many days, we have not eaten any meat.” Rasulullaah

²⁴ Al-Ahaadeethul-Mukhtarah of Dhiyaa Maqdis no. 1697

²⁵ Sharhus-Sunnah no. 3562, Az-Zuhd war-Raqaa'iq of Ibnul-Mubaarak no. 705

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “From the flesh of your brother which you had consumed.” They exclaimed, “By Allaah! We only said that he is weak and does not assist us in the least.” Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commented, “Do not even say this.” (Tirmidhi in Nawaadirul-Usool and Allamah Suyuti in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)²⁶

Incident: One high-ranking pious person joked with a young girl. When people heard of this, they began to criticize this person. On hearing their criticism, he remarked, “I am surprised. According to people, it is forbidden to joke, but permissible to backbite.” (This incident will in-sha-Allaah be mentioned later.)

Incident: Once Salman Farsi رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ ate and went to sleep. Two people passed comments regarding the manner he ate and slept. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى revealed the following verse:

وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا

Do not backbite one another. (Hujuraat verse 12)

This verse establishes the prohibition of backbiting. (Ad-Durrul-Manthoor narrated by Ibn Juraij)²⁷

5.) BACKBITING OF ACTS OF WORSHIP AND SIN

This is when one mentions somebody else’s deficiency in acts of worship.

Examples of this are:

He does not perform salaah properly.

He does not perform tahajjud.

He does not perform nafl salaah.

He performs salaah in makrooh times.

He is deficient in his fasts in Ramadhan.

Incident: Once Shaikh Sa’di backbited regarding some people asleep at tahajjud time and said, “How nice if they also performed salaah at this time!” His father said to him, “How nice if you were also sleeping so that you could have been saved

²⁶ Nawaadirul-Usool vol.1 page 283

²⁷ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 570

from speaking ill of them!" (This incident will in-sha-Allaah be mentioned in detail later in the book.)

Incident: One person had backbitten another. He then said, "I hate him." When the person came to know, he went to Rasulullaah ﷺ and explained that the other had complained about him. "Call him and be just with us." Rasulullaah ﷺ sent for him and asked him the reason for his hate. He replied, "I am his neighbour. He only performs the five times salaah, he does not fast except in Ramadhaan, and he gives no charity besides his zakaat. For this reason, I dislike him." When the other man heard this, he spoke, "O Rasulullaah! Ask him if I show any deficiency in my fardh acts?" When Rasulullaah ﷺ asked the other, he replied in the negative saying, "O Rasulullaah! He does not show any deficiency in the faraa'idh. He performs them properly. However since he performs no optional acts of worship, I am upset with him." Rasulullaah ﷺ then said to the one who had backbitten, "Perhaps this person will be better than you in the hereafter. Therefore, it is not correct that you harbour enmity and speak ill of him." (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)²⁸

6.) BACKBITING OF SIN

Examples of this are:

He fornicated.

He backbites.

He has a lot of jealousy and enmity.

He has a bad habit of lying.

He causes much harm to his parents.

He breaks off family ties.

He is vulgar in his speech.

He always drinks alcohol.

He steals a lot.

²⁸ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 141, Musnad Ahmad no. 23803

Incident: Once Sheikh Sa'di said to his teacher, "A contemporary is jealous over me." His teacher retorted, "O Sa'di, is jealousy forbidden according to you and backbiting permissible that you speak ill of him before me?" (This incident will be mentioned later on in-sha-Allaah)

Fine point: According to the ahlus-sunnah, no one besides the ambiyaa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام are sinless. Every person has some weakness or the other. Some have jealousy, whilst others have enmity, carrying of tales, backbiting, lying, stealing, fornication or some other weakness. No person is free from faults. Therefore, it is incorrect to backbite due to any fault found within a person, since the person backbiting also possesses some fault. Therefore, when he sees a person involved in sin, he should make duaa to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى for the guidance of that person, and desire for himself the ability to abstain from that sin. It is incorrect to disgrace him because of that sin and to laugh at him, since it is possible that he has already repented, or he has the desire to repent. In fact, one should make shukr (be grateful) to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى for saving him from the sin. Whenever the thought of another person's sin comes to mind, then one should think of his own sins, so that he is saved from the sin of bad thoughts.

Statement of sahaabi: Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

يَحْسِبُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مِنَ الْعَيِّ أَنْ يُؤْذِيَ جَلِيسَهُ فِيمَا لَا يَغْنِيهِ، وَأَنْ يَجِدَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِمَا يَأْتِي، وَأَنْ يَظْهَرَ لَهُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ

Three qualities are sufficient for the misguidance of a believer. 1. He causes difficulty to his companions for no reason. 2. He finds faults in people in those actions which he himself does. 3. He finds faults in others but is blind to his own faults. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²⁹

Statement of a nabi: Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said,

لَا تُكْثِرُوا الْكَلَامَ بِغَيْرِ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ، فَتَقْسُو قُلُوبَكُمْ، فَإِنَّ الْقَلْبَ الْقَاسِيَ بَعِيدٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ، وَلَكِنْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ، وَلَا تَنْظُرُوا فِي ذُنُوبِ النَّاسِ كَأَنَّكُمْ أَرْبَابٌ، وَانْظُرُوا فِيهَا كَأَنَّكُمْ عِبِيدٌ، فَإِنَّمَا النَّاسُ مُبْتَلَى، وَمُعَاقٍ، فَارْحَمُوا أَهْلَ الْبَلَاءِ، وَاحْمَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى الْعَافِيَةِ.

²⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 381 no. 571, Shuabul-Imaan no. 4642

Do not speak much without the remembrance of Allah for you will harden your hearts. A hard heart is far from Allah, but you do not know. Do not look at the wrong actions of people as if you were lords. Look at your wrong actions as if you were slaves. Some people are afflicted by wrong actions and some people are protected from it. Be merciful to the people of affliction and praise Allah for His protection. (Muwatta Imam Maalik)³⁰

To ridicule any person due to his sins, and to regard him to be destined to Hell is contrary to Divine pleasure. In fact, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى becomes angry on the person who shames another. He تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى then reverses the roles. He تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgives the sinner and disgraces this person.

Incident: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “There were two men among the Bani Isra'il, who were friends. One of them would commit sin and the other would strive to do his best in worship. The man who exerted himself in worship continued to see the other in sin. He would say, “Refrain from it.” One day he found him in sin and said to him, “Refrain from it.” The sinner remarked, “Leave me alone with my Sustainer. Have you been sent as a watchman over me?” The worshipper said, “I swear by Allaah, Allaah will not forgive you, nor will he admit you to Jannah. Then their souls were taken back (by Allaah), and they met together with the Sustainer of the worlds.

He (Allaah) said to this man who had exerted himself in worship; “Did you have knowledge about Me, or had you power over that which I had in My hand? He said to the man who sinned, “Go and enter Jannah by My mercy.” He said about the other, “Take him to Hell (for punishment over his pride, not forever).”

Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “By Him in Whose hand my soul is, he spoke a word by which this world and the next world of his were destroyed.” (Abu Dawood)³¹

Incident: When Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام came down to earth from the heavens, his body became black (due to the error he had committed by eating from the forbidden

³⁰ Muatta Imam Maalik no. 3615

³¹ Abu Dawood no. 4901

fruit). Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى commanded him to build a house and make tawaaf around it, so that he could be forgiven. Whilst building the Ka'bah, Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام brought the Hajr-Aswad, which was white. When Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام saw this, he began to cry. The Hajr said to him, "O Adam, you had done this to yourself when you ate from the tree." Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said, "O my Sustainer, everything, including the Hajr, is taunting me." Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى transferred the whiteness of the Hajr to his body, and the black colour of Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to the Hajr." (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)³²

e.) Backbiting openly and indistinctly

In this aspect, backbiting is of four types:

1.) Clearly – This is by taking a person's name and speaking ill of him or complaining regarding him.

2.) Imitation – This is by imitating some-one's quality. A few examples are:

To imitate someone's style of walking if he is crippled

To imitate someone's speech if he has a stutter or if he is dumb

To close ones eyes and walk around imitating a blind person

To take out one's chest and walk around imitating the walk of a proud person

To imitate a person who shakes his head, hand etc. whilst talking

Hadeeth – Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَا أُحِبُّ أَنْيَ حَكَيْتُ أَحَدًا وَأَنْ لِي كَذَا وَكَذَا

"I do not like to imitate anyone, even if I gain so much of the world." (Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood)³³

Incident: Once Aa'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا imitated another person. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ remarked, "I do not like that someone be imitated, even if I gain a huge portion of the world." (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)³⁴

³² Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 179

³³ Tirmidhi no. 2503, Abu Dawood no. 4875

³⁴ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 131, Tirmidhi no. 2502

3.) Indication – Apparently a person is not backbiting about a specific person, and he does not take any person's name, however due to certain indications, others know that a specific person's faults are being mentioned. Examples of this are where a person says:

Some people who come to us have these evil qualities.

Some people are such that they are in reality ignorant. One such person is famously known as Muhammad Faadhil.

Some people sit for i'tikaaf and purposely break their i'tikaaf.

Some people wear a kurta and turban very nicely, but quietly engage in adultery.

Some people disobey their parents and obey their wives.

Some people are as black as this wall.

Some people's body gives off an offensive smell (after visiting a sick person).

Some people perspire and have a bad smell.

Some gatherings are such that all those present are sinners.

Some people are stingy or evil (after discussing a certain person).

In all these cases, the people present know who is being addressed.

In short, this is a form of backbiting where a person feigns ignorance, but the people around understand by certain signs that a particular person is referred to.

4.) Hinting – Outwardly a person says one thing, but people understand that he is referring to a certain person e.g. when a person is mentioned, another says,

"All praise to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى who has saved me from sins."

"I do not fornicate."

"Pride is very evil."

"Trimming the beard is prohibited."

"Not performing Fajr Salaah with jama'at is a sin."

The object is so that people know he is involved in these actions.

f.) Backbiting with the tongue, ears, heart, limbs and pen

TONGUE – Rasulullaah ﷺ said to certain people, "Pick your teeth." These people said, "O Rasulullaah! We have not eaten today." Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "I see a certain person's flesh between your teeth." In reality, they had

backbited regarding one person. (Abd Ibn Humaid has narrated this which Allamah Suyuti has quoted in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)³⁵

Incident: Abdullah ibn Masood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates, “We were by Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. A man stood up and went away. Thereafter, a person spoke ill of him. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ told him to pick his teeth, to which he replied, “What should I pick from my teeth? I have not eaten any meat.” Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ remarked, “You have eaten the flesh of your brother.” (Tabaraani has narrated this as quoted by Allamah Mundhiri in At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb))³⁶

Incident: Once Ibn Seereen رَحِمَهُ اللهُ made mention of Ibrahim Nakhai رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. People did not know who he was speaking about, so he placed one hand on his eye so that the people will understand that he is referring to Ibrahim who is one-eyed. He did not want to say so verbally. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)³⁷

EARS – This is when one hears someone backbiting and he does not defend the person. Keeping quiet is the same as backbiting. Sa’di رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has stated, “If you are intelligent, then never attempt to disobey the Being who has bestowed you with eyes, a mouth and ears.”

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

وَأَخْرِجْ ابْنَ أَبِي الدُّنْيَا عَنْ أُنْسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِذَا وَقَعَ فِي الرَّجُلِ وَأَنْتَ فِي مَلَأٍ فَكُنْ لِلرَّجُلِ نَاصِرًا
وَلِلْقَوْمِ زَاجِرًا وَقِمْ عَنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ {أَلَيْبُ أَحَدِكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ}

If you are in a gathering and a person is dishonoured, then be an assistant to that person (by praising him), prevent those people and go away from there. Then Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ recited the following verse, “Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You dislike this.”³⁸

³⁵ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 571

³⁶ Al-Mu’jamul-Kabeer of Tabraani no. 10092

³⁷ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 144

³⁸ Dhammul-Gheebah-wan-Nameemah of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 106, As-Samt no. 242

Incident – Maymoon ibn Siyah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ states, “Whilst I was sleeping, I saw the corpse of a Negro person and someone telling me to eat him. I asked, “O servant of Allaah! Why must I eat?” He replied, “Because you engaged in backbiting the slave of so-and-so.” I said, “By Allaah! I did not mention any good or evil regarding him.” He then said, ‘However you heard others backbiting him and you were pleased with it.’ Maymoon would thereafter never speak ill of any person, and he would not allow others to backbite before him.” (Ma’alimut-Tanzeel)³⁹

HEART – This is when one harbours ill thoughts regarding a righteous Muslim without any proof. More will be mentioned about this soon, in-sha Allah.

LIMBS – This is to point out the fault of another by ones limbs like the hands, eyes, etc. For example, if a person stands up from a gathering, and you make a sign by your hands, eyes or lips towards him so that people come to know of his faults; or if someone is praised and you shake your head.

Incident: A woman of short height came to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ whilst he was sitting. After she left Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا made a sign with her thumb to Rasulllaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (indicating that she was short). Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “O Aa’ishah, you have backbitten her.” (Durre-Manthoor quoting from Bayhaqi)⁴⁰

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “

مَا يَجِلُّ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَشْتَدَّ إِلَى أَخِيهِ - أَوْ قَالَ: يَشْدَدَ إِلَى أَخِيهِ - بِنَظَرَةٍ تُؤْذِيهِ

*It is not permissible for a Muslim to gaze at his brother in such a manner that causes him difficulty. (Ihya-ul-Uloom)*⁴¹

Verse: Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ

Woe to every ‘humazah’ and ‘lumazah.’

³⁹ Tafseerul-Baghawi Surah Hujuraat verse 12

⁴⁰ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6403

⁴¹ Kitabuz-Zuhd of Ibnul Mubarak no. 689

There are many views as to who ‘humazah’ and ‘lumazah’ are.

Ibn Juraij: ‘Humazah’ refers to a person who causes harm to others by his eyes and hands. ‘Lumazah’ refers to a person who causes harm verbally. (*Durre-Manthoor*)

Sufyan Thawri: ‘Humazah’ refers to a person who causes harm to others verbally.

‘Lumazah’ refers to a person who causes harm to others with his eyes. (*Baghawī*)

Ibn Kaysaan: ‘Humazah’ refers to a person who causes harm to those who sit by him verbally. ‘Lumazah’ refers to a person who makes a sign with his eyebrows.

(*Hashiyatul-Jamal*) More explanation of this verse will be mentioned later on in sha Allaah.

Incident: When Rasulullaah ﷺ was taken for Mi’raaj, he passed by men whose skins were being cut by scissors made of fire. Rasulullaah ﷺ asked Jibreel ﷺ as to who these people were. He replied that they were those who used to beautify themselves to commit fornication. Then he ﷺ passed by a hole from which emitted a very bad smell, and in which he ﷺ could hear frightening sounds. When he ﷺ asked Jibreel ﷺ as to who they were, he replied, “The women of your ummah who used to beautify themselves to commit fornication and they used to commit actions not permissible for them.” Then Rasulullaah ﷺ passed by women and men suspended by their breasts. When asked as to who they were, Jibreel ﷺ answered, “Those who used to mock others by making signs with their eyes and limbs.” (*At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb*)⁴²

PEN – This refers to writing e.g. writing the faults of another in a letter, publishing the faults of a person in a newspaper, exposing the faults of contemporaries in one’s books with the intention of degrading them.

Note: Imam Ghazali رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in *Ihyaaul-Uloom*, Safoori رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in *Nuzhatul-Majalis*, Faqih Abul-Laith رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in *Tambee hul-Ghaafileen* and Rafindi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in *Seerat-Ahmadiyyah* have mentioned the types of backbiting very briefly. Certain types were mentioned, whilst others were mentioned with very little detail. This author

⁴² Shuabul-Imaan no. 6326

has mentioned this in great detail and very clearly so that people can benefit and can come onto the path of guidance, as many people due to ignorance fall into this sin, not being able to differentiate between permissible and impermissible. Since some scholars are afflicted with this sickness, they do not advise others. In fact, at times they cannot even differentiate between right and wrong. For this reason, when someone who is backbiting is told to refrain therefrom, they utter, "This is not backbiting." If a person has knowledge and believes backbiting to be correct, then he is a disbeliever. If he does not know and he utters such a statement, then he is worthy of being punished and censured. However today, even those who are supposed to censure others are in need of being censured. They are whiling away their lives.

Now, let us proceed to the next chapter, since the details mentioned above are sufficient for an intelligent person.

CHAPTER THREE – TIMES WHEN BACKBITING IS PERMITTED

This chapter will discuss certain situations in which the Shariah has permitted backbiting and in some cases, one will actually be rewarded for doing so.

Imam Nawawi in Sharh Muslim, Imam Ghazali رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in Ihyaul-Uloom and Keemiyae-Sa'aadat, Safoori رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in Nuzhatul-Majaalis, the author of Mataalibul-Mu'mineen and Balkhi in Ainul-Mu'mineen have mentioned six occasions when backbiting is permissible. Ibn Aabideen Shaami has added another four occasions making it a total of ten. The author has added another three, making it a total of thirteen. I will mention all of them with reasons for it being permissible.

1. Complaining of oppression to a higher authority

If a judge, mufti or ruler oppresses a person, then it is permissible to complain to a higher authority so that one can receive the rights due to him. If the person does not complain, then his rights will be destroyed. It is also possible that the higher authority will remove the oppressor so that others are saved from his evil. Therefore, it is permissible to backbite in this instance, as these benefits will be attained.

Statement of the pious: Shu'bah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

الشَّكَايَةُ وَالنَّحْدِيرُ لَيْسَا مِنَ الْغِيْبَةِ

*To complain of an oppressor and to warn people of the evil of a sinner is not included in backbiting.*⁴³

Allamah Suyuti رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has quoted this statement in Durre-Manthoor from Bayhaqi. This is one of the six occasions in which Imam Ghazali, Safoori, Balkhi and the author of Mataalibul-Mu'mineen are unanimous that it is permissible to backbite.

Verse: Allaah تَبَارَكَوَتَعَالَى states,

لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ

Allaah does not like expressing of any evil statement, except the one who is oppressed.

⁴³ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6372

Fine point: The meaning of this verse is that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will punish those who expose the evil of others.

Jahr bis Su can refer to a curse as Imam Razi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ has quoted in Tafseer Kabeer from Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. This means that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى does not like one to curse another unless he has been oppressed. It will be permissible for him to curse his oppressor.

Jahr bis Su can also refer to exposing a person's faults, as Baghawi has quoted from Mujaahid رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

Both meanings can also be taken, as is mentioned in Jalaalain. Therefore, the meaning of the verse is that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will punish a person who exposes the faults of another or curses another, unless he is being oppressed. For example, one can complain to a higher authority if someone has stolen his wealth, usurped his wealth or was treacherous in some trust given to him.

Incident: A man was hosted by some people in Madeenah Munawwarah. They did not host him properly. He complained of their treatment towards him to some people. Some became upset as to why he complained. This verse was then revealed. (Permission was granted to the oppressed to complain of the treatment meted out to him.) (*Tafseer-Mazhari quoting from Abdur-Razzaaq and Abd ibn Humaid*)⁴⁴

Incident – A man from the Kindah tribe and another from Hadharamaut went to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to dispute regarding a piece of land in Yemen. The Hadhrami said, "O Rasulullaah! This man's father usurped my land. It is now in his hands." (Then Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ passed a decision after following the Shar'i procedure of a court case.) (*Abu Dawood*)⁴⁵

2. Correcting of one's faults

If a person is involved in a sin or he possesses some weakness, then it is permissible to inform that person who will be able to stop him from that wrongdoing or will

⁴⁴ Tafseer Mazhari vol. 2 page 266

⁴⁵ Abu Dawood no. 3622

be able to advise him. This is because the one spoken about will benefit as it will lead to him abstaining from this action. Examples of this are:

- A person informs the father regarding some weakness found within his son or he informs some person of authority so that this person can abstain from his evil
- A person informs the Sultan that the judge is accepting bribes so that he can either stop him or dismiss him

This occasion has been mentioned in Mataalibul-Mu'mineen, Ainul-Ilm, Raddul-Mukhtaar, Tanweerul-Absaar, Ihyaul-Uloom, Nuzhatul-Majaalis, Sharh of Muslim by Imam Nawawi and Muntakhabun-Nafaais.

Incident: Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had appointed Sa'd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as governor of Kufa. The people of Kufa complained against Sa'd to `Umar and the latter dismissed him and appointed `Ammar as their governor. They lodged many complaints against Sa'd and they even alleged that he did not perform salaah properly. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ sent for him and said, "O Abu 'Is-haq! These people claim that you do not perform salaah properly." Sa'd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "By Allaah, I used to perform salaah with them similar to that of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and I never reduced anything of it. I used to prolong the first two rak`at of `Isha prayer and shorten the last two rak`at." `Umar said, "O Abu 'Is-haq, this was what I thought about you." (Bukhaari)⁴⁶

From this incident, we learn that it is permissible to complain of a person's faults so that he can be corrected. If this was not so, then the people of Kufa would not have complained; and if they did so, Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would not have heard their complaint, since listening to backbiting is similar to backbiting.

Hadeeth:

المغتتاب والمستمع شريكان في الإثم

The person listening to backbiting partners the backbiter (in sin.)

(Khizaanatur-Riwaayaat)⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Bukhaari no. 755

⁴⁷ Could not locate elsewhere. Mentioned in Ihya, but Allamah Iraqi did not make takhreej.

Incident: Umair, the freed slave of Abul-Lahm, said, “My master commanded me to cut some meat in strips; (as I was doing it) a poor man came to me, and I gave him some of it to eat. My master came to know of that, and he beat me. I came to Rasulullaah ﷺ and narrated it to him. He ﷺ summoned him and asked, “Why did you beat him?” My master replied, “He gives away my food without being commanded to do so.” Upon this Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “The reward would be shared by you two.” (Muslim)⁴⁸

Obedience to parents – Incident: Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says that he was married to a certain woman, and he loved her greatly. However Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ disliked her. He commanded me to divorce her, but I refused to do so. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went to Nabi ﷺ and mentioned this incident to him. Nabi ﷺ told me to divorce her. (Abu Dawood)⁴⁹

Advice: From this hadeeth, we can understand the importance of obedience to parents. For this reason, in many places in the Noble Qur’aan, there is emphasis to obey ones parents. Severe warnings are mentioned for those who are disobedient to their parents. Therefore, it is necessary for every person not to be deficient in serving and obeying them.

Incident: There was an extremely sinful person in Basrah. His mother would always prohibit him from evil ways, but he would not stop. She used to attend the gatherings of Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and narrate to her son his statements to create fear within him. When the son was about to pass away, he said to his mother, “O my mother, go to Hasan Basri and ask him to come here so that he can teach me how to repent. When she conveyed the message to Hasan Basri, he refused to go there and was not prepared to perform the Janaazah salaah. She returned broken-hearted and informed her son of Hasan’s answer. He said, “O my mother! When my soul emerges, place a rope around my neck and drag me on my face in the house. Say, “This is the punishment for the servant who disobeyed his Sustainer.”

⁴⁸ Muslim no. 1025

⁴⁹ Abu Dawood no. 5138

Then make my grave in the house, so that the other deceased are not caused inconvenience by me, as the living were.” When she placed the rope, she heard a caller calling out, “Be gentle with the friend of Allaah.” She then buried him in the house. Suddenly she heard a knock on the door. She asked, “Who is at the door?” The reply came, “Hasan Basri. I saw Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in a dream. He said to me, “O Hasan, you are making My servants lose hope in My mercy, and you are closing the path in My servant’s face. By My Honour and Greatness, I have forgiven him, and I will enter him in Jannah.” (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)⁵⁰

Lesson: From this incident, we learn that when the oceans of Divine Mercy flow, then every sin is forgiven. This person was extremely sinful, however Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgave him. The reason for this was that he was overcome by fear at the time of death and his body began shaking due to this fear. Therefore, man should not only repose trust in the forgiveness and mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, but he should also look towards the grandeur and might of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Salaam: Once Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ made salaam to Uthmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, who did not reply. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ informed Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ about this and asked him to advise Uthmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to reply to the salaam. Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ heard this complaint and accordingly advised Uthmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. (Sharh of Ainul-Ilm by Mulla Ali Qari)⁵¹

Lesson: We learn from here that it is necessary to reply to salaam, or else Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would not have complained and would not have felt hurt. The ruling is that to make salaam is sunnah-muakkadah, but to reply to it is fardh-kifaayah. If even one person in a gathering replies, then the responsibility will fall off the remaining people.

Advice: In this era, salaam has been completely abandoned. People are in the habit of merely raising their hands. It is regarded as a defect amongst the wealthy and the women folk. If any person makes salaam to a wealthy person, he becomes

⁵⁰ Vol. 2 page 43

⁵¹ Also in Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 152

extremely angry, and at times attempts to punish the person who greeted him. If a woman makes salaam, other women mock her and even become angry at her, not knowing that mocking any part of Deen and looking down upon it is kufr.

Incident: When the news reached Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Abu Jandal had become a habitual drinker in Sham, Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ wrote a letter to him in which these verses of the Qur'aan were written,

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم حم تنزيل الكتاب من الله العزيز العليم غافر الذنب وقابل التوب شديد العقاب

In the name of Allaah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate. Haa-Meem. This Book has been revealed from Allaah, the Powerful, the Knowledgeable, the Forgiver of sins, Acceptor of repentance, severe in punishment...

When Abu Jandal received this letter, he repented. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)⁵²

Incident: When Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ received the news of the death of Zaid Ibn Harithah, Ja'far and Ibn Rawaha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, he sat down and looked sad, and I was looking at him through the chink of the door. A man came and told him about the crying of the women of Ja'far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ordered him to forbid them. The man went and came back saying that he had told them, but they did not listen to him. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Forbid them." So again he went and came back for the third time and said, "O Allaah's Messenger! By Allaah, they did not listen to us at all." (Aa'isha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا added), Allaah's Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ordered him to go and put dust in their mouths." (Bukhaari)⁵³

Lesson: Wailing over the deceased is prohibited. When a person passes away, he feels sorrowful over his life which he wasted therefore, at this time, such work should be done which will be of benefit to the deceased. Crying does not benefit the deceased in the least bit. In fact, Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was of the view that the deceased is punished by the wailing. By wailing, a person's impatience and lack of intelligence becomes apparent. Therefore, when a person passes away and people begin crying, then Izraaeel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام stands at the door and says, "O people! Why are

⁵² Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 152

⁵³ Bukhaari no. 1299

you crying? We have not oppressed him. When his appointed time came, we took away his soul.”

Advice: Today, people exceed the bounds in crying. This is more-so found in women. Even more surprising is that the men do not stop the womenfolk, but even participate in their wailing. They sit at the head side of the deceased and cry uncontrollably. When they are prevented, they become upset and say to those prohibiting them, “You do not know what we are going through.” There is a famous saying, “Only that person can understand the calamity who is afflicted by it.” The person does not even think whether his action is permissible or not. There is no problem if one sheds tears on the demise of a close one, but shouting and wailing is prohibited. Women too should be prohibited from doing so. Rather perform righteous deeds and send the reward to the deceased. One should not waste his valuable time.

Virtue of making salaam first: It was the practice of Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to make salaam first to Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Once, Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ turned away and Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ made salaam (to which Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) replied. When Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was informed of Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ’s action, he صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked him the reason for doing so. He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ answered, “Last night, I saw in a dream a beautiful palace. I asked as to who it belonged to. I was told that it was for the person who initiated the salaam. Therefore I wished to give preference to Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ over myself in gaining this palace.” (*Nuzhatul-Majaalis*⁵⁴, quoting from Ibn Abi Jamarah in his commentary of Bukhaari)

Prohibition of the imam reciting lengthy qiraat:

Incident: It was the habit of Mu’adh ibn Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to recite lengthy surahs as imam. Once he recited Surat Baqarah in Isha salaah. A man turned away and performed salaah alone. The people asked him, “Have you become a hypocrite?” He replied, “I did not become a hypocrite.” He then went to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and said (to him), “O Messenger of Allah, ...Muadh leads us in salaah. We look after camels used for watering and work by day. He came to us leading us in salaah, and

⁵⁴ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 212

he recited Surah Baqarah. He ﷺ said, “O Mu’adh, are you a troublemaker? Recite Surah A’laa and Surah Al-Layl (i.e. do not recite lengthy surahs).” (Abu Dawood)⁵⁵

Guidance: From this hadeeth, we learn that an imam should not lengthen his qiraat, since some of the followers are weak and some are ill. By lengthening the qiraat, difficulty is caused to them, which is disliked. However, as far as possible, one should not recite less than the masnoon qiraat, unless there is some necessity. This is what Rasulullaah ﷺ would do.

Advice: People in these times have a bad habit. When they perform salaah individually, they perform their ruku, sajdah and qiraat very quickly. In Fajr and Zuhr salaah, they suffice on reciting surahs like Surah Burooj and Taariq, whereas the masnoon qiraat for Fajr and Zuhr is from Surah Hujuraat till Surah Burooj. However, when they are imams, they lengthen their qiraat, reading far more than the masnoon qiraat, causing hardship to the followers. At times, the followers are standing in the sun, but the imams do not care. They should desist from this action and recite the masnoon qiraat which is:

Fajr and Zuhr – Surah Hujuraat till Surah Burooj

Asr and Esha – Surah Taariq till Surah Zilzaal

Maghrib – Surah Zilzaal till Surah Naas.

If the muqtadis (followers) find this burdensome, then short surahs should be recited.

Incident: A group of people in Sham started drinking alcohol. At that time, Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan was the governor of Sham. They said to him, “It is halaal for us because Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعَمُوا

There is no sin on those who believe and do good actions in that which they have eaten. (Maaidah verse 93)

⁵⁵ Abu Dawood no. 790 (See Bukhari no. 705, Muslim no. 465)

He complained of this to Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ via a letter. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ wrote back to him to send these people to him before they corrupt others. When they came, Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ gathered the companions of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and consulted with them as to what to do with these people. They said, “O Umar! They have fabricated against Allaah and have created in His deen that which Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى did not permit. Therefore, strike off their necks.” Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ remained quiet. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked him for his opinion. He replied, “Ask them to repent. If they do not repent, then kill them. If they repent, then lash them eighty times (for drinking).” Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked them to repent, which they did. He then gave them eighty lashes. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)⁵⁶

Incident: Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had a friend in Syria. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked a person who came from there regarding his condition. He replied, “He is the brother of Shaytaan. He commits major sins and even drinks.” Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to him, “When you intend going back, inform me.” He then wrote a letter to his friend, in which he wrote,

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم حم تنزيل الكتاب من الله العزيز العليم غافر الذنب وقابل التوب شديد العقاب

In the name of Allaah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate. Haa-Meem. This Book has been revealed from Allaah, the Powerful, the Knowledgeable, the Forgiver of sins, Acceptor of repentance, severe in punishment...

He then advised and reprimanded him. When his friend read the letter, he began crying and said, ‘Allaah has spoken the truth, and Umar is my well-wisher.’ He then repented and changed his life.⁵⁷

Important point: To mention the fault of another before someone who cannot prevent the person from wrongdoing is not correct, since there is no benefit in mentioning that fault.

Incident: A person spoke ill of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf before Ibn Sireen. Ibn Sireen became upset since he did not have the ability to advise Hajjaj. Therefore, there was no

⁵⁶ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 154 no. 194 (See also Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaibah no. 28409)

⁵⁷ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 184

benefit in speaking ill of Hajjaj before him. This incident will in-sha-Allaah be mentioned later.

3. Engendering shame in a person

If a person has some weakness, and someone else mentions it to a third person with this intention, that if the first person comes to know that the third person knows my weakness, then out of shame, he will abstain, then this is permissible. This can be deduced from certain incidents.

A person came to Rasulullaah ﷺ complaining of his neighbour. Rasulullaah ﷺ encouraged him to adopt patience. He came a second or a third time. Then Rasulullaah ﷺ told him to take his belongings and throw it in the street, which he did. When people asked him the reason, he informed them of his plight. People then began cursing his neighbour. The neighbour then came and said to him, "Take your goods back to your house, you will not see from me any action which you dislike." (Imam Ghazaali has mentioned this incident in *Ihya* in the chapter of the rights of neighbours.)⁵⁸

4. Asking a fatwa

If a person has to mention the fault of another whilst asking a mufti or alim a mas'alah, then there is no harm in this. For example, a person says to a mufti:

- A certain person does not spend on me.
- My father passed away. The executor has taken all the wealth for himself. He has not even given me one coat.
- A certain person sold his house. I have the right of pre-emption. Despite my request, he did not sell the house to me.

This occasion has been mentioned in *Ihya-ul-Uloom*, *Nuzhatul-Majaalis*, *Muntakhabun-Nafaais*, *Seerat-Ahmadiyyah*, *Mataalibul-Mu'mineen*, *Sharh of Muslim* by Imam Nawawi and *Raddul-Muhtaar*.

Incident: Abu Sufyan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ's wife complained to Nabi ﷺ about her husband that he is stingy and finds it difficult to spend. What should she do?

⁵⁸ Abu Dawood no. 5153, Ibn Hibban no. 520, Mustadrak of Haakim no. 7303

Rasulullaah ﷺ allowed her to take from his wealth without informing him according to necessity. (Bukhaari)⁵⁹

Incident: A woman complained to Rasulullaah ﷺ that her husband had slapped her. What is the ruling in this case? Rasulullaah ﷺ allowed her to slap her husband in retaliation. Immediately the following verse was revealed,

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ

Man is the overseer of women because Allaah has granted virtue to some over others and because they spend their wealth.

The woman returned without retaliating. (Ibn Abi Haatim has narrated this as mentioned in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)⁶⁰

Incident: Abdul-Hameed ibn Mahmood Al-Maghooli رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says, “We were sitting by Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ when some people came to him and said, “We had left for Hajj. When we reached a place called Dhaatus-Sifaah, one of our companions passed away. After burial preparations, we dug a grave for him, but we found a huge snake was sitting therein. We went to another place and dug a hole there. Again we found a snake sitting therein. We then dug a third grave and found the same thing. We left him and came to you (to find out what to do.)” Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ remarked, “This is due to the evil actions he used to commit. Go and bury him in one of the graves. By Allaah, if you have to dig up the whole earth, you will find the snake there. Then inform his people.”

We went and buried him. When we returned home, we went to his wife with certain of his possessions which were by us. We asked her as to what wrong he used to do. She replied, “He used to sell wheat. He would take out food for his family from there. Then he would place some sticks therein (to increase the weight.) (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)⁶¹

⁵⁹ Bukhari no. 5364

⁶⁰ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 2 page 512

⁶¹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol.1 page 50 no. 37, also see Amaali ibn Bushraan no. 1398.

Point of note: Even though it is permissible to take a specific person's name when asking a fatwa, it is best not to take a name, but to utilize an assumed name.

Incident: Uyaimir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had doubt that his wife had committed adultery. He went to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to ask the ruling. He asked, "O Rasulullaah! If a man finds another man with his wife, what must he do?" Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (understood that he was asking regarding his wife and) said, "A verse has been revealed regarding you and your wife. Bring her here (so that *liaan* could be done)." She was brought and they made *liaan*. (Muwatta Imam Maalik)⁶²

5. Informing of someone's condition

The author says, "It is correct to make apparent people's unpleasant qualities and evil actions before a nabi, scholar or pious person, so that something could be mentioned in this light regarding that person, just as the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ would mention certain evil qualities before Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. However the object was not to disgrace or bring down any Muslim but was so that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ on hearing of this condition would speak of this person's condition so that we could take lesson.

Incident: Once the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ mentioned that a woman was stingy. Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ explained that if the quality of stinginess is within her, then she will enter the Fire. (Imam Ghazaali has mentioned this incident in *Ihya* in the chapter of backbiting.)⁶³

Incident: Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that a bier was taken past the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ praised him. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "It is compulsory." Another bier was taken past and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ spoke ill of the person. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "It is compulsory." Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, 'May my parents be sacrificed for you!' A bier passed. He was praised, and you said, 'It is compulsory.' Another bier passed by, and you said, "It is compulsory." (What does this mean?) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, "The person who you praised, Jannah

⁶² Muwatta Imam Malik no. 1642, also narrated in Bukhari in many places and Muslim no. 1495

⁶³ Could not locate

is binding on him, and the person who you dispraised, the Fire is binding on him. You are the witnesses of Allaah on the earth.” (Ibn Majah)⁶⁴

Point of note: At this juncture, an objection arises that backbiting of a dead person is forbidden (as the details has passed before), since no one knows whether a person is accursed after death or in the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Therefore, how could the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا backbite this person? And why did Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ adopt silence on this backbiting? In answering this objection, people have fallen into error. Allaamah Azeezi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes in the commentary of Jaamius-Sagheer fi Hadeethil-Basheerin-Nadheer, “The correct answer is that the person whom the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ spoke ill of was amongst the open sinners (faasiq) during his lifetime. Therefore, they spoke ill of him, as backbiting of an open sinner is correct.” The author says, “There are two objections to this answer: Firstly, it is not clearly established that the deceased whom the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ spoke ill of was an open sinner. Therefore, this answer does not reach the level of conviction. Secondly, it is prohibited to speak ill of any deceased person, whether he was a sinner or pious person. Yes, to speak ill of an open sinner, to expose his faults and to make apparent his punishment after his demise so that people are warned is correct, as will be mentioned later in detail in-sha-Allaah. Here the object of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ was not to warn anyone. So, how was this backbiting correct? Therefore I say that the correct answer is that this backbiting of the sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ was not with the intention of disgracing him, but their objective was so that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ should mention something regarding this matter. That is why this backbiting was correct. And Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

Incident: A person remarked, ‘O Rasulullaah! A certain woman is well known due to her excessive salaah, fasting and charity. However, she harms her neighbours with her tongue.’ Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘She is in the Fire.’ He then said, ‘O Rasulullaah! Another woman is known for less (optional) fasts, charity and salaah.

⁶⁴ However, the above narration is mentioned in Bukhaari no. 1367 and Nasai no. 1932. A shorter version is in Ibn Majah no.1491. This narration is also mentioned in Muslim no.949 and Tirmidhi no. 1058 with slightly different wordings.

She only gives a small piece of cheese in charity. However, she does not verbally cause harm to her neighbours.” Rasulullaah ﷺ remarked, ‘She is in Jannah.’” (Imam Ahmad has narrated this as well as Khateeb Tabrezi in Mishkaat.)⁶⁵

Point: Some are of the opinion that in deeni matters, there is no harm in backbiting and exposing a person’s faults, since the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ spoke about the actions of people and made apparent their evil qualities. Many ahaadeeth are narrated in this regard. However, the correct view is that if backbiting is done with some benefit in front, then this will be correct, as the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ had done, or else it will not be correct. And Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

6. An open sinner

It is permissible to backbite an open sinner, with the intention of disgracing him. Examples of open sinning are non-performance of salaah, oppressing people, adultery, non-observance of fasting in Ramadhaan, etc. For this reason, the pious and the learned would speak ill of oppressive kings, as is seen in many incidents. (This type has been mentioned in Nuzhatul-Majaalis, Muntakhabun-Nafaais, Seerate-Ahmadiyah and Tambeehul-Ghaafileen.)

Statement: Sufyan ibn Uyainah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَيْسَتْ لَهُمْ غِيْبَةٌ الْإِمَامُ الْجَائِرُ وَالْفَاسِقُ الْمُعْلَنُ بِفِسْقِهِ وَالْمُبْتَدِعُ الَّذِي يَدْعُو النَّاسَ إِلَى بَدْعِهِ

*There are three types of people, regarding whom backbiting is correct: an oppressive king, an open sinner and an innovator who invites people towards his innovation. (Allaamah Suyuti رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has narrated this in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor from Bayhaqi)*⁶⁶

Hasan Basri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا غِيْبَةَ لَهُمْ صَاحِبُ الْهَوَى وَالْفَاسِقُ الْمُعْلَنُ بِفِسْقِهِ وَالْإِمَامُ الْجَائِرُ

⁶⁵ Musnad Ahmad no. 9675, Mishkaat no. 4992

⁶⁶ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6374

There are three types of people, regarding whom backbiting is correct: a person who follows his desires (an innovator), an open sinner and an oppressive king.

(Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)⁶⁷

Faqeeh Abul-Laith رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

الْغَيْبَةُ عَلَى أَرْبَعَةِ أَوْجُهٍ: فِي وَجْهِ هِيَ كُفْرٌ، وَفِي وَجْهِ هِيَ نِفَاقٌ، وَفِي وَجْهِ هِيَ مَعْصِيَةٌ، وَالرَّابِعُ مَبَاحٌ وَهُوَ مَاجُورٌ، فَأَمَّا الْوَجْهُ الَّذِي هُوَ كُفْرٌ فَهُوَ أَنْ يَغْتَابَ الْمُسْلِمَ، فَيَقَالَ لَهُ لَا تَغْتَابَ فَيَقُولُ لَيْسَ هَذَا غَيْبَةً وَأَنَا صَادِقٌ فِي ذَلِكَ. فَقَدْ اسْتَحَلَّ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى، وَمَنْ اسْتَحَلَّ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى صَارَ كَافِرًا نَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ. وَأَمَّا الْوَجْهُ الَّذِي هُوَ نِفَاقٌ، فَهُوَ أَنْ يَغْتَابَ إِنْسَانًا فَلَا يُسَمِّيهِ عِنْدَ مَنْ يَعْرِفُ أَنَّهُ يُرِيدُ مِنْهُ فَلَانًا، فَهُوَ يَغْتَابُهُ وَيَتَرَى مِنْ نَفْسِهِ أَنَّهُ مُتَوَرِّعٌ، فَهَذَا هُوَ لِلنِّفَاقِ. وَأَمَّا الَّذِي هُوَ مَعْصِيَةٌ، فَهُوَ أَنْ يَغْتَابَ إِنْسَانًا وَيُسَمِّيهِ وَيَعْلَمُ أَنَّهَا مَعْصِيَةٌ فَهُوَ عَاصٍ، وَعَلَيْهِ التَّوْبَةُ. وَالرَّابِعُ أَنْ يَغْتَابَ فَاسِقًا مُعْلِنًا بِفِسْقِهِ أَوْ صَاحِبَ بِدْعَةٍ فَهُوَ مَاجُورٌ، لِأَنَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ مِنْهُ إِذَا عَرَفُوا حَالَهُ.

Backbiting is of four types: a.) Disbelief (kufr): A person backbites. When he is told not to backbite, he says, 'This is not backbiting. I am truthful in this.' He has tried to make permissible that which Allaah prohibited. Whoever does so, he becomes a disbeliever. (May Allaah protect us!) b.) Hypocrisy (nifaaq): A person backbites another without naming him in front of those who know exactly who he is speaking about. So he is backbiting, but he feels that he is abstaining from backbiting. c.) Sin: A person backbites taking the other person's name and knowing that he is perpetrating a sin. So he is a sinner and repentance is compulsory on him. d.) A person backbites an open sinner or an innovator, so he will be rewarded, since people will be wary of this person when they know his condition.

The author says, 'Samarqandi has written this reason for the permissibility of backbiting an open sinner that people will stay away from his company and will be wary of him. That is why this backbiting is permissible. However, this reasoning is not complete, since it is permissible to backbite an open sinner whose condition is known to all and whom people stay away from.'

⁶⁷ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 153. However, this narration also is found in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor (vol. 7 page 577) quoting from Shuabul-Imaan (no. 6374) narrated by Sufyan ibn Uyainah.

So actually there are two reasons why it is permissible to backbite an open sinner:
a.) Perhaps the sinner will abstain from his wrongdoings when he comes to hear that people are speaking ill of him in their gatherings. Shame may overcome him. It is for this reason that it is makrooh to make salaam to a person who is an open sinner. This ruling is mentioned in the books of fiqh. The reason given is so that the sinner is forewarned, and he will dislike his action.

b.) An open sinner has no respect in the eyes of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The following has been narrated;

إِذَا مُدِّحَ الْفَاسِقُ غَضِبَ الرَّبُّ

When the open sinner is praised, Allaah becomes angry. (Bayhaqi has narrated this hadeeth, and it has been quoted in Mishkaat.)⁶⁸

Therefore, the servants too should not honour an open sinner. However, one should not exceed the bounds of the Shariah, but remain steadfast in the laws of the Shariah. For this reason, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ would mention the faults of the hypocrites and the disbelievers, and the righteous ulama would not honour the (sinful) rulers. And Allaah knows best!

Incident: Haroon Rasheed had excessive love for the ulama and would adopt the company of the righteous. When he became the khalifah, all the ulama came to congratulate him, except Sufyaan Thawri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. So Haroon wrote a letter to him stating, "O Sufyaan! I had friendship with you. Till now, I have not broken this rope of love. If I was not the Sultan, I would have come to you. When I have become the Sultan, people came to me, but you did not come. O Sufyaan! I have opened the Baitul-maal (public treasury) and I have given wealth to all. I am desirous of meeting you. Immediately come to me."

After writing this letter, he handed it to Abbaad Taaliqaani and sent him to Kufa. When Abbaad reached the masjid of Sufyaan, he found him engaged in salaah. He took the letter of Haroon Rashid and threw it before him. When Sufyaan Thawri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ completed his salaah, he did not show any respect to the letter. He threw it

⁶⁸ Shuabul-Imaan no. 4544

to one of his followers behind and told them to read it, saying, “I seek Allaah’s forgiveness that I touch something which an oppressor had touched with his hands.”

Someone opened the letter and read its contents. Sufyaan said, “Write a reply on the back of that letter.” Someone said, “O Abu Abdillaah! He is the khalifah. It is better if you write on a clean piece of paper.”

He replied, “Write to the oppressor on the back of that letter. If he had earned it from halaal sources, soon he will be rewarded for it. If he earned it from forbidden sources, soon he will burn with it. Nothing which an oppressor touched must remain by us, or else our deen will be corrupted by it.” When asked what to write, he said,

“Write: In the name of Allaah, the most Beneficient, the Most merciful. From the sinful servant, Sufyaan Thawri to the servant deluded by long hopes, Haroon Rasheed, for whom the sweet taste of imaan has been snatched away. O Haroon! I have broken the relationship of love and turned away from your love. You have not spent the wealth of the public treasury in its rightful places. You have wasted the wealth. On the Day of Judgement, you will have to testify before Allaah بَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى regarding it. Your reality will be exposed. O Haroon! You have left the company of the pious. You have lost the taste of imaan. You have chosen kingdom and have placed a great calamity on your neck. O Haroon! You are sitting on the throne. You have started using silken clothing. You like to be an oppressor, in fact you are the leader of the oppressors. O Haroon! What will be your condition when the people on the truth will surround you, will take away your righteous deeds and hand over to you their evil deeds? O Haroon! Remember these advices and fear Allaah! O Haroon! Do not write any letters to me. Don’t ever think of meeting me.”

Sufyaan then gave this letter to Abbaad, who handed it over to Haroon Rasheed. On seeing this letter, Haroon became fearful. Till his demise, he kept the letter by him. (Imam Ghazaali رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ has written this incident in the chapter of commanding the rulers with righteousness.)⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 353 - The incident has been mentioned here in brief.

Incident: Taus has narrated, “I was once sitting by Hajjaaj when a person shouted out labbaik loudly. Hajjaaj ordered that the man be brought before him. When he was brought forward, Hajjaaj asked him, “O person, where is your residence?” He replied, “In Yemen.” Hajjaaj then asked, “In what condition did you leave Muhammad ibn Yusuf (i.e. his brother).” Muhammad was the governor of Yemen. The man replied, “Muhammad ibn Yusuf is a big-sized person, handsome looking and he has the habit of wearing silken clothing and riding conveyances.” Hajjaaj said, “I am asking about his qualities.”

This person then began stating (clearly, without any fear), “I left him as an oppressor, obedient to the creation and disobedient to the Creator.”

Hajjaaj said, “Do you say this regarding him, whilst you know his relationship to me?”

The man asked, “Do you think his connection to you is greater than my rank in the sight of Allaah, since I testify to what Nabi ﷺ said and I am a delegate to His House?” Hajjaaj kept quiet, and the man left without taking permission.

Taus says, “I went after him and I said to him, “I wish to accompany you.”

The man said, “I have no love and respect for you. Were you not reclining on the pillows now, whereas I had seen people asking you for rulings in the Deen of Allaah?”

I said, “Hajjaaj is an oppressive ruler. He sent for me, and I came to him as you did.”

He said, “Then why were you reclining on the pillow in comfort? Why did you not advise him and ask him to fulfil the rights of those under him and to abstain from causing abuse to others? You should not have sat comfortably with him.”

I said, “I seek the forgiveness of Allaah and turn to Him in repentance. I once again request to stay in your company.”

He answered, “May Allaah forgive you! I have a companion who has extreme possessiveness over me. If I become comfortable with another, He will leave me.”

He then turned away and left me. (*Allaamah Dameeri has mentioned this incident in Hayaatul-Hayawaan.*)⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Hayaatul-Hayawaan vol. 2 page 223, Al-Alwliya of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 88

Note: Backbiting of an open sinner is only permissible in matters of deen. For example, mention can be made that he abandons salaah, does not fast, backbites, kills people or fornicates. However, it is not correct to make mention of any faults found within the body, clothing or features of an open sinner, as these are not voluntary qualities. There is no benefit in speaking ill of them. This is clearly mentioned in Nuzhatul-Majaalis and Seerate-Ahmadiyah.

7. Protection

If a person is being caused harm by someone and he is not aware of this, then it is permissible to make mention of the person causing harm, so that people will be saved from his harm. This has been mentioned in Ihyaaul-Uloom, Nuzhatul-Majaalis, Seerate-Ahmadiyah, Aynul-Ilm, Tambeehul-Ghaafileen, Mataalibul-Mu'mineen, Durre-Mukhtaar and the commentary of Muslim. A few examples of this type are:

1.) A person is involved in sins discreetly. Some scholar or pious person sits in his company. There is a fear that if this scholar or pious person is not informed of his faults, they could become corrupted. Informing people of the faults of this person with this intention that people will stay away from his company is correct. For this reason, Rasulullaah ﷺ complained of certain people and even cursed some, so that people could be aware of their faults and stay away from their company.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

أَتْرَعُونَ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الْفَاجِرِ اهْتَكَوْهُ حَتَّى يَعْرِفَهُ النَّاسُ أَذْكُرُوهُ بِمَا فِيهِ حَتَّى يَحْذَرَهُ النَّاسُ

Do you abstain from mentioning the faults of the sinner? Expose his faults so that the people know. Mention the faults in him so that people can be wary of him.

(Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)⁷¹

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

⁷¹ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 153 - A similar narration is found in As-Samt (no. 220) and Dhammul-Gheebah wan-Nameemah (no. 83) of Ibn Abid-Dunya and a shorter version in Al-Mu'jamus-Sagheer of Tabaraani no. 598

اذكر الفاسق بما فيه يحذره الناس

Mention the faults of the open sinner so that people can beware of him. (This hadeeth has been narrated in Jawaahirut-Tafseer, Nuzhatul-Majaalis and Muntakhabun-Nafaais from Muhadhab)

2.) If a person harms others, then it is permissible to make apparent his fault that he is causing difficulty to others, or he carries tales and creates rifts between people. For this reason, when someone buys a slave, it is necessary to make apparent his weaknesses so that the buyer knows from beforehand and does not undergo difficulty.

Incident: When Abu Amr ibn Hafs رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ divorced Faatimah bint Qais رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, then Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and Abu Jahm sent a proposal to her. She discussed the matter with Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who said, 'Muawiyah is poor. Do not marry him. Abu Jahm hits his wives. He does remove his whip from his shoulders. Rather marry Usaamah ibn Zaid.' (This incident is mentioned in Jawaahirut-Tafseer)⁷²

Incident: Hammaad ibn Salimah narrates, "A man decided to purchase a particular slave. The owner agreed to sell him the slave, but warned, "He has one evil quality: he carries tales."

The buyer regarded this as a minor evil and agreed to the purchase. After the slave had been in his new employment for some time, he approached his master's wife and said, "Your husband does not love you. He is silently contemplating a second marriage. Would you like him to abandon his quest for a second wife and love you exclusively?"

"Yes," she replied. He continued, "Do as I tell you. Take a razor and, when he is asleep at night, cut a few strands of hair from his beard. Bring them to me so that I may cast a spell upon them which will reignite his love for you." When he was convinced that he had sowed the seeds of doubt in her heart, he approached her husband and said, "Your wife is an evil woman. She pretends to be honest, but she

⁷² Muslim no. 1480, Tirmidhi no. 1135, Nasai no. 3245

has befriended another man and is waiting for an opportunity to kill you. Would you like to see proof of this?"

The husband replied, "Yes."

The slave advised, "Tonight, pretend to be asleep. She will approach you with a razor and attempt to take your life."

That night, the husband pretended as if he was asleep. His wife approached him with a razor to cut some strands of hair from his beard. He assumed that his slave had spoken the truth and thought that she was about to kill him. He quickly overpowered her, snatched the razor from her hands and killed her. News of this spread to her family, who came and took his life. As a result, the tribes of the husband and wife became involved in a bitter conflict. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)⁷³

3.) If there is a court-case and the claimant brings forward witnesses, but the defendant knows of weaknesses in these witnesses, especially of lying, then he should make apparent this quality, so that a decision is not made contrary to the truth. And Allaah knows best.

Fine point: If a person is involved in discreet sins and no harm is being caused to others, then it is not permissible to backbite him and make apparent his faults. In fact, if any person makes apparent his faults, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will make apparent that person's faults before the people. For this reason, a person who has the habit of exposing other's faults and backbiting, then one should not befriend him and sit in his company.

Statement: Some elders have stated:

لا تصحب من الناس إلا من يكتفم سرّك ويستر عيبك فيكون معك في النوائب ويؤثرك بالرخائب وينشر حسناتك ويطوي سيئاتك فإن لم تجده فلا تصحب إلا نفسك

Do not sit with people except he who conceals your secret and hides your faults. He remains with you in difficulties. He gives preference to you with things he likes, he exposes your good and conceals your faults. If you cannot find anyone like this,

⁷³ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 158

then keep to yourself. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen in the chapter on qualities needed for companionship)⁷⁴

Zaid ibn Aslam said,

إِنَّمَا الْغَيْبَةُ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَعلُنْ بِالْمَعَاصِي

Backbiting is only regarding those who do not openly sin. (Durre-Manthoor)⁷⁵

This means that if one speaks ill of a person committing open sins, then this will not be regarded as backbiting.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ سَتَرَ عَوْرَةَ أَخِيهِ الْمُسْلِمِ سَتَرَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ وَمَنْ كَشَفَ عَوْرَةَ أَخِيهِ الْمُؤْمِنِ كَشَفَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ حَتَّى يَفْتَضَحَ بِهَا فِي بَيْتِهِ

He who conceals the faults of his Muslim brother, Allaah will conceal his faults on the Day of Qiyaamah. He who exposes the faults of his brother, Allaah will expose his faults, until He will disgrace him in his own house. (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)⁷⁶

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

لَا يَسْتُرُ عَبْدٌ عَبْدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا، إِلَّا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Whichever person conceals another person in this world, Allaah will conceal him on the Day of Judgement. (Muslim)⁷⁷

8. A shameless person

It is permissible to backbite an immoral person. This refers to a person full of faults. If someone speaks ill of him, he takes no effect. He has no shame. Actually, shame runs away from him.

For this reason, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ used to speak ill of the killers of Husain رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. They were shameless people, and they regarded their fault as an accomplishment.

⁷⁴ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 172

⁷⁵ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 577, Shuabul-Imaan no. 6376

⁷⁶ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 153, Ibn Majah no. 2546

⁷⁷ Muslim no. 2590

This is mentioned in Ihyaaul-Uloom, Aynul-Ilm, Seerate-Ahmadiyah, Durre-Mukhtaar, Raddul-Muhtaar and Mataalibul-Mu'mineen.

Hadeeth:

مَنْ أَلْقَى جَلْبَابَ الْحَيَاءِ فَلَا غِيْبَةَ لَهُ

He who throws down the covering of shame, then it is correct to backbite him.

(Abush-Shaikh has narrated it quoted by Mulla Ali Qari in Aynul-Ilm)⁷⁸

Statement of the pious: Shaikh Sa'di رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "It is correct to backbite three; a shameless person, an oppressive ruler and a person engaged in hidden sins, but he causes harm to people (e.g. a person cheating in weighing.)

Incident: After the martyrdom of Husain رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, an inhabitant of Iraq once asked Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ a ruling regarding the blood of a mosquito which had fallen on his clothing. Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ remarked, "Look at this person. He is asking about the blood of a mosquito whereas they had killed the son of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ." (This inhabitant of Iraq is so pious that he abstains from mosquito blood, whilst it is these same Iraqis who murdered Husain رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. At that time, there was no precaution.) (Tirmidhi)⁷⁹

9. Sorrow and regret

Backbiting due to sorrow is permissible. This is mentioned in Khazaanatur-Riwaayaat, Tanweerul-Absaar, Raddul-Muhtaar and Seerate-Ahmadiyah. An example of this is when a person says out of concern or sorrow, "A certain person does not perform salaah," or "A certain person is involved in adultery."

To have sorrow over another person's evil is praiseworthy. Whenever a Muslim sees another Muslim engaged in any sin, he should feel sorry for his condition and the fact that Shaitaan has overpowered him.

⁷⁸ As-Sunanul-Kubra of Bayhaqi no. 20956

⁷⁹ Tirmidhi no. 3770, similar narration in Bukhaari no. 3753, 5994

Statement of the pious: Shaqeeq Balkhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ said, “If you mention a person’s bad qualities with the intention to disgrace him, then this is backbiting, and if your intention is to express sorrow, then this will not be regarded as backbiting. (Khizanatur-Riwayah)

10. Unknown person

If a person’s evil qualities are mentioned and his name is not taken, then this is permissible. This is mentioned in Bazaaziyah, Seerate-Ahmadiyah, Durre-Mukhtaar, Khazaanatur-Riwaayaat and Tambeehul-Ghaafileen.

11. Famous by a certain nickname

If a person is well-known by a certain nickname, which shows the fault of that person, then there is no harm in mentioning this nickname, since people will not recognize him if he is mentioned by another name. The name A’raj is the nickname of a person, which means a person who walks with a limp. The hadeeth scholars narrate in the books of ahaadith, “From A’raj.” However, it is better that as far as possible, such nicknames should not be mentioned. (This is mentioned in Ihyaaul-Uloom, Nuzhatul-Majaalis, Raddul-Mukhtaar, Mataalibul-Mu’mineen and the commentary of Saheeh Muslim by Imam Nawawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.)

12. To strengthen Deen

It is permissible to backbite for consolidation of deen as is mentioned in Raddul-Mukhtaar. Examples of this are when the hadeeth scholars write: a certain person has the habit of lying, he fabricates narrations, his memory is weak, he makes errors in narrating, etc. Similarly the jurists write: this book is not reliable because the author is not a jurist, the author of this book is a Mu’tazili and his statements are incorrect, a certain person has made mention of weak rulings in his book, a certain jurist places fabricated narrations in his book, etc.,

13. Taking lesson

The author states that to mention punishment meted out to a living person or deceased person to warn people is permissible.

For example:

To say that a person is worthy of the Fire because he is stingy, with this intention that people will abstain from stinginess.

To say that a certain person used to commit many sins in his lifetime. Now he is being punished after his demise.

To say that a certain person's face turned black after his demise because he was involved in a certain sin

To say that I saw a certain person going through some punishment.

The object must not be to disgrace the person, but to warn the people so that they take lesson.

Incident: Rasulullaah ﷺ passed by two graves. He then said to the companions so that they could take lesson, "Punishment is descending on these two graves. One person is being punished due to carrying tales, whilst the other is being punished because of not concealing himself when relieving himself."
(Tirmidhi)⁸⁰

Incident: When Sulaiman ibn Abdul Malik became the ruler, (Umar ibn Abdil Azeez was his minister), he intended to take Yazeed ibn Muslim, the minister of Hajjaaj, as his scribe. Umar ibn Abdul Azeez said, "O Sulaiman! Do not bring alive mention of Hajjaaj, by taking his minister as your scribe."
Sulaiman said, "O Umar! According to me, there was no dishonesty found in him with regards to wealth."

(The reason Umar ibn Abdil Azeez رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said the above was so that people could be saved from his oppression.) Umar further said, "O Sulaiman! Hajjaaj caused great oppression on the kingdom. He misguided people. (Making his minister your scribe is not without harm.)"

When Sulaiman heard this, he did not appoint Yazeed as his scribe. (Hayaatul-Hayawaan)⁸¹

⁸⁰ Tirmidhi no. 70, Bukhaari no. 216/1361, Muslim no.292, Nasai no.

⁸¹ Hayaatul-Hayawaan under the section of Sulaiman ibn Abdil Malik vol. 1 page 100

Incident: Once Umar ibn Abdul Azeez رَحِمَهُ اللهُ thought of the frightful scenes of Qiyaamah and began crying profusely. He fell unconscious. Suddenly he began laughing. When people asked him the reason, he replied, "I saw a dream that Qiyaamah has occurred. Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was called forward for reckoning. He came forward, an easy reckoning was taken, and he was entered into Jannah. In a like manner, an easy reckoning was taken of Umar, Uthmaan and Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ and they were entered into Jannah. Then a person called me. I came before Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى very ashamed and sorrowful. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى due to his great kindness, did not take a difficult reckoning from me. During this time, I happened to see a dead body. I asked, "Who are you?" He replied, "Hajjaaj." I asked him, "How did Allaah deal with you?" He replied, "I found Him to be severe in punishment, but I am awaiting that which the believers are awaiting." (Nuzhatul-Majaalis) ⁸²

Point: There are difference of views amongst the ulama as to the kufr of Hajjaaj. From this incident, it seems that he passed away as a believer, since he was waiting for that which the believers were awaiting. And Allaah knows best.

Incident: Amr ibn Dinaar states, "The sister of an Ansaari passed away. After burying her and returning home, he remembered that he had forgotten a bag in her grave. He decided to dig up the grave and remove his bag. He sought help from one of his companions. They went to the grave, dug it up and found the bag. He said to his companion, "Move aside so that I may see the condition of my sister." He removed some portion of that which was covering her body. He found the grave was blazing with fire. He quickly replaced the covering, closed the grave and returned to his mother. He asked his mother regarding the actions of his sister. She replied, "She used to delay performance of salaah, she would not perform salaah with complete purity, and she would go to the houses of the neighbours when they were about to sleep, listen to their stories and spread this news. This is the reason she is being punished."" (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen) ⁸³

⁸² Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 2 page 50

⁸³ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 52

[Note: The author has mentioned an incident of Muawiya ibn Yazeed رَحِمَهُ اللهُ from Hayatul-Hayawan. However, since there is an attack on Muawiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in this narration, we did not have the courage to translate it. Many of narrations of this type are fabricated.]

VIRTUE OF SALAWAAT (DUROOD SHARIEF)

Incident: Abdul Waahid ibn Zaid Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ says, “I once went on a journey to perform hajj. With me, a certain person travelled as my companion. All the time, whether walking, sitting or standing, he continued to recite salawaat upon Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. I therefore asked him the reason for his abundant recitation of salawaat. He replied, ‘When I performed my first hajj, my father accompanied me. On our return, we reached one of the resting places and slept there. While we were there, I had seen a dream in which someone was telling me, “Wake up, your father has passed away and his face has turned black.” I awoke in great distress, and when I removed the cloth from the face of my father, I discovered that he had indeed passed away and that his face was turning black. This filled me with great sorrow, and I was overcome with fear. I fell asleep and again dreamt that four dark skinned men with iron rods, about to torment him, were sitting by his head. At that point, a handsome man dressed in two green sheets passed by and chased these four men away. He then stroked the face of my father with his hands and said to me, “Rise up (and rejoice), for Allaah has changed the colour of your father’s face. It is now white.” I said to him in great joy and happiness, “May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, who are you?” He replied, “My name is Muhammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.” Since then, I never stopped reciting salawaat upon Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.’ (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)⁸⁴

From this incident, we learn that it is permissible to mention the evil qualities of a deceased person to warn people. Otherwise, Abdul Waahid would have become angry and stopped the person from backbiting when he explained the condition of his father.

⁸⁴ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 507

ADVICE REGARDING RECITAL OF ABUNDANCE OF SALAWAAT

Friends, ponder over the above incident. Recite salaaat in abundance so that you may be saved from the fearful conditions of the hereafter. Create the love of the Intercessor of sinners ﷺ in your heart so that you will be saved from destruction on the Day of Judgement. If you are unable to recite salawaat all the time, then do not waste your free time. If you cannot even do this, then at the very least, recite salawaat upon Rasulullaah ﷺ when his blessed name is taken. Undoubtedly, a person who is punctual in reciting salawaat will be saved from disgrace at the time of death and will be found laughing on the Day of Qiyaamah. In this era, people are void of love for Rasulullaah ﷺ. Therefore, they possess no love for Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى since a person cannot possess love for the beloved if he possesses no love for the lover. It is for this reason that when the blessed name of Rasulullaah ﷺ is taken in a gathering, most people do not recite salawaat. Some laugh at those who recite salawaat and even mock them, “Allaahu Akbar! What a great worshipper he is. His tongue is always moving.” Due to this mockery, shaytaan overpowers them, and they become travellers to the path of Jahannum. They prevent others from reciting salawaat and turn them away from the straight path.

اللهم امتنى على حب حبيبك صلى الله عليه وسلم بجوار نبيك مع الايمان يا ذا الامتنان

RESULT OF DISOBEDIENCE TO MOTHER

Alqamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was a very pious person. He spent his time in prayer and fasting. At the approach of death he was unable to proclaim the Kalima Shahada, in spite of repeated instruction by those present. Alqamah's wife sent a messenger to Rasulullaah ﷺ to inform him of Alqamah's grave condition.

Rasulullaah ﷺ enquired whether the parents of Alqamah were alive. He was informed that Alqamah's mother was alive. Rasulullaah ﷺ asked the aged mother about Alqamah. She replied: 'Alqamah is a very pious person. He passes his time in Salaat and Saum (fasting). He performs Tahajjud, but he always disobeys me for the sake of his wife. I am, therefore, displeased with him.'

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, 'It will be best for him if you forgive him.' However, she refused. Rasulullaah ﷺ ordered Bilaal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to gather firewood. On hearing this order, Alqamah's mother asked in consternation, 'Will my child be burnt in the fire?'

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, 'Yes! Compared to the punishment of Allah, our punishment is light. I take oath by Allah that as long as you remain displeased with him, neither his salaah nor his sadaqah is accepted.'

The old lady said: 'I make you and all people present witness that I have forgiven Alqamah.' Rasulullaah ﷺ addressing the gathering, said: 'Go and see if the kalimah is on the tongue of Alqamah or not.'

After returning from Alqamah the people informed him that he was reciting the kalimah. Thus, he left this world with the kalimah on his lips. After burying Alqamah, Rasulullaah ﷺ said, 'The curse of Allaah is on the one who causes difficulty to his mother. The curse of the angels and the curse of mankind be on him. Allaah neither accepts his Fardh nor his Nafl Ibadat as long as he does not repent and obey his mother. He has to gain her pleasure as best as he can. Allah's pleasure depends on the mother's pleasure and His wrath is concealed in her wrath.' (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Hereunder are the comments of the Muhadditheen on the narration in reference.

1) Ibn-ul-Jawzi Rahmatullahi Alaihi states, (هَذَا حَدِيثٌ لَا يَصِحُّ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)

Translation: It is not permissible to attribute the narration in reference to Rasulullah ﷺ.

2) Imam Ahmad bin Hambal رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ states, (فَإِيدٌ مَتْرُوكُ الْحَدِيثِ)

Translation: The narrator of this Hadith "Faa'id" is considerate as (مَتْرُوكٌ) Matruk- that Hadith in which there is such a narrator who has been blamed for lying in other matters besides narrating Hadith. Such a Hadith is considered rejected.

3) Yahya bin Maeen رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ states, (لَيْسَ بِشَيْءٍ) **Translation:** This Hadith is insignificant.

4) Ibn Hibbaan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ states, (لَا يَجُوزُ الْإِخْتِجَاجُ بِهِ)

Translation: It is not permissible to take this narrators opinion as proof.

5) Imam Bayhaqi states (لَا يَتَّبَعُهُ عَلَى هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ إِلَّا مَنْ هُوَ مِثْلُهُ)

Translation: Faa'id is alone in this narration.

This hadeeth explains that Rasulullaah ﷺ stood at the grave and made mention of an evil quality of Alqamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, to show the people that the person who gives preference to his wife over his mother as Alqamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had done, did not repent and his mother was not pleased with him, then he is accursed. This shows that it is permissible to mention the fault of someone in this case.

JANNAH LIES UNDER THE FEET OF THE MOTHER

From the narration above, we learn that Jannah lies beneath the feet of the mother. If a person disobeys his mother, he is on the path to Jahannum. On the other hand, a person who dutifully serves his mother, has purchased Jannah from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Sa'dis father advised him, "O young man! Remember this advice, 'Whoever was not loyal to his parents, he is not a good person according to the people of intellect.'"

Today, people give preference to their wives over their mothers. Some wretched and misguided people, on behalf of their wives, swear and fight with their mothers and speak ill of their sisters. If the wife says to the husband that his mother or sister has said a certain thing, he immediately regards it to be true. If someone has to speak harshly to his wife, be it his mother, father or sister, he becomes an enemy to them. Perchance, a person says that his wife is ugly, he will stop meeting the person for years. If the wife says, "I cannot live in this house, get me another house," he will abandon his mother, sisters, aunts, etc., break off ties with them, become the slave of his wife and thereby earn curses in this world and the hereafter. (We seek Allaah's protection from that!)

Whilst the narration in reference is not authentic, that should not undermine the serious repercussions of obeying one's mother and the possibility of being deprived of blessings and mercy of Allah at the time of death.

And Allah Ta'āla Knows Best

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PROHIBITION OF CONSULTING WITH WOMEN

Guidance: From this hadeeth, we learn that one should not practise on the statements of women, whether one's wife or someone else, since women are deficient in intellect. There is harm in accepting their views. Therefore, those who consult with their wives are destroying themselves and earning nothing but harm.

Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

من أطاع زوجته فيم تهوى أكبته في النار

He who obeys his wife in that which she desires, then this will cause him to be flung into the Fire. (Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 2 page 22)

Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said,

خالفوا النساء فإن في خلافهن البركة

Oppose the womenfolk because there is blessings in that. (Ibid)

Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام gave Sheeth عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام some words of advice. One of them was, "Say to your children, 'Never follow the desires of your womenfolk. I practised on the desire of my wife, and I ate from the tree. I was made to suffer sorrow.'" (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 221)

Note: Even though these statements show that women are deficient in intellect, men should place a gaze of kindness on their womenfolk. Look after them well. At times, if a woman says something, and there is no harm in following it, then follow it.

Some people in today's times who regard themselves as pious speak in an ill-manner to women and cause them grief. It is necessary that they repent, be kind to these women and abstain from such behaviour. Nobody knows our final condition. Perhaps that woman who you are speaking in such a rude manner to goes to Jannah, while you go to Jahannum.

O Allaah, forgive the believing males and females, and overlook their shortcomings!

DEFINITION OF INCORRECT BACKBITING

Conclusion: As seen above, there are thirteen situations when backbiting is permissible. The backbiting which is forbidden in the Shariah is to speak ill of a specific person, who is not engaged in open sin, people are not caused harm by his actions, and he is not shameless. The object is to dishonour him, and there is no deeni benefit intended.

Backbiting of the following people are permissible:

- # an unknown person (*majhool*)

- # a person who openly sins

- # an immoral and shameless person

- # a person who sins in secret but there is a possibility that his sins will cause harm to people

Backbiting of some-one due to sorrow, and not to dishonour him, is permissible.

Backbiting because of some benefit is also permissible e.g.

- # to gain one's right

- # to find out a mas'alah (religious ruling)

- # to warn people of certain wrongdoings.

All of these have been mentioned in detail above.

CHAPTER FOUR – LAWS, AHAADEETH AND STATEMENTS REGARDING THE PROHIBITION OF BACKBITING

THE PROHIBITION OF BACKBITING

Backbiting is completely forbidden (*qat'ee haraam*). Its prohibition is established from clear texts. The one who denies its prohibition i.e. a person who regards it to be permissible is a disbeliever and has emerged from the straight path, since the prohibition of backbiting is established from the verses of the Qur'aan, ahaadeeth and ijmaa' (consensus) of the ummah. Shaikh Sa'di said,

If a friend is absent, then two things are forbidden on his friends. They should not consume his wealth unlawfully and they should not speak ill of him.

The author of Rawdh has stated that backbiting is amongst the minor sins, which Safoori has narrated. Some have stated that it is a minor sin, but major when speaking against ulama and huffaaz. However, Allamah Qurtubi has narrated that there is ijma' (consensus) that backbiting is a major sin. In the commentary of Al-Jaamius-Sagheer fi hadeethil-Basheer-wan-Nadheer, Ali ibn Ahmad Al-Azeezi has written this as well. For this reason, Sulaiman Jamal writes in the footnotes of Jalaalain that none have difference of opinion in it being a major sin. This is the correct view and Allaah knows best.

For this reason, the pious predecessors and latter-day pious would abstain from this sin. However today, people are engaged in this action day and night finding the faults of every single person. Outwardly they engage in many actions of worship, but internally, they are always complaining about people. Outwardly, they have the form of ulama, but internally the lifestyle of ignoramuses. Their forms are outwardly that of achievement, but their internal is of failure. Inappropriate words emerge from their tongues and limbs. In front of people, they mention that Shaytaan is their enemy, but inwardly, they follow him. Instead of looking at their own faults, they are ever engaged in seeing the faults of others. They disgrace and humiliate the favourites of Allaah and dishonour the true servants of Allaah. They are the cause of Allaah's anger.

They care not for His anger. They possess evil thoughts of some, speak ill of others, find fault with someone's features, and weaknesses in some-one's character. They speak ill of some people's lineage, regard some to be a servant of shaytaan, and swear some people whilst speaking ill of them. They engage in every kind of major and minor sins.

ALL CALAMITIES IN THIS ERA ARE DUE TO BACKBITING

For this reason, there are so many calamities descending in this era. Earthquakes, droughts, floods, extreme changes in weather, sudden deaths, gales, fires, oppressive rulers, sicknesses, etc. are all due to our sins, which is generally caused by backbiting. These matters are clear before everyone. We should repent before Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Amazing is the condition of people. Difficulties descend, people become perturbed and raise their hands in duaas, but they continue with their evil action of backbiting. For this reason, duaas are not accepted, and they become depressed. Then too, their gaze does not turn to their sins. They do not tire of backbiting. Hearts therefore have become hard, due to which it does not accept advice. When mention is made of Jannah, they supplicate for Jannah. When mention is made of someone's martyrdom, they are affected. However, they do not take heed of those advising them. They take in the advice from one ear and eject it from the other. They continue as they were doing in the past. (O Allaah! O most Compassionate! Have mercy on me, my parents, my family members and my teachers. We are your sinful slaves. You have commanded us, but we have not obeyed you. You have prohibited us, but we have committed those sins. If You take a severe reckoning from us, then who will shower mercy upon us? Therefore, do not make us unsuccessful, through the blessings of our master, Sayyiduna Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.)

VERSE MENTIONING THE PROHIBITION OF BACKBITING

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَجِبُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ

And never backbite each other. Does any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother, which you so detest? (Hujuraat verse 12)

Backbiting is tantamount to eating the dead flesh of one's brother. Just as every person despises this, he should despise backbiting.

In Tafseer Ma'aalimut-Tanzeel, the reason for the revelation of this verse is as follows,

"It was the habit of Rasulullaah ﷺ to join two wealthy people on a journey with a poor companion, so that they could see to his needs, and he could serve them. Once Salmaan Farsi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was together with two men. On the journey, they stopped at a certain place. These two wealthy men then went out for some work whilst Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ slept. When they returned and asked Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ if he had prepared the food, he said that he had fallen asleep and could not prepare anything. They then sent him to Rasulullaah ﷺ to get some food. When he went to Rasulullaah ﷺ and informed him of what had transpired, Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "Go to my treasurer, Usaamah. If he has anything, then bring it." When Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went to Usaamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and asked for something, he replied that he had nothing in stock. Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ conveyed this message to those two men. They spoke ill of Usaamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saying, "Usaamah had food. He was stingy." Then they said to Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "Go to some other companions." When he left their presence, they spoke ill of him. Salmaan came back empty-handed. Then these two men went to Rasulullaah ﷺ, who said, "I see the effect of meat between your teeth." They said, "O Rasulullaah! We have not eaten meat today." Rasulullaah ﷺ remarked, "You ate the flesh of Usaamah and Salmaan, since you spoke ill of them." At this time, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى sent Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, and this verse was revealed.⁸⁶

SIMILARITY OF BACKBITING WITH EATING FLESH

In the verses of the Qur'aan and the ahaadeeth, backbiting has been likened to eating flesh. There are two reasons for this:

⁸⁶ Could not locate in Ma'aalimut-Tanzeel, but similar narration mentioned in Ibn Katheer in Surah Hujraat verse 12

1.) Just as there is great disgrace for the one whose flesh is being eaten, in speaking ill of him, his respect is being taken away. Therefore, when you backbite about someone, it is as though you have eaten his flesh.

2.) Just as eating the flesh of a dead human is something completely contrary to one's nature, and every person abstains from such an action, similarly backbiting is evil. Therefore, every person should control himself and his tongue from speaking ill of others.

Backbiting of Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Incident: Once Zaid ibn Thaabit رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was sitting in Masjid-Nabawi and advising those present. From some place, meat was gifted to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ said to Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "Go to Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and bring meat for us." Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went. After he had left, those present spoke ill and complained of Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, which Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was informed of via revelation. When Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for meat for those Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, he answered, "Those people have eaten meat." Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ mentioned this to them, whereupon they said, "But we have not tasted meat in days." Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and conveyed to him what the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ said. Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ repeated what he had said earlier. When this happened twice or thrice, those Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ went to Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who explained to them, "You had eaten Zaid's meat, because you spoke ill of him. Spit! You will see the effect of meat in your mouth." When they spat, they saw that the redness of blood was mixed with their saliva." (*Tambeehul-Ghaafileen*)⁸⁷

Point: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ reprimanded these Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, firstly by stating that they had spoken ill of Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and secondly by making them spit so that they could see the effect of backbiting. The reason for this was that they were guilty of two sins: backbiting and doing the action in the masjid. So backbiting in the masjid is extremely evil. In fact, worldly talks and laughing loudly in the masjid is prohibited. So backbiting will be much worse.

⁸⁷ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 207 vol. 1 page 162

DISHONOURING THE MASJID

Advice: There remains no honour for the masjid in the hearts of people nowadays. When one goes to the masjid, he finds people laughing loudly, speaking of worldly affairs and telling stories. People actually have made the masjid a meeting place where they sit and engage in futile speech. There is no remembrance of Allaah ﷻ or his Rasool ﷺ. It is amazing to note however that if they proceed to the palace of a king, and the king is before them watching their every move and action, they sit with the utmost respect, lowering their gazes and without uttering a single word. When they come to the House of Allaah ﷻ, who is the King of kings, they go contrary to His rules. They commit the prohibitions of Allaah ﷻ like laughing aloud, backbiting, etc. in His very House. Some even stand up and gaze at strange women. This is despite the fact that much emphasis has been mentioned in the Qur'aan and ahaadeeth regarding respect for the masjid. Worldly matters, including buying and selling, is not allowed in the masjid. The pious predecessors would greatly honour the masjid and would proceed there with the highest level of respect.

(O Allaah, the Being in whose control our hearts lie! Have mercy on us and forgive us on the Day of Resurrection. Grant us the ability to do the greatest of actions. Aameen!)

THE ANGER OF RASULULLAAH ﷺ ON THE SAHAABAH WHO HAD BACKBITTEN

Incident: Once, some sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were with Rasulullaah ﷺ. A person stood up from the gathering and proceeded home. Those in the gathering started speaking ill of him, "He is weak. He has no strength." Rasulullaah ﷺ said, 'You have backbitten him and eaten his flesh.' (Abu Layla has narrated this, as mentioned in Seerate-Ahmadiyyah)

NABI ﷺ PRAISES MAA'IZ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ WHEN OTHERS SPEAK ILL OF HIM

A man of the tribe of Aslam came to Rasulullaah ﷺ and testified four times against himself that he had had illicit intercourse with a woman, while all the time Rasulullaah ﷺ was turning away from him.

Then when he confessed a fifth time, he turned round and asked, "Did you have intercourse with her?" He replied in the affirmative. He ﷺ asked, "Have you done it so that your sexual organ penetrated hers?" He replied, "Yes." He ﷺ asked, "Have you done it like a collyrium stick when enclosed in its case and a rope in a well?" He replied, "Yes." He ﷺ asked, "Do you know what fornication is?" He replied, "Yes. I have done with her unlawfully what a man may lawfully do with his wife."

He ﷺ then asked, "What do you want from what you have said?" He said, "I want you to purify me." So he ﷺ gave orders regarding him and he was stoned to death. Then Rasulullaah ﷺ heard one of his companions saying to another, "Look at this man whose fault was concealed by Allaah but who would not leave the matter alone, so that he was stoned like a dog." He said nothing to them but walked on for a time till he came to the corpse of an ass with its legs in the air.

He ﷺ asked, "Where are so and so?" They said, "Here we are, Rasulullaah ﷺ!" He said, "Go down and eat some of this ass's corpse." They replied, "O Rasulullaah! Who can eat any of this?" He said, "The dishonour you have just shown to your brother is more serious than eating some of it. By Him in whose control my soul is, he is now among the rivers of Paradise and plunging into them." (Abu Dawood)⁸⁸

AFTER PUNISHMENT IS INFLICTED, IS THE SIN FORGIVEN OR NOT?

Ulama have differed in this matter. If a person commits fornication and is given the shar'ee punishment, is his sin forgiven or not? According to the Hanafis, the more correct view is that the sin is not forgiven by mere penal punishments. If a person repents, then the sin is forgiven. Their proof is the above-mentioned hadeeth. According to some fuqaha, by mere penal punishment, the sin is forgiven. Their proof is also the above-mentioned narration, since Rasulullaah ﷺ referred to Maaiz as a Jannati. From here, we can understand that the punishment caused the sin to be forgiven. The Hanafis answer by stating that he repented before being stoned and he was extremely sorrowful of his action. For

⁸⁸ Abu Dawood no. 4428

this reason, he was forgiven and entered into Jannah. In some ahaadeeth, this is clearly mentioned.

RASULULLAAH ﷺ PROHIBITING THE HYPOCRITES FROM BACKBITING THE MUSLIMS

Hadeeth: Once Rasulullaah ﷺ said in a loud voice,

يا معشر من اسلم بلسانه ولم يقض الإيمان الى قلبه لا تؤذوا المسلمين ولا تعيروهم ولا تتبعوا عوراتهم فإن من يتبع عورة اخيه المسلم يتبع الله عورته ومن يتبع الله عورته يفضحه ولو في جوف رحله

O people, who had accepted Islam by tongue, and into whose hearts true faith has not as yet entered, do not cause any harm to the Muslims, neither defame nor embarrass them, nor set after them, searching for their faults to expose them (to ridicule). For verily whosoever exposes the faults of his Muslim brother, Allaah will expose his faults, and when Allaah exposes the fault of any person, he shall be disgraced even if he be in complete seclusion. (Tirmidhi)⁸⁹

Point: Since the hypocrites used to cause great hurt to the Muslims and would always mention their faults, Rasulullaah ﷺ specifically addressed them. This hadeeth shows the evil of backbiting as well as the punishment of one's own faults being exposed. Today, people sit in gatherings, and expose faults of others with great relish. What will be their condition?

CONDITION ON THE PLAINS OF RESURRECTION

People will come before Allaah تبارك وتعالى on the Day of Judgement. Due to extreme heat, people will be wet with perspiration. They will be thinking of their sins. The daughter will run away from her mother, the son from his father and the husband from his wife. Every man and woman will be concerned about themselves. Shouting and wailing will be heard from all sides. Jahannum will be boiling with rage before the people. Every person will be demanding his rights. "He had backbitten me, he had oppressed me, he had regarded me as stupid, he killed me, etc." The angels will bring forth those people against whom the charges are laid.

⁸⁹ Tirmidhi no. 2032

They will come forward with their heads lowered, in extreme shame. The oppressed will be at their side, and Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will judge with justice and fairness. A person who deserves a right will be made happy. The other person's good deeds will be given to him, or his evil actions will be placed in the book of deeds of the oppressor. If Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى favours the oppressor, he will be granted salvation, or else he will have to remain in the Fire for some period.

O Allaah! Save myself, my parents and my family members from the Fire, O most gracious, and enter us without reckoning into the gardens of Jannah. Aameen

BACKBITING IS WORSE THAN FORNICATION

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

الْغِيْبَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الزِّنَ

Backbiting is more severe than fornication.

(Ibnu-Abid-Dunya has narrated it as mentioned in Seerate-Ahmadiyah)⁹⁰

Point: The reason for this is that in fornication, a person is opposing Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and following Shaytaan, whereas in backbiting, there are two matters: one is opposing the command of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and the second is causing harm to the one who is backbitten. The right of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is forgiven by repentance, but the right of fellow human beings will not be forgiven as long as the person himself does not forgive. For this reason, it is the view of some ulama that Hajj wipes away all minor and major sins, but the rights of fellow humans are not forgiven, unless the person himself forgives. On the Day of Qiyaamah, the oppressed person will demand his rights. Thus, backbiting is worse than fornication, because if a fornicator repents fulfilling the conditions of repentance, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will forgive him. On the other hand, if the person who backbites feels sorrowful and repents, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will forgive his sin, but he will still not be free from his wrongdoing as long as the person concerned does not forgive him. On the Day of Judgement, this person will follow him and catch hold of his clothing. There will be no helper

⁹⁰ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6315/6316, Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 6590

and assistant for the backbiter. With humbleness, he will proceed to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and ask for forgiveness. Then Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will say,

الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ لَا ظُلْمَ الْيَوْمَ

Today, every soul will be recompensed with that which they earned. There will be no oppression today. (Ghaafir verse 17)

On hearing this, the person will despair. He will be extremely sorrowful and will wish that he had never exposed the faults of any person in this world.

O Allaah! Save us from sadness on the Day of Judgement, the Day of Sorrow and Grief!

FAMOUS INCIDENT OF IBRAHIM IBN ADHAM

Incident: Ibrahim ibn Adham invited some people. When they sat down to eat, one person began backbiting another. Ibrahim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, "In the past era, people would first eat the bread, and then would place the meat in their mouths. You people are eating the meat of people before the bread." (*Tadhkiratul-Awliyaa*)

ANSWER OF ABDULLAAH IBN MUBAARAK

Incident: A youngster came to Abdullaah ibn Mubaarak رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and said, "I have committed such a major sin which I cannot express." When Abdullaah asked him as to what sin he had committed, he replied, "Fornication." Abdullaah said, 'All praises to Allaah that you did not backbite, because backbiting is worse than fornication.'" (*Tadhkiratul-Awliyaa*)

THE ADVICE OF SHAIKH SA'DI'S FATHER

Incident: In chapter two of Ghulistaan, Sa'di رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ states that in his youth, he would engage in worship most of the time. He would keep a Qur'aan under his arm constantly. One night, he was with his father. Before them, some people were sleeping. So he asked his father, "What is with these people that they are sleeping as though they have passed away? If only they woke up and performed two rak'ats of salaah!"

His father said to him, “O beloved son! If you were also asleep at this time and did not engage in worship, it would have been better for you, since you would have been saved from backbiting and finding faults in others.”

BACKBITING DURING THE JOURNEY OF HAJJ

Incident: The author of Rawdah states, “I heard Imam Abu Muhammad رحمه الله saying, “Abul-Laith Bukhaari once set out for hajj. He had placed two dirhams in his pocket. He then took an oath, “By Allaah! If I backbite regarding anyone whilst going or coming back from the journey, I will give these two dirhams in the path of Allaah.”

Abu Muhammad said, ‘When Abul-Laith returned from Hajj and arrived at home, the people saw that those two dirhams were still in his pocket.’ The people asked him the reason for being so particular. He remarked, “I did not backbite on the journey, because according to me it is better to fornicate one hundred times than to backbite once.” (*Khazaanatur-Riwaayah*)

Fine point: The reason why Abul-Laith took an oath is that backbiting during hajj is an extremely grave sin and can take a person to Jahannum. Some ahaadeeth state that only that person’s Hajj will be accepted who does not commit sin in ihram, who does not backbite and who does not use vulgar language. Today, people go for hajj. The same sins committed at home are committed there. In ihram, backbiting is committed. When they go to the Haramain Shareefayn, they find faults and speak ill of the inhabitants there.

We seek Allaah’s protection from the evils of our selves and our evil actions!

BACKBITING IS WORSE THAN FORNICATION

Incident: A woman came to a madrasah and said to the Shaikh, “I have come to ask a ruling, but due to shame, I cannot express myself.” When the Shaikh insisted and told her not to be shy, she said, “I committed fornication. A child was born, and I killed the child.” On hearing this, those present were shocked. The shaikh asked, ‘Are you shocked? Understand that backbiting is worse, because when a person repents from fornication, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى accepts his repentance. However, if one backbites, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى does not regard him as free from his responsibility

as long as he does not ask for forgiveness from the person he had spoken ill of.”
(Khazaanatur-Riwaayah quoting from Rawdah)

ADVICE OF YAHYA IBN MUAZ RAAZI

Yahya ibn Muaaz Raazi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

لِيَكُنْ خَطُّ الْمُؤْمِنِ مِنْكَ ثَلَاثُ خِصَالٍ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ: أَحَدُهَا أَنْتَ إِنْ لَمْ تَنْفَعْهُ فَلَا تَضُرَّهُ. وَالثَّانِي إِنْ لَمْ تَسْرَهُ فَلَا تَعْمُهُ. وَالثَّالِثُ إِنْ لَمْ تَمْدَحْهُ فَلَا تَذُمَّهُ.

O Muslims! Let other Muslims gain three things from you, so that you may be amongst the righteous. If you cannot benefit anyone, then do not harm him. If you cannot please anyone, then do not cause him to fall into grief. If you cannot praise him, then do not dispraise him. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)⁹¹

- 1.) If you cannot benefit anyone, then do not harm him – Endeavour to benefit every person. If you cannot do so, then do not cause any harm to the person or any sort of oppression.
- 2.) If you cannot please anyone, then do not cause him to fall into grief – It is best that you please and serve every person. Try to go according to his rules. If he is a family member, then be kind to him and join family ties. If he is a stranger, then be soft with him. Do not speak harshly to him. If this is not possible, then do not cause him to grieve by causing harm to him or speaking in an unethical manner.
- 3.) If you cannot praise him, then do not dispraise him – The best is to speak good of all, to look for and praise their noble qualities, and to conceal their weaknesses. Create within yourself the quality of concealing and never expose the hidden faults of people. If you cannot do so, then abstain from accusing others, backbiting and mocking.

If these three qualities are attained, then you will be recorded amongst the righteous. The reward promised to the *muhsineen* (righteous) will be granted to you. On the other hand, if you oppress people, cause harm to them, destroy their rights, expose their faults, disgrace them and place accusations on them, then you will be written amongst the *zaalimeen* (oppressors). The punishment allotted to

⁹¹ Vol. 1 page 165

them will be granted to you. Jahannum will desire you and Jannah will run away from you.

These people will catch hold of you on the Day of Judgement. They will present their case before the True Just Being, where you will then be mocked at and ridiculed. If you desire to be embarrassed before the entire creation on the Day of Judgement, then continue backbiting and looking down on others. If not, then abstain from such actions.

WHO IS A PERFECT MUSLIM?

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

The perfect Muslim is the one from whom other Muslims are safe from his hand and tongue. (Bukhaari)⁹²

A true Muslim is he from whom others are saved from:

- 1.) His tongue: he does not swear, backbite, expose people's faults, call them names and expose secrets.
- 2.) His hands: He does not hit anyone, raise his hands to anyone or cause them any physical harm.

If any Muslim does these actions, then he is not a perfect believer. Imaan is not firmly entrenched in his heart. At the time of death, there is a strong possibility that Shaytaan will overpower him, create doubts in his heart, cause him to fall out of the circle of Islam, slip from the straight path, choose the path to Jahannum and run away from Jannah. On the contrary, when a person's imaan is perfect, the enjoyment of Islam has entered his heart, he practices on the dictates of Imaan and he does not have the weight of others' rights on him, then the whisperings of Shaytaan will not affect him at the time of death. His imaan will flare up, the angels will chase away Iblees and remove the whisperings. He will pass away on goodness, Shaytaan will hit himself on the head, throw soil on it and scream and wail.

⁹² Bukhaari no. 10, Muslim no. 40

KA'B IBN AHBAAR'S STATEMENT

Statement of taabi'ee: Ka'b ibn Ahbaar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I read in the books of the past Ambiyaa,

من مات تائباً من الغيبة فهو آخر من يدخل الجنة ومن مات مصراً عليها فهو أول من يدخل النار

Whoever passed away seeking forgiveness from backbiting will be the last to enter Jannah, and the one who passes away whilst always backbiting will be the first to enter the Fire. (Keemiya-e-Sa'aadat)⁹³

So a person who backbites is only causing harm to himself. If he has to repent and pass away, then even though there will be no punishment for his backbiting, he will be reproached in this way that he will be the last sent to Jannah. At this time, he will feel extreme sorrow and regret.

If he passes away without repenting, then he will have to enter the Fire first. There, no screaming, shouting and wailing will be of any help, if a person has fallen into the anger of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

BACKBITING IS A SICKNESS

Statement of a Sahabi: Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

عليكم بذكر الله تعالى فإنه شفاء وإياكم وذكر الناس فإنه داء

Hold firm onto the remembrance of Allaah, for it is a cure, and beware of backbiting and mentioning the faults of people, because this is a sickness.

(Ihya Uloomid-Deen)⁹⁴

VERSE PROHIBITING BACKBITING

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ

Do not criticize one another. (Hujuraat verse 11)

THE DAY OF QIYAAMAH

⁹³ Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 142, Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 165

⁹⁴ Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 143

Narration: Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,
من أكل لحم أخيه في الدنيا قُرب إليه يوم القيامة، فيقال له: كُلْهُ مِمَّا كَمَا أَكَلْتَهُ حَيًّا، فَيَأْكُلُهُ وَيَكْلَحُ وَيَصْخُرُ

Whoever eats the flesh of his brother (backbites about him) in this world, his flesh will be brought before him on the day of Qiyaamah and it will be said to him, "Eat his flesh now as you had eaten it in the world." When he will eat it, he will scream and frown (due to the foul taste.) (At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb)⁹⁵

ADVICE OF QATAADAH رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Advice: Qataadah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

كما يمتنع احدكم من ان ياكل لحم اخيه ميتا كذلك يجب ان يمتنع من غيبته حيا

Just as one of you abstains from eating his dead brother's flesh, he should abstain from eating his flesh whilst alive. (Hashiyatul-Jamal Ala-Jalaalain)

ONE THIRD OF THE PUNISHMENT IN THE GRAVE

Advice: Qataadah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

ذكر لنا أن عذاب القبر ثلاثة أثلاث ثلث من الغيبة وثلث من النميمه وثلث من البول

It has been mentioned to us that the punishment of the grave is because of three things: backbiting, carrying tales and being careless with urine drops. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)⁹⁶

PROHIBITION OF BACKBITING AND ILL THOUGHTS

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ مَنَ الْمُسْلِمِ دَمَهُ وَمَالَهُ وَأَنْ يُظَنَّ بِهِ ظَنُّ السَّوِّءِ

Verily Allaah has made forbidden the blood and honour of a Muslim and thinking ill of him. (Haashiyatul-Jamal alaa Jalaalain)⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 1656

⁹⁶ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 143

⁹⁷ Similar narration in Shuabul-Imaan no. 6280

EVIL OF BAD THOUGHTS

Guidance: This hadeeth shows the prohibition of evil thoughts. Some Qur'aanic verses and other ahaadeeth also clearly state this. Today, it has become common for people to have bad thoughts about others. Different thoughts revolve in the mind e.g. "He is backbiting about me. He is swearing me. He hates me. He does not perform salaah. He does not fast." This is not based on any soundproof. Due to these evil thoughts, problems are caused. Fights take place. When shaytaan sees that a person harbours bad thoughts regarding another, then he places all forms of thoughts in the person's heart against the other, which eventually leads to so much harm.

ADVICE OF IBN ABBAAS رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Statement of a Sahabi: Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

إِذَا أَرَدْتَ أَنْ تَذْكُرَ عُيُوبَ صَاحِبِكَ فَادْكُرْ عُيُوبَكَ

When you intend mentioning the faults of your companion, then remember your faults. (Ihya Uloomid Deen)⁹⁸

This means that one should think of his sins and thereby abstain from backbiting. If a person opens the faults of others, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will expose his faults on the Day of Judgement.

IYAAS IBN MUAAWIYAH'S PROHIBITION OF BACKBITING IN AN AMAZING WAY

Incident: Sufyaan ibn Husain says, "I was sitting by Iyaas ibn Muaawiyah. A man walked past, and I spoke ill of him. He said to me, "Keep quiet."

Then he said to me: Have you fought against the Romans?

I: No

Iyaas: Have you fought against the Turks?

I: No

Iyaas: The Romans are safe from you. The Turks are safe from you. But your Muslim brother is not safe from you.

⁹⁸ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 143

Sufyaan says, “I never did that action again.” (*Tambeehul-Ghaafileen*)⁹⁹

ADVICE OF ZAINUL-AABIDEEN رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Zainul-Aabideen, Ali ibn Husain رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ heard one man backbiting. He said to him,

إِيَّاكَ وَالْغَيْبَةَ فَإِنَّمَا إِدَامُ كِلَابِ النَّاسِ

*Abstain from backbiting because it is the gravy of people who are dogs. (Keemiya-e-Sa'aadat)*¹⁰⁰

Point: Zainul-Aabideen رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has compared those who backbite with dogs, because the Qur'aan and ahaadeeth state that the one who backbites is like one who eats the flesh of a dead person. Eating the flesh of the dead is the work of dogs. Therefore those who backbite are like dogs and have emerged from being a human being. A human being will have the quality of humans and not that of dogs.

BACKBITING IS THE RECEPTION OF THE SINNERS

Statement: Abu Imraan said,

الْغَيْبَةُ ضِيَاةُ الْفَسَاقِ وَمَرَاتِعُ النِّسَاءِ وَإِدَامُ كِلَابِ النَّاسِ وَمَزَانِلُ الْآتِقِيَاءِ

Backbiting is the reception of the sinners, the place of grazing for women, the gravy of the people who are like dogs, and the garbage place of the pious.

(*Nuzhatul-Majaalis*)

Backbiting is the reception and hospitality of sinners. Whenever they gather together, there is abundance of backbiting. Never mind the common man, even the pious, when they sit to eat on the floorcloth, they mention worldly incidents. They read Bismillaah and then eat the flesh of people. It is best to discuss the incidents of the pious and deeni stories whilst eating.

When two men meet, the reception they give one another is speaking ill of others. They expose the faults of Muslims thereby disgracing them. They do not feel happy to discuss deeni matters but feel comfortable when others are spoken of.

⁹⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 165

¹⁰⁰ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 143

Therefore, backbiting is the hospitality and reception offered by the sinners and wrongdoers.

Backbiting is the place of grazing for women. Just as animals see grass and hasten there, and are always on the lookout for grasslands, women look for places of backbiting. As soon as they hear of one, they hasten there, sit together, laugh at others, give their input and raise their voices, trying to outdo the others in presenting someone's incident.

In the past era, some women were such that they were particular with Ishraaq and Tahajjud. After the five daily salaah, they would recite tasbeeh. They would not discuss the faults of people but remain on the straight path. If they heard anyone speaking ill of others, they would advise them and prevent them from disgracing the Muslims. What an insult to men that despite possessing a superior status to women, they are always engaged in backbiting and need to be reminded by their women counterparts.

Shaikh Sa'di رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said,

Those women who have a desire for worship are superior to their impious husbands. You have no shame on your manhood that women have more acceptance than you.

Women, even though they are excused, do not stop worshipping, whilst you without any excuse choose to be secluded. Your rank is lower than that of women, therefore leave your bragging and pride of manhood.

Backbiting is a gravy for those men who are like dogs. Explanation has passed. Backbiting is the garbage place of the pious. Just as the place of garbage is filthy, and a person endeavours to stay away from such a place, the pious stay away from such speech at all times.

Statement: Mahmood ibn Mahmood Al-Arabi Al-Khawaarizmi writes that Imam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ never spoke ill of anyone.

ITCH IN JAHANNUM

Incident: There will be severe itching in Jahannum. The cause of this itch will be that the flesh on the body will fall off and the bones will be exposed. Then a call

will be made, “O people! Are you undergoing pain?” They will reply in the affirmative. They will be informed, “This pain is due to the pain you inflicted on people in the world, by disgracing them.” (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹⁰¹

VERSE

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ * الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ

Woe to every humazah and lumazah who gather money and continue counting it.

(Humazah verse 1-2)

The mufasssirren have differed firstly as to whether this verse is general or specific. Some are of the opinion that these verses only refer to the person regarding whom they were revealed i.e. those who used to speak ill of Rasulullaah ﷺ and the believers e.g. Waleed ibn Mugheerah, etc.

Kalbi narrates that ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said that the verse was revealed with regards to Akhnas ibn Shareeq who used to waste his time in speaking ill of Rasulullaah ﷺ and complaining about the Muslims.

Some others are of the opinion that these words are general. They refer to any person who backbites. Karkhi has narrated this from Mujaahid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. The view of the research scholars is that even though this verse was revealed regarding certain specific people who used to speak ill of Rasulullaah ﷺ, the verse refers to every person who backbites, whether it is Akhnas ibn Shareeq, Waleed ibn Mugheerah or any other person. Imam Raazi has inclined to this view in Tafseer Kabeer.

Then the mufasssireen differ as to the meaning of the words humazah and lumazah. Some state that both refer to backbiting, as is mentioned in Jawaahirut-Tafseer. Kalbi narrates from Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that humazah is a person who speaks ill of people in their absence and lumazah refers to one who curses and swears people in front of him. Suleiman Jamal in the footnotes of Jalaalain has mentioned the exact opposite from Hasan Basri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

¹⁰¹ Could not locate there

Imam Raazi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has narrated from Abu Zaid in Tafseer Kabeer that humazah refers to that person who causes harm to people with his hands, and lumazah refers to one who causes verbal abuse to people.

In short, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى makes apparent grief for those who backbite and has severely warned them. Astonishing are those people who backbite and become worthy of Allaah's anger yet continue as though nothing happened! If Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has to look at us with justice, then none of us will ever attain salvation. If He glances towards us with mercy, then we will be saved.

O Allaah! We are Your sinful slaves. We have sinned against you and fellow men. As for Your rights, forgive us by Your grace. As for the rights of fellow human beings, make those we have wronged pleased, merely by Your kindness.

Incident: some pious people were sitting when a man amongst them started backbiting. One of the pious said to him, "Have you ever fought against the Europeans in jihaad?" He replied, "I have never left the precincts of my house." The pious person said, "There is none as wretched as you that no harm has been caused by you to the disbelievers, but you cause harm to Muslims verbally."

BACKBITING IS HYPOCRISY

Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ heard a man speaking ill of Hajjaaj. He asked him, "O sir! If Hajjaaj was here, would you have mentioned his faults before him or not?" When he replied in the negative, Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ regarded this as hypocrisy that you praise a person before him and speak ill of him in his absence." (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁰²

ADVICE

When people meet nowadays, they show great respect. They ask you your condition and host you. This is all done outwardly, but in the heart lurks great enmity and hatred. Therefore, in their gatherings, their past time is to backbite, mock, laugh and jeer at others. They find all sorts of faults in others: in their

¹⁰² Vol. 1 page 123. Similar narration in Musnad Ahmad and Tabaraani, however Hajjaaj is not mentioned.

actions, in their clothing, in their character, in their speech, etc. When they are corrected, they try to justify their actions.

Once the author (May Allaah ﷻ forgive him!) said to such people, “You people are shameless. You praise a person and flatter him in his presence, but you speak ill of him in his absence.” They replied, “This is known as good character. Allaah ﷻ told Nabi ﷺ, “Verily you have lofty character.” For this reason, Rasulullaah ﷺ would not tell people of their evil in their presence. For this reason, we too do not tell them of their evils in their presence, so that they do not feel hurt.”

I answered, “Just as Rasulullaah ﷺ would not tell people in their presence, he would not do so in their absence, unless there was some benefit in doing so. (Details have passed.) This is contrary to you people who in his presence you praise him but hold enmity in your hearts for him. This is hypocrisy.”

BEING LIGHT-HEARTED IS BETTER THAN BACKBITING

Incident: Shaikh Sa’di رحمه الله says that a pious person once had a playful discussion with a young man, with the intention of being light-hearted. When other pious people heard that he was having this type of discussion, they began laughing and speaking ill of him. When this news reached the pious person that the others are laughing at his condition, he remarked, “Today, being light-hearted is forbidden and backbiting is permitted!” (i.e. Allaah ﷻ has not made light-heartedness forbidden. However, backbiting is forbidden. Who has allowed you to backbite?)

BACKBITING IS HYPOCRISY

Incident: Once, some people were sitting at the door of Huzaifah رضي الله عنه, waiting for him. During this time, some mention was made of Huzaifah رضي الله عنه. When Huzaifah رضي الله عنه emerged, these people kept quiet out of shame. Huzaifah رضي الله عنه said, “Say what you were saying, because we regarded this to be hypocrisy in the era of Rasulullaah ﷺ (where people spoke about a person in his absence but kept quiet in his presence).” (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 173

HADEETH ON THE PROHIBITION OF BACKBITING

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ: مَالُهُ، وَعَرَضُهُ، وَدَمُهُ، حَسْبُ امْرِئٍ مِنَ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَحْقِرَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ

Everything of a Muslim is sacred to another Muslim, his property, honour and blood. It is enough evil for any man to despise his brother Muslim.

(Abu Dawood)¹⁰⁴

ADVICE: It is necessary for people to abstain from causing harm to one another and raise their hands in repentance to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The condition of people in today's times is that if they do some good to another, then they boast of their favours to him, and engage in backbiting and degrading him. They do not regard this as causing harm to him, whereas Rasulullaah ﷺ has referred to this as a great evil.

O Allaah! Make us amongst those who follow the straight path and the correct way. Aameen

ADVICE OF SHAIKH SA'DIS TEACHER

Incident: One day in Madrasah Nizaamiyah, Sa'di رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said to his teacher, Shamsud-deen Abul-Faraj ibn Jawzi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, "When I give lessons of hadeeth to people, then a certain person is jealous, and he becomes extremely upset." Ibn Jawzi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said to him, "O Sa'di! I am surprised at you that you regard jealousy as such an evil action which you mention before me, but you backbite your Muslim brother. Who has said that jealousy is forbidden, and backbiting is permissible? If that person enters the Fire because of jealousy, you will go there because of backbiting." (This incident is mentioned in Bustan.)

VERSE

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

وَلَا تُطْعَمُ كُلُّ خَلَافٍ مَّهِينٍ هَمَّازٌ مَشَاءٌ بِنَمِيمٍ مَنَاعٌ لِلْخَبَرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَتَمِّمُ

¹⁰⁴ Abu Dawood no. 4882

Do not obey every person (Kaafir) who excessively swears on oath (without necessity, whether true or false), who is disgraced, who searches for the faults of others, who excels in carrying tales, who vehemently prevents good, who transgresses (social and religious limits), is sinful... (Qalam verse 10-12)

From this verse, we learn that to swear oaths for every matter is prohibited. Nowadays, people take oaths all the time, not realizing the greatness of the Being whose name is being used. If they want to portray falsehood as the truth, they make Allaah their witness, saying, “Allaah is our witness and Allah knows everything.” In some books of jurisprudence, it is clearly mentioned that in such a case, the person becomes a disbeliever, since he has made Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى a witness to a lie, as though Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is a liar. We seek Allaah’s protection from this!

Incident: When Yaqoob عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام met, then the wolf whom the brothers had falsely accused of having eaten Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام came to congratulate them. Yaqoob عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام asked the wolf, “Did you know of the condition of Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام all this time?” The wolf answered, “Yes.” (I knew the condition of Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام as well as what his brothers had done to him.) “Then why did you not inform me,” asked Yaqoob عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. “Because I feared the carrying of tales,” the wolf replied. (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)¹⁰⁵

Advice: The condition of the people of this era is such that they are engaged in backbiting all the time. Animals which do not possess intellect abstain from backbiting and complaining. Therefore, these people are worse than wolves. It is so sad that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has given man superiority overall, including females, but they cause harm to themselves, and make themselves lower than animals and women.

FRIGHTENING SCENE

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

¹⁰⁵ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 154

لَمَّا عُرِجَ بِي مَرَرْتُ بِقَوْمٍ لَهُمْ أَظْفَارٌ مِنْ نَحَاسٍ يَخْمُشُونَ وُجُوهُهُمْ وَصُدُورَهُمْ، فَقُلْتُ: مَنْ هَؤُلَاءِ يَا جِبْرِيلُ، قَالَ: هَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ حُمُومَ النَّاسِ، وَيَقْعُونَ فِي أَعْرَاضِهِمْ

When I was taken up to the heavens, I passed by people who had nails of copper and were scratching their faces and their breasts. I asked, "Who are these people, Jibreel?" He replied, "They are those who were given to backbiting and who attacked people's honour." (Abu Dawood)¹⁰⁶

ADVICE OF HAATIM ASAMM

Haatim Asamm رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

المغتتاب والنمام قرد أهل النار والكذاب كلب أهل النار والحاسد خنزير أهل النار

Those who backbite and carry tales are the monkeys amongst the people of the Fire, those who lie in abundance are the dogs amongst the people of the Fire and those who are jealous are the swine amongst the people of the Fire.¹⁰⁷

REGARDING LIES TO BE A MINOR SIN IS AN ACT OF FOOLISHNESS

In this era, all of these sins have become common. Lies are spoken by the ignorant and learned, the honourable and lowly. They regard lies to be a minor sin, and therefore there is no harm in it. Sitting in gatherings, lies are spoken to make others laugh, taking upon themselves different forms of calamities. Even when fasting, lies are not stopped but increased. They do not realize that the sins which are regarded as insignificant in the eyes of man are extremely severe in the sight of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Therefore, it is possible that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى seizes them on this sin, reprimands them and enters them into the Fire. We seek Allaah's protection from this! The pious predecessors would abstain from sins to a great extent, realizing that in truth is salvation and in lies there is harm. In the ahaadeeth, there are curses narrated for one who lies.

DAWOOD TAI PROHIBITING BACKBITING

Incident: A person mentioned a fault of another before Dawood Tai. He said, "A certain sufi is lying intoxicated. All of his clothing are full of vomit and dogs are

¹⁰⁶ Abu Dawood no. 4878

¹⁰⁷ Nuzhatul-Majaalis Vol. 1 page 151

sitting around him.” Dawood Tai heard this and said after pondering carefully, “O man! It is for this type of answer that a person needs a compassionate friend so that he does not backbite his friend.” (*Bustaan*)

FORBEARANCE AND ANGER

Incident: A Nabi saw in a dream one night someone saying to him, “In the morning eat the first thing you come across. Conceal the second thing. Grant refuge to the third. Do not disappoint the fourth. Run away from the fifth.”

In the morning, the first thing he came across was a huge black mountain. He stood in surprise and said, “My Sustainer has commanded me to eat this. Can I eat this?” Then he thought to himself, “My Sustainer will not command me to do that which I am unable to do.” Once he resolved to eat it and walked to the mountain, the mountain became small. When he reached it, he found the mountain to be a morsel sweeter than honey. He ate it and praised Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

He continued and came across a tray of gold. He said, “I have been commanded to conceal it.” He then dug a hole in the ground, buried the gold and continued on his way. When he turned around he saw that the tray was above the earth. Twice or thrice he returned to bury it, but each time found that it was on the surface of the earth. He remarked, “I have done that which I have been commanded,” and continued on his way.

He then came across a bird followed by a falcon which wanted to seize it. The bird said, “O Nabi of Allaah! Save me.” He took hold of the bird and placed it in his sleeve. The falcon came forward and said, “O Nabi of Allaah! I was hungry. From the morning, I was after this bird. I was about to catch it. Do not disappoint me.” The Nabi said to himself, “I was commanded not to disappoint the fourth. The fourth is this falcon. What should I do?” He then took out a knife and cut a piece of his thigh. He threw it to the falcon which grabbed it and then flew away. Thereafter the Nabi let go of the small bird and continued on his way.

The fifth thing he saw was a stinking corpse. He ran away from there.

In the evening, the Nabi said, “O my Sustainer! I have done what You commanded me to do. Explain to me the reality of these matters.”

He saw in a dream someone saying to him, “As for the first which you ate, it was anger. In the beginning it is like a mountain. But when a person exercises patience and controls his anger, then finally it becomes sweeter than honey.

The second was whoever does a good action and then conceals it, it will become apparent.

The third was that whoever gives you some trust, then do not break this trust.

The fourth is that when any person asks you for some need, then make an effort to fulfil it, even though you may be in need of it.

The fifth was backbiting. Run away from those who speak ill of people. (*Tambeehul-Ghaafileen- Faqeeh Abul-Laith narrates this from his father*)¹⁰⁸

When a person becomes angry, he goes into a rage. If he controls himself, and swallows his anger, then this becomes beneficial for him. People refer to him as forbearing and he receives reward in the Hereafter. Swallowing one’s anger and creating within oneself the quality of forbearance seems to be extremely difficult, like eating a mountain. When a person firmly resolves to be forbearing, then he will swallow his anger like honey. Just as a person gains joy when eating honey, when a person swallows his anger, he attains goodness in both the worlds. A poet has stated,

الْحِلْمُ أَوَّلُهُ مُرٌّ مَذَاقُهُ ... لَكِنَّ آخِرَهُ أَحْلَى مِنَ الْعَسَلِ

The beginning of forbearance is very bitter in taste, but its ending is sweeter than honey.

A forbearing person attains high ranks in this world and the hereafter due to his forbearance.

HADEETH:

Once Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ يُصِيبُ مِنَ الرَّبَا أَعْظَمَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فِي الْخَطِيئَةِ مِنْ سِتٍّ وَثَلَاثِينَ زَنِيَةً يَزِيهَهَا الرَّجُلُ، وَإِنْ أَرَى الرَّبَا عَرَضَ الرَّجُلِ الْمُسْلِمِ

One dirham acquired through interest is worse in the sight of Allaah than fornicating thirty-six times, and the worst form of interest is the honour of a Muslim person. (Narrated in Ihyaaul-Uloom)¹⁰⁹

Advice: O backbiter! Ponder over this hadeeth. Backbiting is worse than adultery. Taking interest is worse than committing adultery thirty-six times. Therefore backbiting is worse than committing adultery thirty-six times. How surprising that people abstain from adultery to such an extent that it is better for some honourable people to die than commit this shameful action, but day and night, they continue backbiting, regarding it as a good action.

FINAL ADVICE OF RASULULLAAH ﷺ

When Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى had completed the deen of Islam and revealed the following verse to Rasulullaah ﷺ on the occasion of the Final hajj,

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي

Today, I have perfected for you your deen and I have completed My bounty upon you.

the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ understood that the time of the demise of Rasulullaah ﷺ was close. After perfection, then there will be a deficiency thereafter. When the Deen was perfect, then automatically deficiency would commence. How could there be any deficiency in the presence of Rasulullaah ﷺ? This showed that the time of demise was close. This is exactly what happened. When the sickness before death became intense and a few days remained of his life, Rasulullaah ﷺ went to the masjid from his room on Thursday. He told Bilaal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to tell the people to gather for his last advice to the people, which he did. All the people gathered. Rasulullaah ﷺ stood on the mimbar, cried, praised Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, sent salawaat on the Ambiyaa and then started giving advice. Amongst the advices given was the performance of salaah and fulfilling the rights of slaves. Many other advices were given. Amongst them were,

¹⁰⁹ Shuabul-Imaan no. 5135

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ، فِي مَقَامٍ عَظِيمٍ، وَهَوْلٍ شَدِيدٍ فِي يَوْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ، إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ. أَلَا هَلْ بَلَغْتُ، أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ احْفَظُوا أَلْسِنَتَكُمْ، وَأَبْكُوا أَعْيُنَكُمْ، أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لَا تَظْلِمُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الطَّالِبُ لِمَنْ جَارَ، وَعَلَيْهِ حِسَابُكُمْ، وَإِلَيْهِ إِيَابُكُمْ،

O people! Verily Allaah will gather you on the day of Judgement on one plain in a great place. There will be intense fear. It will be a day in which no wealth or children will benefit one, except those who come with a sound heart before Allaah. Listen! Have I conveyed the message? O people, protect your tongue, and continue crying..... O people! Do not oppress, because Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will take to task those who oppress. Upon Him is your reckoning and towards Him is your return. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹¹⁰

HADEETH:

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

وَمَنْ سَتَرَ عَلَى مُؤْمِنٍ عَوْرَتَهُ سَتَرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَوْرَتَهُ

Whoever conceals a believer's fault, Allaah will conceal his faults (on the Day of Judgement.)¹¹¹

As for the person who exposes the faults of people and backbites regarding them, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will destroy them on the Day of Judgement and send them to the Fire.

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا فَتَهْلِكُوا

You should not backbite one another, otherwise you will be destroyed. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)

HADEETH:

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ كَفَّ لِسَانَهُ عَنْ أَعْرَاضِ النَّاسِ، أَقَالَهُ اللَّهُ عَثْرَتَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

The person who prevents his tongue from attacking the honour of people, Allaah will overlook his errors on the Day of Judgement.

¹¹⁰ No. 898 page 554

¹¹¹ Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 5649, Musnad Ahmad no. 17391, similar narration in Muslim no. 2590

This reason for this is that one has done a good action to another Muslim and not exposed his faults. (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)¹¹²

ADVICES OF FUDHAIL IBN IYAAD رَحِمَهُ اللهُ

A person asked Fudhail ibn Iyaadh رَحِمَهُ اللهُ for some advices. He replied,

اخْفُظْ عَنِّي حَمْسًا: أَوَّلُهَا: أَنْ مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ، فَقُلْ ذَلِكَ بِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى حَتَّى تَدْفَعَ الْمَلَأَمَةَ عَنِ الْخَلْقِ.

وَالثَّانِي: اخْفُظْ لِسَانَكَ لِيَنْجُو كُلُّ الْخَلْقِ مِنْكَ، وَأَنْتَ تَنْجُو مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.

وَالثَّالِثُ: صَدِّقْ رَبَّكَ بِمَا وَعَدَكَ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ حَتَّى تَكُونَ مُؤْمِنًا.

وَالرَّابِعُ: اسْتَعِذْ لِلْمَوْتِ حَتَّى لَا تَمُوتَ غَافِلًا.

وَالْخَامِسُ: اذْكُرِ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا حِينَمَا كُنْتَ، حَتَّى تَكُونَ مُحْصَاً مِنْ جَمِيعِ السَّيِّئَاتِ

Remember five things from me.

- 1.) *Whatever afflicts you, then say, "This happened by the decision of Allaah," so that you do not malign the creation.*
- 2.) *Protect your tongue so that the creation are saved from your harm, and you will be saved from the punishment of Allaah.*
- 3.) *Testify to the promise which Your Sustainer has made to you regarding sustenance so that you can be a (true) believer.*
- 4.) *Prepare for death so that you do not pass away whilst unmindful*
- 5.) *Remember Allaah in abundance so that you can be protected from all sins.*

(Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹¹³

1.) Taqdeer- Some misguided people have stated that when Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has written all good and evil which is to take place in the Protected Tablet, there is no meaning in punishing people for their evil, since man has become helpless like a stone. If a person had choice and he was able to go against that which was written for him, then this will necessitate that his taqdeer is false, thus attributing lies to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. This doubt was placed before my father by some people whilst I was studying Sharhul-Aqaaid Nasafiyah under him. For example, it is written in

¹¹² Az-Zuhd War-Riqaaq of Ibnul-Mubaarak no. 745

¹¹³ Page 398

Zaid's taqdeer that he will commit adultery on a certain day. Now if Zaid has choice to commit adultery, and he does not do so due to his choice, then this will mean he is going contrary to his taqdeer. If he does not have choice, then this is contrary to the belief of the Ahlus-Sunnah Wal-Jamaat.

At this time, I tried to explain to them, but they would not understand. After the termination of the gathering, again I explained to them, but they could not understand. They said that since the matter was one of beliefs, they believed in the fact that after the writing of taqdeer, man still has choice, but they could not understand its reasoning properly.

Now listen to the manner of removing this doubt: Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى did not write in the Protected Tablet that a certain person will do a certain work forcefully. There it is written that a person will do a certain work wilfully. For example, it is not written in taqdeer that Zaid will commit adultery and he will be forced to do so. Whatever is going to happen in the future has been written in the Protected Tablet, since Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows everything. Therefore, he has recorded the fact that Zaid will commit adultery. This means that even though Zaid has choice to commit or not commit adultery, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows that his nature is such that he will commit adultery. Therefore, by the writing of taqdeer, one's choice is not ended. An easy example to understand this: If a person knows with conviction through certain signs that Zaid is going to commit adultery tomorrow, and he even informs Zaid, then when Zaid commits adultery tomorrow, his choice had not been removed by the person who had informed him. If he wanted to, he would not have committed adultery, but since his nature was inclined towards it, he did the action. Similarly, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has full knowledge of the Unseen. He knows that Zaid's desires will be inflamed, and he will commit adultery the next day. According to His knowledge, He has recorded it in the Protected Tablet. So how is the other person's choice taken away by this?

2.) Control the tongue and do not speak ill of others, so that the creation can be saved from harm caused by you and you can be saved from the punishment of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Sa'di has beautifully said, "The tongue has been created to be grateful. The people of the truth do not use it to backbite."

In short, if you do not control your tongue, and you follow the dictates of the nafs, you will destroy yourself and will face punishment in the hereafter. A poet has indicated towards this,

احفظ لسانك واحتزز من نقطه فالمرء يسلم باللسان ويعتب

Protect your tongue and be careful of its words. A man finds safety and destruction with his tongue.

The one regarding whom one backbites about is hurt. A wound is created in the heart by the tongue, and this wound cannot be cured. When the arrow of the tongue hits the heart, it cannot be cured, contrary to the wound of the arrow, which can be cured by medication. Therefore the wounds inflicted by the tongue are much more severe than the wounds inflicted by the arrow.

Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said,

جَرَاحَاتُ السِّنَانِ لَهَا الْبُشَامُ ... وَلَا يَلْتَامُ مَا جَرَحَ اللِّسَانُ.

The wound inflicted by the arrow can be healed, but the wound by the tongue cannot be healed.

3.) Regard the promise of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى regarding sustenance to be true. This means that one should trust Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and not be overly concerned with gathering money, since Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has taken guarantee for the sustenance of man. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

And there is no creature on the earth except that Allaah has taken responsibility for its sustenance. (Hood verse 6)

If you were only concerned to gather money and you wasted your time in this temporary world to acquire wealth, then you have regarded Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to be a liar (Allaah forbid!) and you have not taken into consideration His promise. It is therefore necessary to utilize your life in worship and not to waste your life in attaining the world, since the world is temporary, whilst the life of the hereafter is forever. Live in this world like a traveller, and do not be deceived by wealth.

4.) Prepare for death so that you do not pass away whilst unmindful, or else your final result will be evil. This world is impermanent. One day, we have to journey from here.

آخر اس دنیا سے اٹھنا ہے تجھے ذائقہ اس موت کا چکھنا ہے تجھے
Finally you have to leave this world. You have to taste death.

Whoever knows that he is leaving a city soon, will start preparing his goods for the journey. He will keep some provisions for the journey. When we know that definitely we have to travel to the hereafter and have to face the Angel of Death, then we have to keep with us the provisions of the hereafter and be prepared to pass away at any time. It should not happen that when the Angel of Death announces his arrival and the soul is suddenly extracted, man becomes sorrowful as to why he did not prepare provisions for this journey. A poet has indicated towards this,

چو زیں دار فنا قصد سفر دگر داری چرا غافل نشینی اے دل اسبابش مہیا کن
When you intend to travel from this temporary world to another world, then O negligent heart, why are you sitting? Prepare your provisions.

Attaar رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ said,

بغفلت می گزاری زندگانی دریغا گر چنی غافل بمانی
You are passing your life in negligence. If you continue staying negligent like this, then you will be sorrowful over your condition.

An example of this is a person living in great comfort. However he has this thought that if a certain person has to come, he will capture me and take me away. He will lock me in a room and inflict me with severe forms of punishment. In such a case, this person will abandon all his enjoyments, and will prepare around himself such items by which he will be able to save himself from the difficulty which the other will inflict on him. He will go to others begging them to assist and save him. He will want them to intercede on his behalf. Similarly, it is necessary for every man to prepare for death at every moment, and to utilize his life in the obedience of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. It should not happen that the angel of death suddenly appears, and man has to face his terrifying form. When he appears man will forget all his occupations. With great force, his soul will be removed, and man will be placed in a tight and

narrow grave. All alone, he will have to face the angels before him. There will be none to assist him. Different types of punishment will appear before him. The ground will squeeze him, and all the parts of his body will disintegrate. The scorpions and snakes will sting him, and the angels will be moving around. At such a time, what answer will man give?

5.) Remember Allaah in abundance so that you can be protected from all sins. The remembrance of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is a fort. Just as man protects himself from his enemies, man is saved from sins by engaging in the remembrance of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

THE MANNER OF THE SAHAABAH رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

Imam Ghazaali رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ has written,

وكان الصحابة رضي الله عنهم يتلاقون بالبشر ولا يفتابون عند الغيبة ويرون ذلك أفضل الأعمال ويرون خلافه عادة المنافقين

*The Sahaabah would meet each other with a smiling face. They would not backbite in the absence of the other. They regarded this to be the most virtuous of actions, and they regarded the opposite to be the habit of the hypocrites.*¹¹⁴

The person who follows the way of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ is worthy of Jannah, whilst those who turn away from their path will go to the Fire.

Incident: Once a severe wind blew in the era of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ which had a bad odour. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “This bad odour is because the hypocrites spoke ill of the Muslims.” (Khazaanatur-Riwaayaat)

Advice: In this era, many difficulties and hardships descend, due to backbiting. However people pay no attention to this, and do not even repent.

One person wrote the faults of a few individuals in a letter and sent it to some people. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى was not pleased with this action of his. On that day, his student started fighting with him. The student hit him. There was lot of blood, and

¹¹⁴ Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 143

this incident took place before many people. This person was embarrassed but did not realize that this was the effect of his complaining and backbiting about others.

CALAMITIES DESCEND IN THE WAKE OF BACKBITING

A person used to backbite his family members. He used to squander his time in complaining about them. Eventually, he became so poor that he was forced to beg from others.

Incident: A woman used to speak ill of people all the time. She would cause untold difficulties to her family members. She was afflicted with a wound in her stomach, due to which it became difficult to breathe. Finally, she passed away in this sickness.

Incident: A student used to disobey his teacher. He would speak ill and complain of him. One day, he began fighting with his teacher openly. The teacher hit him with his shoes before many people, who then started criticizing the student. This was the punishment he received for his backbiting.

THE CONDITION OF THE SCHOLARS AND IGNORANT OF THIS ERA

Fine point: Since backbiting was very uncommon in the era of Rasulullaah ﷺ, people knew its evil and revolting nature. Today, since every person, learned and ignorant, is engaged in backbiting and making apparent the faults of others, the evil of backbiting is not known to people. They cannot see its filth and dirt. The one who works with stool cannot recognize the bad odour of stool since he is working day and night with it. A person living in a house with a bad odour does not perceive the bad odour anymore, as he becomes habituated to it. Similarly, today the learned and ignorant do not perceive the rotten odour of backbiting since backbiting has become so common. If an ignorant person sees a scholar dancing or committing adultery, he will regard him to be a faasiq (open sinner). He will lose trust in him, be surprised at his action and disgrace him in society. Today, scholars backbite, but no one speaks ill of this action of theirs.

It is the habit of ulama to advise the unlearned in different matters. They teach them the rulings of Salaah and Hajj, the evils of adultery, alcohol and interest. They

quote the ahaadeeth of Rasulullaah ﷺ, but do not state the masaa'il and prohibition of backbiting. This is due to two reasons: one is that backbiting is not regarded as a sin in their sight as they are continuously involved in it. Secondly if they advise people not to backbite and speak ill of backbiting, then they will become disgraced before the people. The people will say that he advises us not to backbite, but he himself disgraces and speaks ill of people. The awe and respect of that aalim will then leave the hearts of the people.

O Allaah! Save us from the whisperings of Shaytaan and have mercy upon us the day we are presented before You!

ADVICE TO PEOPLE

INCIDENT: Khaalid Raba'ee states, "I was in the Jaami' masjid. People started backbiting. I prevented them. They then stopped. After a while, they began speaking ill of another person. This time I did not stop them but joined them in the discussion.

That night I saw in a dream a tall dark-looking man who had a tray with a piece of swine flesh. He told me to eat it. I replied, "Must I eat swine? By Allaah, I will never eat it." He then severely rebuked me and said, "You ate something worse than this."

He then shoved the swine meat in my mouth. I then woke up. For the next thirty or forty days, whenever I ate food, I could feel the taste of that flesh and its odour in my mouth. (*Tambeehul-Ghaafileen*)¹¹⁵

Advice: O brothers! Do not oppress anyone. If you wish to eat the flesh of swine, then complain of people, otherwise abstain. How amazing that if people are fed swine meat, they will become enemies of those who fed them, but if a gathering of backbiting is taking place, they will sit there with great relish. If incidents of the pious predecessors are mentioned, they are unhappy. Shaytaan has dominated them. Amazing however is that when they read about Shaytaan, then they seek Allaah's protection from him, yet they do not abstain from their evil actions. Their

¹¹⁵ Tambeehul-ghaafileen page 165 no. 211

example is of a person who is confronted by a lion. He is afraid that the lion may harm him or even kill him. There is a fort before the man. If he goes therein, he will be saved from the lion. However he does not go inside, but says, "I seek protection from the lion by means of this fort." He suffices on this. All will regard this man to be foolish. This is the condition of those who refer to themselves as the friends of Allaah, but in reality follow Shaytaan, and abstain from following Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Narration: Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that when Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ went for Mi'raaj, he saw some people eating carrion. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام as to who these people were. He replied, 'They used to backbite and complain of people in the world.' (Seerat-Ahmadiyah)

Point: A person who sees himself eating carrion in a dream will backbite people. Imam Ghazaali رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ has mentioned this in Huqooqus-Suhbah. This is because the Qur'aan has equated backbiting to eating the flesh of one's deceased brother. (Ibn Sireen has clearly mentioned this in his book on Interpretation of Dreams.)

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِ ثَلَاثًا: دَمَهُ، وَمَالَهُ، وَأَنْ يُظَنَّ بِهِ ظَنُّ السُّوءِ

*Verily Allaah has made forbidden three things from a believer: his life, his wealth and having evil thoughts of him.*¹¹⁶

ABSTAINING FROM BACKBITING IS BETTER THAN THE WHOLE WORLD

Wahb Makki رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

لَأَنْ أَدْعُ الْغَيْبَةَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا، مُنْذُ خُلِقْتُ إِلَى أَنْ تَفْقَى، فَأَجْعَلُهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَأَنْ أَعْصِيَ بَصْرِي عَمَّا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى، أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا فَأَجْعَلُهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

Abstaining from backbiting is more beloved to me than possessing the whole world and whatever it contains from the time it was created till it terminates, and I spend it in the path of Allaah. Controlling my gaze from that which Allaah

¹¹⁶ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6280

تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has forbidden is more beloved to me than possessing the whole world and whatever it contains from the time it was created till it terminates, and I spend it in the path of Allaah. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹¹⁷

Advice: According to this statement of Wahb, we learn that controlling one's gaze from forbidden sights is more superior to the whole world and what it contains. This sickness of evil glancing has become very common today. The condition of men is such that they look around in all directions. If their gaze happens to fall on a beautiful woman, they stare at her. If they cannot do so, they look at her with the corner of their eyes. They look towards people's houses hoping to see the woman inside. When women gather in a certain place, they climb on top of roofs to look at these females. Amazing is that these people do not look at them openly due to shame, but glance at them surreptitiously. They have no shame that they are before Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى who is present and watching at every moment but are ashamed of His servants.

If a woman's eyes are exposed, they look into her eyes, and make advances. If they are in solitude, they will engage in inappropriate activities, at times, even leading to fornication. There are occasions where a person will actually engage in such immoralities with such close family members, whom one can never marry. These people tarnish the names of their elders and their family lineage. Some of the pious predecessors were such that if Shaytaan had to overcome them and they looked at someone with an evil eye, they would pull out their eye, becoming one-eyed. Today, women have become so daring and bold that they regard looking at men as correct. They take enjoyment in staring at men even behind the veil, even if the man pays no attention to them. Women looking at men with desire is a sin, and the verses of the Qur'aan and ahaadeeth prohibits this action. For this reason, Wahb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "Controlling my gaze from that which Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has forbidden is more beloved to me than possessing the whole world and whatever it contains."

¹¹⁷ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 166 no. 211

Narration: Since Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was extremely intelligent, he was held in high esteem in the gatherings of Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He was honoured more than the elderly. وَقَالَ العباس لِابْنِهِ عبد الله إِنِّي أَرَى هَذَا الرَّجُلَ يَغْنِي عَمْرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ يَقْدُمُكَ عَلَى الْأَشْيَاخِ فَاحْفَظْ عَنِّي حَمْسًا لَا تُفْشِيَنَّ لَهُ سِرًّا وَلَا تُغْتَابَنَّ عِنْدَهُ أَحَدًا وَلَا تَجْرِنَ عَلَيْهِ كَذِبًا وَلَا تُعْصِينَ لَهُ أَمْرًا وَلَا يَطْلُعَنَّ مِنْكَ عَلَى خِيَانَةٍ فَقَالَ الشَّعْبِيُّ كُلُّ كَلِمَةٍ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْخُمْسِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفٍ

Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to his son, ‘I see that Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ honours you greatly that he places you before other elders. Remember five points:

- 1.) Do not reveal his secrets to anyone. (The harm of exposing one’s secrets is that one will become lowly in the sight of the person who asked him to keep the secret. Today, this evil has become common. If a person is told not to expose his secret, it is done in the absence of that person. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى guide those people to abstain from this evil and to save themselves from the Fire of Jahannum!)
- 2.) Do not backbite anyone before him.
- 3.) Do not lie to him. (Today lying has also become common. Even outside masjids, people stand and lie to make others laugh. Such people have been cursed in the ahaadeeth. People after lying even say, “What must I do? You have to lie nowadays.” This shows that they know that lying is severely prohibited.)
- 4.) Do not disobey him.
- 5.) Let him not find you committing any act of misappropriation (in wealth or in consultation.) (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹¹⁸

Advice: Some wise person has said,

قَالَ بَعْضُ الْحُكَمَاءِ: إِنْ ضَعُفْتَ عَنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ فَعَلَيْكَ بِثَلَاثٍ: إِنْ ضَعُفْتَ عَنِ الْخَيْرِ فَاْمْسِكْ عَنِ الشَّرِّ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ لَا تَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ تَنْفَعِ النَّاسَ فَاْمْسِكْ عَنْهُمْ ضَرْرَكَ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ لَا تَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ تَصُومَ فَلَا تَأْكُلْ لَحْمَ النَّاسِ.

If you are unable to do three things, then do three. If you are unable to do good, then abstain from evil. If you are unable to benefit people, then save them from your harm. If you are unable to fast, then do not eat the flesh of people.

(Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 179 Kitaabu-Adaabil-Ulfah Wal Ukuwwah

¹¹⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 211 vol. 1 page 166

Statement: Mujaahid رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

لا تذكر أخاك في غيبته إلا كما تحب أن يذكرك في غيبتك

Do not make mention of your brother in his absence except in that manner which you like to be mentioned in your absence. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹²⁰

Statement: Mujaahid رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

إِنَّ لِبْنِ آدَمَ جُلَسَاءَ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ، فَإِذَا ذَكَرَ أَحَدُهُمْ أَخَاهُ بِخَيْرٍ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: لَهُ وَلَكَ مِثْلُهُ.

وَإِذَا ذَكَرَ أَحَدُهُمْ أَخَاهُ بِسُوءٍ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ كَشَفْتُ الْمُسْتُورَ عَلَيْهِ عَوْرَتَهُ، ارْجِعْ إِلَى نَفْسِكَ وَاحْمَدِ اللَّهَ الَّذِي سَتَرَ عَلَيْكَ عَوْرَتَكَ.

Every person has angels appointed over him. When one of them speaks good of his brother, the angels say to him, "And may the same be for you." When one of them speaks ill of his brother, the angels say, "O son of Aadam!" You have exposed the person whose faults were hidden. Look at yourself and praise Allaah who has hidden your faults." (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹²¹

Point: The difference between backbiting and exposing a secret is that backbiting refers to making mention of a person's fault that if he has to hear of it, he will feel hurt. The object of backbiting is to disgrace him, whether the fault was known before or not. In exposing a secret, people are not aware of the matter before. For example, if it is known that a person does not perform salaah, and mention is made of it to disgrace him, then this will be referred to as backbiting and not as exposing a secret.

NOBLE CHARACTER

Hadeeth: Sulaiman ibn Jaabir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ asked Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for some advice by which he could benefit. He صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied,

وَأَنْ تَلْقَى أَخَاكَ بِبُشْرٍ حَسَنٍ وَإِنْ أَدْبَرَ فَلَا تَغْتَابَنِهِ

¹²⁰ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 181

¹²¹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 211 vol. 1 page 166

....and that you meet your brother with a smiling face. When he turns away, then do not backbite him. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹²²

Fine point: This is referred to as noble character. When one meets a person, he should meet him in an amicable way. When the person leaves, he should not speak ill of him. For this reason, Allaah ﷻ praised Rasulullaah ﷺ, “And undoubtedly, you have great character.” This was because Rasulullaah ﷺ would meet every person, even a disbeliever, with a smiling face; and he would not speak ill of the person in his absence. However, if there was a possibility of a person causing harm to others, then Rasulullaah ﷺ would mention his faults, but when he met him, he ﷺ would meet him with the best of character.

Incident: Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reported that a person sought permission from Rasulullaah ﷺ to see him. He ﷺ said, “Grant him permission. (He ﷺ also added:) He is a bad son of his tribe, or he is a bad person of his tribe.” When he came in, Rasulullaah ﷺ spoke to him gently. Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reported that she said, “O Rasulullaah! You said about him what you had to say and then you treated him with kindness.” He ﷺ replied, “O Aaishah, verily in the sight of Allaah, the worst amongst the person in rank on the Day of Resurrection is one whom the people abandon or desert out of the fear of indecency.” (Muslim)¹²³

Imam Nawawi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ writes that this person was Uyainah ibn Hisn, who had not accepted imaan as yet. Later on, he accepted imaan, and thereafter renegaded. (May Allaah protect us!) He was brought as a prisoner in the era of Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in Madaarijun-Nubuwwah quotes from Qadhi Iyaadh رَحِمَهُ اللهُ that his imaan was not established at that time. Therefore backbiting him was permissible. If he was a believer, then Rasulullaah

¹²² Kitaabus-Samt of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 166 page 119, Kitabul-Gheebah wan-Nameemah of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 28 page 14

¹²³ Muslim no. 2591

ﷺ complained about him to the people to warn them regarding his evils. This too is correct as mentioned in great detail before.

A point to note is the character of Rasulullaah ﷺ compared to the people of this era, who regard themselves as part of his followers, but go against his teachings. Some are such that when they meet others, due to hatred for the person, they scowl, do not speak properly and speak ill of him when he leaves. They continue doing so for a long time. Some are such that when they meet others, they show great honour and respect, but as soon as the gathering terminates, then without any valid Shar'ee reason, they open the faults of that person and speak ill of him. Then too, they regard themselves to be the bearers of noble character. Even though this group of people are better than the first group, they are still engaged in evil. They should feel sorry that they are the followers of Rasulullaah ﷺ yet they abandon his way and the path of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. They should repent and abstain from this action.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said to Mu'aaz رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ،
 وَأَقْطَعْ لِسَانَكَ عَنْ إِخْوَانِكَ، وَلْتَكُنْ ذُنُوبُكَ عَلَيْكَ، وَلَا تَحْمِلْهَا عَلَى إِخْوَانِكَ، وَلَا تُزَكِّ نَفْسَكَ بِتَذْمِيمِ إِخْوَانِكَ، وَلَا
 تَرْفَعِ نَفْسَكَ بِوَضْعِ إِخْوَانِكَ، وَلَا تُرَاءِ بِعَمَلِكَ النَّاسَ

Close your tongue from your brothers (do not backbite them), place your sins upon yourself, and do not push it onto your brothers. Do not regard yourself as pure by speaking ill of your brothers. Do not raise yourself by lowering your brothers. Do not show off your actions to people. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹²⁴

Advice: Those close to the rulers today speak ill and expose faults of others before the rulers. Their intention is to become the favourite of the rulers, and the rulers do not pay attention to others. If somebody is praised before the ruler, they make sure that they will make mention of some fault within him, even if by sign, so that the ruler abstains from gaining closeness to him. These people should desist and repent, as Rasulullaah ﷺ has severely prohibited this evil action.

¹²⁴ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 924 page 574

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

لَا يَرَى مُؤْمِنٌ مِنْ أَخِيهِ عَوْرَةً، فَيَسْتُرُهَا عَلَيْهِ، إِلَّا أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ الْجَنَّةَ

Whichever believer sees a fault in his brother and conceals it, will enter Jannah.

(Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹²⁵

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِنَّ مِنْ أَرَى الرِّبَا الاسْتِطَالَهَ فِي عَرَضِ الْمُسْلِمِ بغيرِ حق

The worst form of usury is to attack the honour of a Muslim unrightfully.

(Bayhaqi)¹²⁶

The reason for this is that in interest, there is harm caused to the other person's wealth, whereas in backbiting, harm is caused to the other's honour. The honour of a human being is greater than everything. It is the belief of the Ahlus-Sunnah that humans are better than angels.

Point: By using the word 'unrightfully' there is an indication that if the backbiting is done due to a valid Shar'ee reason, whether the matter is related to a worldly or religious matter, then it will be correct. For this reason, it is permissible to backbite an oppressor, as well as a person who fabricates hadeeth, as done by the muhadditheen. If people do not know the condition of the narrator, they will regard him to be truthful, which will then cause great harm to deen.

HADEETH:

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

الغيبة والنميمة تحطان الإيمان

Backbiting and nameemah (carrying tales) destroys imaan.

(Seerat-Ahmadiyah quoting from Asbahaani)¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 1480 and Al-Mu'jamul-Kabeer of Tabaraani no. 795 vol. 17 page 288

¹²⁶ Abu Dawood no. 4876

¹²⁷ At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb li Qiwwamis-Sunnah of Asbahani no. 2248

When a person backbites, imaan is scraped off from the heart. At the time of death, imaan is totally removed. This is the condition of a person who carries tales as well.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BACKBITING AND CARRYING TALES

The difference between the two is that *nameemah* is when a person says to another that a third person has spoken ill of him, with the intention of causing enmity between the two, whilst *gheebah* refers to mentioning the fault of another, whether the intention is corrupt or not. So wherever there is *nameemah* there will be *gheebah*. This is the definition written by Imam Nawawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in his commentary of Saheeh Muslim. According to others, there is no difference between these two words. According to some, *nameemah* refers to exposing a secret, whether done with a correct intention or not. This is the view adopted by Imam Ghazaali رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in Ihyaaul-Uloom. However, after pondering over the ahaadeeth, the first view seems most correct.

ABSTAINING FROM BACKBITING IS BETTER THAN (OPTIONAL) ACTS OF WORSHIP

Statement: Some Taabi'een have stated,

أَذْرَكْنَا السَّلَفَ وَهُمْ لَا يَرَوْنَ الْعِبَادَةَ فِي الصَّوْمِ وَلَا فِي الصَّلَاةِ، وَلَكِنْ فِي الْكَفِّ عَنْ أَعْرَاضِ النَّاسِ

We found the pious predecessors did not regard worship to be in salaah and fasting, but in abstaining from taking the honour of people. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)

Note: Despite salaah being the most virtuous act of worship and fasting being regarded as the best act of worship, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ regarded abstention from backbiting to be superior due to the following reasons:

1.) Salaah and fasting are such acts that by abstaining from them, one will not be fulfilling the right of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. However, in backbiting, the right of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى as well as the rights of fellow human beings are infringed. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgives His servants by sincere repentance since He is most forgiving and Most Merciful. He looks at His servants with the gaze of mercy, to such an extent that

He grants sustenance to the disbelievers as well. So when a sinful servant raises his hands in the court of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى with humility, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgives Him and showers mercy upon him. On the other hand, when a person backbites, he does not become cleansed of the sin by mere repentance. He has to also seek forgiveness from the person regarding whom he spoke ill of. Therefore backbiting is worse than abstinence from salaah and fasting.

2.) Abstaining from sins has more virtue than doing acts of worship. A person who abstains from sin and does not perform acts of worship is better than the one who always engages in worship, but is engaged in major and minor sins, more-so, one of the worst (backbiting). When this rule applies to all sins, then to a greater extent, it will apply to backbiting.

Incident: A person asked Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “Who is better: A person who engages in abundant worship and commits many sins, or another person who engages in less worship, and commits less sins?” He replied,

مَا أَعْدِلُ بِالسَّلَامَةِ شَيْئًا

I do not equate anything with abstinence. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹²⁸

3.) Every sin is a sickness. If a person does not have medication for the sickness or he cannot diagnose it, then it is impossible for him to save himself from the disease. It is unlikely that he will recover. Backbiting is a type of sickness. People cannot be cured of it since the thought of it being evil is not entrenched in the hearts of the people. This is contrary to salaah and fasting since all know the evil of abandoning them.

4.) In those sicknesses in which there is no doctor, the sickness is severe. It will continue to increase daily. At times, the life of the sick person is taken away. Backbiting is such a disease for which there is no doctor, since the doctor of sicknesses are the ulama, and they themselves are sick. When they themselves are sick, how can they cure others? This is contrary to salaah and fasting. However,

¹²⁸ Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaibah no. 34771

the ulama do know that backbiting is evil and prevent people from falling into it. This is why the sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ regarded abstinence from backbiting to be better than salaah and fasting.

5.) If the effect of any disease reaches another, and the other person is caused harm, then this sickness is regarded as extremely harmful in the sight of people. All regard chickenpox to be evil as it is regarded to be contagious. Similarly, the effect of backbiting is not confined to one person, but others are harmed in the process. On the other hand, if a person does not perform salaah or fast, then the sin will only be on the sinner. For this reason, the sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ regarded backbiting to be worse than leaving out of salaah and fasting.

6.) Abstinence from salaah and fasting is a sin of the limbs, whilst backbiting is a sin of the tongue. The sin of the tongue is worse than the sin of the limbs. For this reason, the sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ regarded backbiting to be worse than leaving out of salaah and fasting.

Hadeeth: Sufyaan ibn Abdillaah Thaqafei رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, "Inform me of an action which I can hold firmly onto." Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Say, 'My Sustainer is Allaah,' then remain steadfast." Then Sufyaan asked, "O Rasulullaah! Which limb do you fear for me the most?" Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ held his tongue and said, "This." (Ibn Maajah)¹²⁹

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ وَقَاهُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ اثْنَيْنِ وَلَجَ الْجَنَّةَ

The person whom Allaah saves from the evil of two things will enter Jannah.

Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ asked, "What are they?" Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied,

مَا بَيْنَ حَبِيبِهِ وَمَا بَيْنَ رَجُلَيْهِ

¹²⁹ Ibn Maajah no. 3972, Tirmidhi no. 2410

That which is between his jaws (i.e. the tongue) and that which is between his legs (i.e. the private part). (Muatta Imam Maalik)¹³⁰

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِذَا أَصْبَحَ ابْنُ آدَمَ فَإِنَّ الْأَعْضَاءَ كُلَّهَا تُكْفِرُ اللِّسَانَ فَيَقُولُ: اتَّقِ اللَّهَ فَبِمَا نَحْنُ بِكَ، فَإِنْ اسْتَقَمَّتْ اسْتَقَمَّ مَتْنَا وَإِنْ اغْوَجَّتْ اغْوَجَّتْنَا

When man gets up in the morning, all his body parts submit themselves before his tongue and say: 'Fear Allaah with regard to us because our existence is dependent on you. If you remain upright, we will remain upright. If you deviate, we will also deviate.' (Tirmidhi)¹³¹

Hadeeth: People asked Rasulullaah ﷺ as to which parts of the body would cause a person to enter Jahannum. He ﷺ replied, "the two i.e. the mouth and private part." (Ibn Maajah)¹³²

Note: From this hadeeth, we learn that these two limbs will lead people to the Fire: the mouth and the private parts. However the sin of the mouth is worse than the sin of the private part, since the punishment of the private part is generally meted out to the person himself, whereas the sin of the mouth is generally connected to others.

Advice: The basis of being pious in this era is generally based on outward forms of worship like salaah, fasting, etc. A person who engages in abundance of salaah, fasting, charity and dua is regarded to be a great worshipper and ascetic even though he is engaged in backbiting the whole day. Another person who engages in less (optional) acts of worship, but abstains from backbiting, etc. is not called muttaqi. The reason for this is that people do not realize the gravity of backbiting. May Allaah steer us and allow us to follow the path of guidance!

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

¹³⁰ Muatta Imaam Maalik no. 2824

¹³¹ Tirmidhi no. 2406, Musnad Ahmad no.11908

¹³² Ibn Maajah no. 4246, Ibn Hibbaan no. 476, Musnad Ahmad no. 7907

Backbiting is worse than committing fornication thirty times in the condition of Islam. (Ainul-Ilm of Muhammad ibn Uthmaan ibn Umar Al-Balkhi)¹³³

Committing fornication as a Muslim is worse than committing fornication as a non-Muslim. There are two reasons for this:

1.) The disbeliever is commanded to believe in Allaah بِبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. According to some ulama, the subsidiary laws like the compulsion of salaah and fasting as well as the prohibition of adultery and interest is not for the disbelievers. On the Day of Judgement, a Muslim will be punished on account of his sins, whilst the disbelievers will only be punished on account of their disbelief. They will not be held accountable for missing of salaah and fasting or for committing fornication, as the condition for these laws is imaan. When the disbeliever does not possess imaan, then these laws are not binding on him. Thus, committing fornication in the state of imaan is worse than committing it in the state of disbelief, since a disbeliever will not be punished for his act of fornication, whereas a believer will be given a severe punishment.

2.) If a person fornicates in the state of disbelief, then it is not necessary for him to seek forgiveness and to be sorrowful for his action when he turns away from disbelief. Once imaan enters the recesses of his heart, all sins committed in the state of disbelief, whether fornication or any other major sin, are forgiven. It is the belief of the Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaat that imaan wipes away past sins and removes all evil from one's book of deeds. This is contrary to a Muslim whose act of fornication will not be forgiven without sincere repentance, which demands regret. The punishment for fornication will not be removed by the performance of any righteous deed. Righteous deeds expiate minor sins. For major sins, one has to seek forgiveness. This shows that a Muslim person committing fornication is worse than a disbeliever committing the same act. The fornication committed by a disbeliever is forgiven by one righteous deed i.e. imaan whilst the fornication

¹³³ Could not locate as a hadeeth. Mentioned in Bidaayat-ul-Hidayah of Imam Ghazaali and Bahrud-Dumoo' of Ibnul-Jawzi. And Allaah بِبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

perpetrated by a believer is not forgiven by any righteous deed, until one repents. However, if Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى wishes, He can forgive without the person even asking for forgiveness.

For this reason, in the above narration, the word *in the condition of Islam* has been mentioned to show the intensity of the sin of backbiting.

Advice: People regard fornication to be a severe sin compared to backbiting. Therefore, if an honourable person or scholar has to fornicate, then people will regard this action to be extremely blameworthy and will disgrace this person. They will regard him to be a flagrant sinner, publicize the action and will refrain from meeting him. If this person has to repent, then too it will be impossible to remove the ill thoughts in the hearts of people. However, those honourable people and scholars who day and night engage in backbiting are not regarded as flagrant sinners and are not dishonoured. In fact people go to their gatherings wherein the backbiting takes place, gain enjoyment therein and destroy their Hereafter.

Narration: Haatim Asamm رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

ثلاثة إذا منَّ في مجلس فالرحمة مصروفة عنه: ذكر الدنيا، والضحك، والوقعة في الناس

*When one of three discussions is found in a gathering, then the mercy of Allaah is turned away from them: mention of the world, laughing and attacking the honour of people.*¹³⁴

1.) Mention of the world: People sit in a gathering discussing matters of the world and exhibit their happiness. Such a gathering is deprived of the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The author states that this is due to the following reasons:

a.) Divine mercy turns to those who have connection with the Being of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and are disinclined from all that which is besides Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. When these people turn their attention to the world, taking enjoyment therein, the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى stops descending on them.

A poet states,

¹³⁴ Bahrud-Dumoo' vol. 1 page 129

هم خدا خوابی وهم دنيائے دوں ایں خیال ست ومحالست وجنوں

*Desiring Allaah and the world at once is a mere figment of imagination,
impossible and madness.*

b.) The world is a mirage which will terminate. It is not a permanent abode.

Moulana Room رحمہ اللہ states,

The deceiving tailor cut the cloth of your life with the scissors of days.

The example of this world is like a traveller's lodge. Every person comes from his mother's womb and eventually lands up under the ground. This is just like a traveller who goes from one city to the next.

A poet says,

O heart! Who has said to you to make this world your abode and to keep your delicate body in this fort? The world is not a permanent place of residence. Do not place your heart therein. Live as a traveller and cross this road. See how many people have left this world and take lesson.

To have love for this world is the height of foolishness. Foolishness is also a cause of being deprived of Divine mercy. This is how a master turns his attention to his slaves who are intelligent and turns away from those slaves who are foolish.

c.) Even though the world outwardly is beautiful, it is evil in the sight of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى obstructs His mercy – which is the most superior of things - from those who turn towards evil. This is similar to a Sultan who has before him some stool. He places a pearl on it so that it appears beautiful. However, in reality it is extremely ugly. A person who turns to the stool and places his heart therein, then undoubtedly the Sultan will be angry with him, even though he may not reprimand him. He will not speak to him and bestow less favours on him.

d.) The world is contrary to the pleasure of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, since Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has created us for His worship, not to discuss the matters of the world.

Do not place your heart in this temporary abode, remember this advice of Sa'dee.

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

I have not created man and jinn except that they worship Me.

Just as a person goes contrary to the king's command, then the king turns his attention away from him; likewise, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى turns His attention away from those who go contrary to His pleasure.

2.) Laughing: People sit in a gathering and continue laughing and making jokes. Such a gathering too is deprived of the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The author states that this is due to the following reasons:

a.) Laughing is a cause of heedlessness. One who is heedless of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is *heedless* of him. Therefore, mercy does not descend on such a gathering.

b.) The hearts of those who laugh in abundance become hard like rock. It is proven by experience that those who are always laughing are deprived of a soft heart: therefore, advice does not benefit them, their hearts are not inclined to repentance, they never cry, they never feel afraid when mention of Jahannum is made, and if the demise of any person is mentioned it has no effect on them. In fact, they never think of the greatest calamity which befell the ummah, which was the demise of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى dislikes a hard heart. Therefore, He refers to the disbelievers as having hard hearts. For this reason, His mercy turns away from the gathering in which there is excessive laughter which leads to a hard heart.

Note: There are three forms of laughter:

Tabassum (smile): This is when no sound emerges from the mouth.

Dhik (laugh): This is when a slight sound emerges.

Qahqahah (guffaw or boisterous burst of laughter): This is when a person laughs aloud.

Advice: Nowadays, smiling is seldom found. Laughing has become more common, and boisterous bursts of laughter are generally found in every gathering. People mention such statements to cause people to laugh loud. A person takes two sins on his head: one for laughing out aloud and one for causing others to laugh in that way. He is preparing for himself a road to Jahannum. Even worse is when such laughter takes place in the masjid and graveyards. In between the five salaahs, people gather around and begin discussing others, causing them to laugh out aloud. If some-one cautions them that it is prohibited to do so, they begin mocking him. At the graveyard when people go for *urs*, they take people who will amuse them. They do not remember Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, do not take lesson from the deceased, but engage in mention of the world. They laugh, cause others to laugh and destroy their deen in the process. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would generally smile, seldom would he laugh, and he would never guffaw. Laughing aloud is evil. For this reason, when it occurs in salaah, it causes the salaah and wudhu to break.

Logically as well, it is foolish for one to laugh. The basis for laughter is happiness. It is the height of irrationality to portray joy and happiness for events which are surrounded on all sides by grief and sorrow, and which will eventually terminate. Moreover, when all humans were extracted from the back of Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and separated, we do not know in which group we were those of Jannah or Jahannum. When the soul was blown in the mother's womb, we do not know whether we were written as fortunate or unfortunate. When death arrives, we do not know whether our souls will leave our bodies with glad tidings or evil tidings. Shaikh Sa'di has said,

What benefit is there in long life when finally the creation will pass over our heads?

When Qiyaamah will occur, with fear all-encompassing, severe heat, perspiration dripping, then a person will realize that excessive laughing was nothing but foolishness.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

لَا تَبَاغَضُوا، وَلَا تَدَابَرُوا، وَلَا تَنَافَسُوا، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا

Do not possess enmity for one another, do not backbite one another (or do not turn your back to one another), and do not compete with one another (in worldly matters). Be the servants of Allaah and brothers. (Haakim)¹³⁵

Advice: Whatever Rasulullaah ﷺ prohibited us from doing has become common in this era. People possess great enmity for one another to such an extent that children fight with their parents, students with their teachers, and brothers with each other. When enmity is found, then people are not prepared to meet each other. They turn their backs on each other and refuse to even greet. This even happens in close family circles where each person tries to outdo the other. Such statements are uttered which inflames enmity, whereas it is compulsory for every person to join ties. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى grant guidance to all Muslims!

Incident: Once a person came to Rasulullaah ﷺ and said, “O Rasulullaah ﷺ! Besides the five times salaah, I do not perform any other salaah. Besides the fasting in Ramadhaan, I do not keep other fasts. I am poor, so I do not give charity. I cannot perform Hajj. When I pass away, where will I be, (since I am not doing anything which will take me to Jannah)?”

Rasulullaah ﷺ smiled and replied, “You will be together with me in Jannah, if you protect your heart from two things, hatred and jealousy; your tongue from two things, backbiting and lies; and you protect your eyes from two things, looking at forbidden items and looking down at someone. Then you will enter Jannah with me.” (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹³⁶

From this hadeeth, we learn that abstaining from backbiting is greater than salaah and fasting, as understood by the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. This was mentioned before together with seven reasons.

At this moment, an eighth reason has come to mind. Backbiting is normally given a similarity to eating the flesh of a dead person. A person by nature can leave

¹³⁵ Muslim no. 2563, Musnad Ahmad no. 9051 – could not locate in Haakim

¹³⁶ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 194 – could not locate in another book.

salaah and fasting but cannot tolerate eating some-one's flesh. For this reason, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ regarded abstaining from backbiting as better than salaah and fasting. And Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

These eight reasons prove that abstaining from backbiting is better than fardh salaah and fasting. Then what can be said regarding nafl actions?

O Allaah! Guide my people, for verily they do not know.

CHAPTER FIVE – HARMS OF BACKBITING

Great harm is caused to a person in this world and the hereafter because of backbiting.

HARM 1 – NON-ACCEPTANCE OF DUAAS

The person who is in the habit of backbiting is seldom sorrowful, therefore his duaas are not accepted and he is deprived of divine favours.

Statement: Faqeeh Abul-Laith in the chapter of jealousy in Tambeehul Ghaafileen writes,

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا تُسْتَجَابُ دَعْوَتُهُمْ أَكْلُ الْحَرَامِ، وَمِثْنَارُ الْغِيْبَةِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ غِلٌّ أَوْ حَسَدٌ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

The duaas of three people are not accepted: the one who consumes haram, the person who backbites in abundance, and the one who possesses malice or jealousy for Muslims. ¹³⁷

Incident: Ibrahim ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was asked, ‘Why is it that we make duaas, but they are not accepted, whereas Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has said, ‘Call to me, I will accept your duaas.’ He replied, “Because your hearts are dead.” He was asked, ‘What has caused it to die?’ he replied, “Due to eight qualities:

- a.) You know the rights of Allaah, but you do not fulfil them.
- b.) You recite the Qur’aan but do not practise on its rulings.
- c.) You say that you love Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ but you do not practise on his sunnats.
- d.) You say that you fear death, but you do not prepare for it.
- e.) Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states, “Verily Shaytaan is your enemy, then take him as an enemy,” but you are in harmony with him in sin.
- f.) You claim that you fear the fire, but you throw your bodies into it.
- g.) You claim that you love Jannah, but you do not prepare for it.
- h.) When you awaken from your beds, you throw your faults behind your back, and you spread out the faults of people in front of you.

¹³⁷ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 179 no. 223

You have angered your Sustainer, so how can He then accept your duasas?”
(Tadhkiratul-Awliyaa and Ihya Uloomid-Deen) ¹³⁸

HARM 2 – DECREASE OF RIGHTEOUS ACTIONS IN THE BOOK OF DEEDS

Narration: Abu Umaamah Baahili رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيُعْطَى كِتَابَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيَرَى فِيهِ حَسَنَاتٍ لَمْ يَكُنْ عَمِلَهَا، فَيَقُولُ يَا رَبُّ مِنْ أَيْنَ لِي هَذَا؟ فَيَقُولُ
هَذَا بِمَا اغْتَابَكَ النَّاسُ وَأَنْتَ لَا تَشْعُرُ

A person will be given his book of deeds on the Day of Qiyaamah. He will see therein such good deeds which he had not done. He will say, ‘O Allaah! From where have these actions come?’ Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will reply, ‘This is because people backbit you whilst you were unaware.’ (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen and At-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb)¹³⁹

Incident: Hasan Basri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ heard that a certain person had backbitten about him. He sent him a tray with dates saying, “The news has reached me that you have gifted your good deeds to me (by speaking ill of me), so I would like to recompense you.” (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)¹⁴⁰

Narration: Abu Umaamah Baahili رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيُؤْتَى كِتَابَهُ مَنْشُورًا فَيَقُولُ يَا رَبُّ فَأَيْنَ حَسَنَاتٍ كَذَا وَكَذَا عَمَلْتُهَا لَيْسَتْ فِي صَحِيفِي فَيَقُولُ بِاِغْتِيَابِكَ النَّاسِ

A man will be given his book of deeds open. He will say, “O my Sustainer! Where is such-and-such righteous action which I had performed, but is not in my book?” Allaah will say, “It has been erased because of your backbiting.” (At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb)¹⁴¹

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ

Allaah will not oppress (anyone on the Day of Judgement) even an atom’s weight.

¹³⁸ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 38

¹³⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 164 no. 210 could not locate in At-Targheeb. Narrated from Abyu Nu’aym in Al-Ma’rifah

¹⁴⁰ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 151

¹⁴¹ At-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb no. 4306

Therefore, Allaah will ensure that he will give every person his due right. A person who was backbitten will be given the righteous deeds of the one who had backbitten him.

Hadeeth: One day Rasulullaah ﷺ asked the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, ‘Do you know who is a bankrupt person?’ They replied, “A person who has no money.” He ﷺ replied, “The actual bankrupt person is he will come on the Day of Judgement, having an abundance of salaah, zakaah and fasting. However the rights of people will be on him. He had sworn a person, backbitten another, eaten the wealth of a third, and killed some-one. All the people will demand their rights. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will be very just. He will please every person who has a right. The person’s good deeds will be given to those who had rights over him, and his acts of worship will become less. When all his righteous deeds have terminated, the evil deeds of those who have rights over him will be placed on him. Finally, the others who had rights over him will take their dues and enter into Jannah, and this person will enter Jahannum.”¹⁴²

In reality, this person is bankrupt, because a person who does not have money in this world is assisted by other Muslims, contrary to the other person who will appear on the Day of Judgement in such an environment when every person will be concerned regarding his own condition, the terrifying sounds of Jahannum will be heard by everyone, and there will be no family or friends to assist one. A person will run away from his parents, children and spouse. He will actually desire that if he has any right over his father, he will take it so that his book of good deeds could be filled. Never mind the general people, even the Ambiyaa will not be prepared to intercede on behalf of mankind, being sorrowful over their errors, since the oceans of Allaah’s anger will be manifest on that day, causing every person to lose his senses. There will be an inconceivable condition at that moment. When the actions are weighed, the people’s faces will be full of fear in anticipation to see which side of the pan is weightier.

¹⁴² Similar narration in Muslim no. 2581, Tirmidhi no. 2418, Musnad Ahmad no. 8029 and other places

When a person is called forward for reckoning, he will be in a state of panic. Dread will overcome him. His body will be quivering. Even the Ambiyaa will be trembling. When Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will call forward those who have rights over others, and will deal justly with them, people with great sorrow will wish that they had never spoken ill of any person and had not caused harm to any person. Every person will desire, 'If only my evil deeds could be given to another, and I am given the good deeds of others!' If a strict reckoning is taken from a person on that day, he will be in a huge dilemma. (Ma'aalimut-Tanzeel)

Abdullaah ibn Mubaarak رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "I was once sitting in the company of Sufyaan Thawree رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. He started speaking ill of Imam Abu Haneefah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. I said to him, "Imam Saheb has an amazing quality. He never backbites or complains about anyone." Sufyaan said, 'This is the quality of the intelligent. They do not hand over their good deeds to others and do not backbite others.'" (Narrated in the Musnad of Abu Hanifah and in the Tareekh of Khallikaan)

HARM 3 – INCREASE OF EVIL ACTIONS IN ONE'S BOOK OF DEEDS

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

اياكم والغيبة فان فيها ثلاث آفات لا يستجاب له الدعاء ولا يقبل له الحسنات ويزداد عليه السيئات

Abstain from backbiting since there are three harms therein. The dua of the person who backbites is not answered, his actions are not accepted, and his evil deeds are increased. (Khazaanatur-Riwaayaat)¹⁴³

Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, "When Qiyaamah occurs, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will gather all the people. A caller will call out, "Whoever has been wronged can come forward and take his right." A person will be happy if he has a right on his father, his son, his wife or his brother. He will take his right, even if it is small. This is verified by the following verse in the book of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى,

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

¹⁴³ Could not locate.

When the trumpet is blown (to signal the advent of Qiyaamah), neither shall there be any family ties between them (each person will disassociate from his/her relatives fearing that their relatives may ask them for rewards, which they so desperately need for themselves), nor will they ask about (the welfare of) each other (because each person will worry only about himself). (Mu'minoon verse 101)

A person will be brought forward. An announcer will call out before all people, "This is so-and-so. Whoever has a right over him should come forward and take it." It will then be said (to him), "Give them their rights." He will ask, "O my Sustainer! From where (must I fulfil their rights) since the world has terminated?" Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will say to His angels, "Look to his righteous deeds. Give them their right from this." If an atom's weight of goodness remains, the angels say, "O our Sustainer! Only an atom's weight of righteous deeds remain." Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will say, "Increase it for My servant and enter him into Jannah due to my grace." The proof of this is found in the Book of Allaah, "verily Allaah does not oppress an atom's weight. If there is a good deed, He will increase it." If the person was wretched, the angels will say, "O our Deity! His good deeds have terminated, and there are still people demanding their rights." Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will say, "Take from their evil actions and add it to his evil deeds. Then fling him into the Fire." (Ma'aalimut-Tanzeel)

Advice: Man should never be proud over his actions of worship, nor should he be satisfied with an abundance of worship, since it can happen that on the Day of Judgement, all his acts of worship could be transferred to another person's Book of Deeds, and that person's evil actions may be transferred to him. This is because man at times performs many acts of worship, but then gets involved in many sins. For example, he fasts, but then gets angry with others, backbites and speaks ill of others, and hurts the hearts of others. These evils destroy the reward of the fast.

Imam Ghazaali رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has written,

ولعلك لو حاسبت نفسك وأنت مواظب على صيام النهار وقيام الليل لعلمت أنه لا ينقضى عنك يوم إلا ويجرى على لسانك من غيبة المسلمين ما يستوفي جميع حسناتك

*If you fast continuously and stand up at night in worship, and then take stock of yourself, you will come to realize that not a day passes except that you have backbitten Muslims to such an extent that all your righteous deeds will be destroyed.*¹⁴⁴

Therefore, a person should take great care with regards to the rights of fellow human beings, even if his acts of worship are less; since causing harm to a person is worse than disobedience to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Therefore Sufyaan Thawri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

الْكَبَائِرُ مَا كَانَ فِيهِ الْمَطَالُ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَالصَّغَائِرُ مَا كَانَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ كَرِيمٌ يَغْفِرُ

*A major sin is that which is between you and another servants of Allaah, whilst a minor sin is that which is between you and Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى because Allaah is Kind and All-Forgiving.*¹⁴⁵

When there will be reckoning for small matters in the Hereafter, then undoubtedly, major sins like backbiting and carrying of tales will lead a person to Jahannum.

Statement: Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَتَعَلَّقُ بِالرَّجُلِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيَقُولُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ اللَّهُ فَيَقُولُ وَاللَّهِ مَا أَعْرِفُكَ فَيَقُولُ بَلَى أَنْتَ أَخَذْتَ لَبَنَةً مِنْ خَانِطِي وَأَخَذْتَ خَبِطًا مِنْ ثَوْبِي

*One man will catch hold of another on the Day of Judgement and will say, "Allaah is the judge between me and you." He will say, "By Allaah! I do not know you." The first man will say, "You took one brick from my wall. You took one stitch from my clothing."*¹⁴⁶

Incident: Kahmas ibn al-Hasan said, "I committed a sin, and I am crying over it for the past forty years." He was asked what the sin was. He replied, "One person

¹⁴⁴ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 521

¹⁴⁵ Ma'alimut-Tanzeel under verse 31 Surah Nisaa

¹⁴⁶ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 373

visited me. I bought a fish for him. (After eating), I stood up by the wall of my neighbour, and I took some sand to cleanse my hands.” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁴⁷
 Take lesson from this incident. Do not disgrace yourself on the Day of Judgement. If people have rights over you, seek pardon, so that you are pure on that day. Otherwise, even your acts of worship will not fully benefit you on that day, especially when all will be demanding rights. O Allaah! O Rahmaan! Do not make our reckoning difficult and make us amongst those who are safe on the Day when the books will be presented, O Wahhaab, by the blessings of Nabi ﷺ!

HARM 4 – NON-ACCEPTANCE OF RIGHTEOUS DEEDS

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

ما النار في اليبس بأسرع من الغيبة في حسنات العبد

Fire in dry grass does not have so much of effect (in destruction) than backbiting does to a person's righteous deeds. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁴⁸

Hadeeth: Khaalid ibn Ma'daan said to Mu'adh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “Narrate to me a hadeeth which you heard directly from Rasulullaah ﷺ, memorized it and you remember it every day from the day he narrated to to you.” Mu'aaz رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ cried abundantly and then narrated a lengthy hadeeth in which Rasulullaah ﷺ said to him, “O Mu'adh! At times, the angels record the deeds of a person from morning till evening. The actions are then raised to the heavens. It is illuminated like the light of the sun. When it reaches the first heaven and is about to proceed to the second heaven, the angel says, “Wait. Throw this action on the face of its doer. Say to him, ‘Allaah has not forgiven you.’ He used to backbite the Muslims. (Therefore his action is not accepted.)” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁴⁹

Hasan Basri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “

والله للغيبة أسرع في دين الرجل المؤمن من الأكله في الجسد

¹⁴⁷ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 371

¹⁴⁸ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 148. Allamah Iraqi states, (لم أجد له أصلاً).

¹⁴⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen Page 574

*By Allaah! Backbiting creates destruction faster in one's religious life than a wound causes in the body.*¹⁵⁰

The minute a person backbites, harm is caused to his Deen. A weakness is found in the acceptance of righteous deeds.

HARM 5 – CRY FROM THOSE WHO POSSESS RIGHTS OVER ONE ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

Incident: One day, a person began speaking ill of Hajjaaj before a pious person and made mention of his oppression. The pious person said, “Allaah is very fair. Just as Allaah will take the rights of the oppressed from Hajjaaj, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will take the rights of Hajjaaj from those who spoke ill of him, when Hajjaaj will lay a claim against them.”

Incident: A pious person bought some cotton for his wife. She remarked, “The cotton-sellers are evil people. They have deceived you.” The man divorced his wife. He was asked the reason for doing so. He said, “I am a man with a lot of self-honour. I fear that all the cotton-sellers will lay a case against her on the Day of Judgement.” It will be said, “The cotton-sellers have a case with the wife of so-and-so. Therefore I divorced her.” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁵¹

Note: The lady did not actually backbite the cotton-sellers. Backbiting is when a specific person's fault is exposed. She mentioned a fault of an unknown group of people which technically does not fall under the definition of backbiting. However, the pious person, due to his high level of abstinence, regarded this to be backbiting and left his wife.

The writer states that perhaps he told her that he had purchased the cotton from a certain person. When she exposed a fault, it was of a known person. Therefore, he divorced her.

¹⁵⁰ Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 143

¹⁵¹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 167

Advice: From this incident, we learn that having a wife with evil qualities is harmful. Being with her will create evil qualities in one, as company definitely affects a person.

A poet says (in Persian, the translation of which is),

Stay away from evil company. An evil friend is worse than a harmful snake.

A snake destroys one's life, whereas an evil friend destroys one's life and imaan.

Righteous company creates righteousness within one, whilst evil company creates wickedness within one.

The condition in this era is amazing. Wives are immoral, but the husbands do not leave them. They regard divorce as a blemish. They are shy in Shar'ee matters. Neither do they leave their wives, nor do they advise them. If the wife does not perform salaah, the husband is not concerned. If she does not fast, the husband does not become upset. Despite knowing that the wife remains in an impure state after relations, he never cautions her to take a bath.

The writer states that to have relations with such a wife is not good, since he will be the cause for the evil action. The wife is impure because he had relations with her. If she does not bath, the husband should curtail relations with her, so that she can take lesson, feel regret over her action, and learn to remain in a pure state. Since the men do not teach their wives, they gain control over the man. The men then fear their wives just as they fear lions. If the wife commands him to hand over all his earnings to her so that she can buy unnecessary luxuries, thus depriving other needy family members, he obediently does so. If she does not allow him to go to the masjid and perform salaah, he places the law of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى on the side, and regards her command as binding, whereas even if one's mother prohibits her son from attending Isha salaah due to the dark conditions, he cannot obey her. Imam Bukhaari رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has narrated this from Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. Today if the mother commands one not to go to the masjid, he will go to the masjid to defy her, but if the wife says so, he will immediately obey her.

Such people should repent, and should advise their wives, or limit relations with them, as the company of evildoers is not good, and all of creation regard evildoers as evil.

It is narrated that when Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام erred in Jannah, and he was commanded to come to the world, then everything in Jannah, besides gold and silver, cried for him. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى asked them, “Why are you not crying on his separation?” They said, ‘Why must we cry on the separation of one who went against your command?’ Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى remarked, ‘By My honour and status, (due to your intelligence), I will (grant you such honour that) you will be the value of every item and I will make human beings your slaves.” (Nuzhatul-Majaalis in the chapter of repentance)¹⁵²

O Allaah! Save us from general calamities, O Most Great and Kind. Aameen.

HARM 6 – SEVERE RECKONING

The abstinent fear the Day of Reckoning and at times fall unconscious when thinking of its punishment.

Narration: Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “There will be twelve stages on the Day of Judgement which a person will have to pass. In every stage, there will be a question. On the fourth stage, a person will be questioned regarding backbiting. If he had not backbitten anyone, he will be allowed to proceed to the next level. Otherwise, he will be made to stand for a thousand years in that place.” (Allamah Sha’raani in his book *Ahwaal al-Mawtaa*)

Incident: Once Awf began backbiting about Hajjaaj before ibn Sireen رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, who said, “Allaah is very Just. He will take revenge on behalf of Hajjaaj those who spoke ill of him, just as He will take revenge on behalf of those who Hajjaaj oppressed. When you will meet Allaah tomorrow, the smallest sin committed by you will be severer upon you than the greatest sin which Hajjaaj committed.” (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)

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The author states that when Ibn Sireen regarded it as impermissible to speak ill of Hajjaaj during his lifetime, then to a greater extent, it will not be permissible to speak ill of him now, since it is not permissible to speak ill of the deceased. Details of this have passed. It is also narrated that Hajjaaj sought forgiveness at the time of

¹⁵² Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 2 page 45

¹⁵³ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 153

his demise. Perhaps, by means of this, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will forgive his sins, since He is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. The following words have been reported from Hajjaj at the time of his demise,

اللهم أغفر لي فإن الناس يقولون إنك لا تغفر لي

O my Sustainer! Forgive me because people are saying that You will not forgive me.

Umar ibn Abdul Azeez liked these words and envied Hajjaj for uttering them. When Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ heard these words were uttered by him, he was surprised. (Ihya' Uloomid-Deen)¹⁵⁴

Imam Nawawi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has stated, "It is not permissible to curse Hajjaj." (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)

In another place, it is mentioned that Hajjaj said the following at the time of death,

يا رب قد حلف الأعداء واجتهدوا ... أيمانهم أنني من ساكني النار

أحلفون على عميةا وبجهم ... ما ظنهم بعظيم العفو غفار

O my Sustainer! The enemies have taken strong oaths that I will be from amongst the inhabitants of the Fire.

Are they taking an oath blindly? Woe to them! What is their thought of the Being who is Most Forgiving?

(Hayaatul-Hayawaan)¹⁵⁵

Incident: Once Dawood Tai passed a place and fell down unconscious. He was carried home. When he recovered, people asked him, "What was the reason for falling unconscious here?" He replied, "I once spoke ill of a person in this place. I thought of him demanding his right from me before Allah." (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)¹⁵⁶

Advice: Reckoning will be extremely severe, and why not? If any king apprehends a servant and starts interrogating him, then this person will become distressed by this questioning. When Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ, who possesses knowledge of all matters,

¹⁵⁴ Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 481

¹⁵⁵ Hayaatul-Hayawaan vol. 1 page 246

¹⁵⁶ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 151

starts asking regarding every single action, then it is obvious that the person will begin shaking. Shaikh Sa'di رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states,

What excuse will you put forth for your sins in that place where the Ambiya will be terrified?

For this reason, the true servants of Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ feared His punishment as well as reckoning.

Incident: Ataa said, "We came out with a group of youngsters. Amongst us were middle-aged and young people. They used to perform their Fajr salaah with the wudhu of Isha. Due to excessive standing in worship, their feet had swollen up, their eyes had sunk in, their skin had clung to their bones, their veins were like strings, and it was though their skins were like the covering of watermelons. It seemed as though they had emerged from their graves explaining how Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ honoured the obedient and disgraced the sinners.

Whilst walking, one passed by a place and fell down unconscious. Despite the extreme cold, he was perspiring. His companions sat around him weeping. They rubbed water over him. When he recovered, they asked him the reason for falling unconscious. He said, "I remembered that I had disobeyed Allah in this place."

*(Ihya Uloomid-Deen)*¹⁵⁷

Incident: Imam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was once walking on a certain road, when his foot hit the foot of a young boy. The boy remarked, "O Abu Hanifah! Do you not fear accountability on the Day of Qiyaamah?" On hearing this, Imam Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ fell down unconscious.

He said, "Oppression leads to an evil death." (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)¹⁵⁸

In reality, merely thinking of standing before Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ and being taken to task for evil deeds should cause great fear in a person. If any person is questioned regarding his evil deeds, how uncomfortable he feels and he wishes for the earth

¹⁵⁷ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 186

¹⁵⁸ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 2 page 46

to swallow him. What then will be the condition of people on the plains of resurrection?

HARM 7 – SORROW ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

Shaikh Sa'di states that a person should remove the matter of negligence from his head today, so that he does not have to lower it out of sorrow and regret tomorrow.

If a person speaks ill of another in this world and a case is laid against him in court for defamation of character, how much of sorrow he has to undergo. If he acknowledges he has done wrong, then he is punished; and if he denies wrongdoing, then the claimant will bring forth witnesses to prove his claim. When he is proven guilty, then he will have to suffer the consequences. Similarly, on the Day of Judgement, when a claim is laid against a person for backbiting, Allah ﷻ who is All-Knowing, will question him. If he acknowledges his wrong, he will be disgraced before the entire mankind. If he denies committing the offence, then his limbs will be given the ability to speak and they will testify against him, which will lead to his disgrace. Yes, those who are pious and are blessed with the grace of Allah will be granted salvation and will be saved from sorrow.

Shaikh Sa'di states, "When the pious people will acquire lofty ranks on the Day of Judgement, and will be raised from lowliness to high positions, then you will be sorrowful, because your actions will come before you. O brothers! Stay away from evil, so that you will not be embarrassed before the pious."

Moulana Rumi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ said, "On the Day of Judgement, all secrets will become apparent. Every sinner will be disgraced by himself. The limbs will openly testify before Allaah ﷻ regarding the sins they committed. The hand will say, "I stole in this manner." The lips will say, "I kissed some-one in this manner." The private part will say, "I committed fornication with so-and-so." The eyes will say, "I glanced at forbidden sights." The ear will say, "I enjoyed listening to evil."

For this reason, the true servants of Allah ﷻ possessed great fear for standing before Allah and for the sorrow they will have to undergo on the Day of Judgement.

THE ANSWER OF ABU SULAIMAN DARANI رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

Incident: When Abu Sulaiman Darani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was about to pass away, his companions came to him and said, “Be happy, for you are going to a Being who is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.” He said to them, “Why do you not say, ‘Beware!’ you are going to a Rabb who will take reckoning of minor sins and punish you for major sins.” (This means that just as one should have hope, he should be afraid as well.) (*Ihya Uloomid-Deen*)¹⁵⁹

Advice: When any person today commits a sin and he is advised, he says, “Allah is Most Forgiving. He will forgive our sins.” He does not understand the gravity of sins, and he continues to boldly transgress. He does not understand that if Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ has to question him for a minor matter, he will not be able to put forth any answer. If Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ has to exhibit His anger, then no one will remain conscious. On the plains of resurrection, Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ’s anger will become manifest to such an extent that every person, including the previous Ambiya will be concerned about themselves. None will be prepared to intercede on behalf of the people. When the people will go to the different Ambiya like Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, Moosa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, they will all forward excuses. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ will then go forward and intercede for his people.

Today people do not fear the Divine Anger, and they shamelessly commit sins, whereas regarding a sin to be insignificant after committing it and to exhibit happiness is itself an extremely major sin.

HARM 8 – EATING THE FLESH OF THE BACKBITTEN PERSON

The narration of Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Whoever eats the flesh of his brother (backbites about him) in this world, his flesh will be brought before him on the day of Qiyaamah and it will be said to him, “Eat his flesh now as you had eaten it in the world. When he will eat it, he will scream and frown (due to the foul taste.)” (*Seerat-Ahmadiyyah quoting from Tabaraani*)¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 483

¹⁶⁰ Al-Mu’jamul-Awsat no. 1656

HARM 9 – EATING ONE’S OWN FLESH ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

When Rasulullaah ﷺ went for mi’raaj, he said,

مَرَرْتُ بِقَوْمٍ يَقْطَعُ اللَّحْمُ مِنْ جُنُوبِهِمْ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُمْ: كُلُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْ حِمِّ أَخِيكُمْ، فَقُلْتُ: يَا جِبْرِيلُ مَنْ هَؤُلَاءِ؟ قَالَ: هَؤُلَاءِ مِنْ أُمَّتِكَ الْهَمَّازُونَ اللَّمَّازُونَ يَعْنِي الْمُغْتَابِينَ

I passed by a group of people from whose sides flesh was being cut, and they were made to swallow it. Then it was said to them, “Eat (your flesh) as you used to eat the flesh of your brother.” I asked, “O Jibreel! Who are these people?” He replied, “These are the people who used to backbite.” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁶¹

HARM 10 – SCRATCHING ONE’S BODY WITH NAILS ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

In the narration of Abu Dawood, which was mentioned previously, Rasulullaah ﷺ had seen those who used to backbite were scratching their bodies with their nails.

HARM 11 – SUFFERING FROM RINGWORM IN JAHANNUM

The narration of Mujaahid رحمه الله has passed wherein it is stated that those who backbite Muslims with the intention of disgracing them will suffer from ringworm in Jahannum.

HARM 12 – EARLY ENTRANCE INTO JAHANNUM

If a person who backbites repents from his sin and passes away, then even though he will enter Jannah, he will enter after some time; and if he passes away without seeking forgiveness, then he will be amongst the first to enter Jahannum. This subject matter has been mentioned earlier in this book from Ka’b Ahbaar.

Incident: In Raudatul-Waaizeen, Mulla Miskeen Harawi رحمه الله states that the following advice is written in the books of Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, “O son of Adam! Abstain from backbiting so that Jannah desires you.”

¹⁶¹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 162

HARM 13 – TURNING INTO A MONKEY IN THE HEREAFTER

In Nuzhatul-Majaalis, the statement of Haatim Asamm has already been narrated that those who backbite will be monkeys in the Hereafter.¹⁶²

HARM 14 – PUNISHMENT IN THE GRAVE

Qataadah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has mentioned that one third of the punishment of the grave is due to backbiting.¹⁶³

HARM 15 – POSSESSING QUALITIES OF HYPOCRITES

This incident has passed wherein Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saw a man speaking ill of Hajjaaj. He asked him, “O sir! If Hajjaaj was here, would you have mentioned his faults before him or not?” When he replied in the negative, Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ regarded this as hypocrisy that you praise a person before him and speak ill of him in his absence.”¹⁶⁴

HARM 16 – LOSS OF TRUST

Whoever speaks ill of others before people, then people lose trust in him. They feel that if he can speak ill of him today before us, then there is no reason why he will not speak ill of us tomorrow before others.

Incident: A person had backbitten another before a pious person. The pious person remarked, “O person! Do not speak ill of another in my presence and do not allow me to have evil thoughts regarding you.”

HARM 17 – OPPRESSION OF THE MUSLIMS

Advice: Someone asked a wise person to advise him. He replied,

لَا تَجْفُ رِبِّكَ، وَلَا تَجْفُ الْخَلْقَ، وَلَا تَجْفُ نَفْسَكَ، أَمَّا الْجَفَاءُ بِرَبِّكَ فَإِنْ تَشْتَغِلَ بِخِدْمَةِ غَيْرِهِ مِنَ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ، وَأَمَّا الْجَفَاءُ
مَعَ الْخَلْقِ فَإِنْ تَذْكُرُهُمْ عِنْدَ النَّاسِ بِسُوءٍ، وَأَمَّا الْجَفَاءُ مَعَ النَّفْسِ، فَإِنْ تَتَهَاوَنَ بِفَرَائِضِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

¹⁶² Nuzhatul-Majaalis Vol. 1 page 151

¹⁶³ Ihyaa-Uloomid-Deen Vol. 3 page 143

¹⁶⁴ Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen Vol. 1 page 123

Do not oppress your Sustainer, do not oppress the creation and do not oppress yourself. Oppressing your Sustainer refers to being engaged in worshipping the creation, oppressing the creation refers to speaking ill of them before other people, and oppression of yourself refers to being lax with the fardh duties imposed upon you by Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁶⁵

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said,

خصلتان ليس فوقهما شيء من الشر الشرك بالله والضرر لعباد الله وخصلتان ليس فوقهما شيء من البر الإيمان بالله والنفع لعباد الله

Two qualities are such that there is nothing more evil than them: taking partners with Allaah and causing harm to the servants of Allaah. Two qualities are such that there is nothing better than them: believing in Allaah and benefiting the servants of Allaah. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁶⁶

HARM 18 – HAPPINESS OF THE ENEMY OF ALLAAH – IBLEES

Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام once saw Shaitaan having honey in one hand and ash in the other. Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام asked him the reason. He replied, “I place honey in the mouth of those who backbite (so that they enjoy themselves and because I am pleased with them) and I place the ash in the face of orphans, so that they become pale-faced. People will then be repulsed by their sight and will not do any good to them. (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)¹⁶⁷

Shaitaan becoming pleased is harmful for two reasons: Shaitaan is disobedient to Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ and His anger descends on Shaitaan. Pleasing Shaitaan is a means of drawing the anger of Rahmaan. Whoever obeys his master’s enemy, the master will be displeased with him.

The second reason is that Shaitaan is also man’s enemy. Moulana Rumi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ states that since Shaitaan is your mortal enemy, he is always attempting to destroy your imaan.

¹⁶⁵ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 371

¹⁶⁶ Ihy Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 208 from Musnadul-Firdaws no. 2988

¹⁶⁷ Page 150

So outwardly, he acts like a friend, since the nafs enjoys following him, but quietly, he is lighting a flame. Fooling the nafs, he takes it into Jahannum. Such an enemy is extremely dangerous, and it is quite difficult to repel him, since a person recognizes an open enemy and is aware of his evil, contrary to a hidden enemy. His words outwardly seem very appealing, but in reality causes great harm. For this reason, never mind the general people, even the pious speak ill of Shaitaan outwardly, but in reality, obey him. Therefore, Wahb ibn Munabbih رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

اتق الله ولا تسب الشيطان في العلانية وأنت صديقه في السر

Fear Allaah! Do not speak ill of Shaitaan openly, whilst you are his friend internally. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁶⁸

Those whom Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ has guided regard Shaitaan to be their enemy externally and internally, and they completely abstain from him.

Incident: Faqeeh Abul-Laith has mentioned an amazing incident in the chapter of tawakkul.

Shaqeeq Balkhi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said to Haatim Asamm رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, “For how long have you been staying with me?” He replied, “Thirty years.” Shaqeeq asked him, “What have you learnt in this thirty years?”

Haatim said, “I learnt six lessons. If I practise on them, I have hope that it will save me from the evils of this world.”

Shaqeeq said, “Inform me of these six lessons.” Perhaps if I practise on them, I will be saved.”

Haatim said, “I see that Allah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ states,

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

There is no creature on the earth except that Allaah has taken responsibility for its sustenance. (Hood verse 6)

I saw myself from being amongst these creatures to whom Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ provides sustenance. I realized that whatever is written for me will definitely reach me. Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ grants sustenance to the elephant despite its huge size and He does

not forget the mosquito despite it being so small. So I handed my matters to Allaah ﷻ and I engaged in His worship. I have no other concern besides His worship. Shaqeeq said, ‘You have understood well. What is the second lesson?’

Haatim said, “I see that Allaah ﷻ states,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

Undoubtedly the believers are brothers. (Hujuraat verse 10)

I realized that all the believers are my brothers. A brother should possess compassion for his brother. I see that the cause of enmity which occurs between brothers is due to jealousy. I have made an effort to remove jealousy from my heart. My heart has become such that if any problem afflicts a believer in the east, I begin worrying about it as though it has afflicted me; and if any goodness is received by a Muslim in the west, I become so happy as though I received this goodness.

Shaqeeq said, ‘You have understood well. What is the third lesson?’

Haatim said, “I pondered, and I found that every person has a beloved. It is necessary for a lover to express his love to his beloved. I found my beloved to be the obedience of Allaah ﷻ. All other beloveds will eventually be detached from me except righteous deeds. It will remain with me in the grave, on the plains of Qiyaamah and on the Siraat (Bridge). I detached myself from all other beloveds and I made the obedience of Allaah a beloved.

Shaqeeq said, “You have understood well. What is the fourth lesson?”

Haatim said, “I see that every person has an enemy. A person must be on guard and have enmity for his enemy. I found my enemy to be the disbeliever and Shaitaan. I found the enmity of the disbeliever to be lighter, because if he fights me and kills me, then I will be a martyr. If I kill him, I will be rewarded. I found the enmity of Shaitaan to be more severe because he sees me whilst I cannot see him. He wants me to join him in the Fire. So as long as I live, I will remain engaged in enmity with him. I left out enmity with others.

Shaqeeq said, “You have understood well. What is the fifth lesson?”

Haatim said, “I see that every person has a house. Every house has to be built. I know that my house is the grave. So I have made effort to build it up.”

Shaqeeq said, “You have understood well. What is the sixth lesson?”

Haatim said, “I see that there is a seeker for everything. The one seeking me is the Angel of Death. I do not know when he will come to me. I have prepared for him like a bride who is being taken for the first time to her husband’s house. When he will come to me, I will not ask him for any respite.

Shaqeeq said, “You have understood well. If you practise on these, you and I will gain salvation.”¹⁶⁹

HARM 19 – DISOBEDIENCE OF ALLAAH تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

Disobedience of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ and being void of divine fear leads to destruction and loss. This is actually a very lowly action, as Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ is watching and knows everything. Haatim Asamm رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

إِذَا أَرَدْتَ أَنْ تُعْصِيَ مُؤْلَكَ فَاعْصِ فِي مَوْضِعٍ لَا يَرَاكَ

*When you intend to disobey your Master, then disobey him in such a place where
He cannot see you. (Moulana Jaami has narrated this is Nafahaatul-Ins)*

ADVICE OF LUQMAAN عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام: Amongst the advices Luqmaan عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام gave to his son, one was,

إِذَا أَرَدْتَ أَنْ تُعْصِيَ اللَّهَ، فَاطْلُبْ مَكَانًا لَا يَرَاكَ اللَّهُ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ

*O my son! When you intend to disobey Allaah, then look for such a place where
Allaah and His angels cannot see you. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁷⁰*

Sa’di رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ has stated,

*Just as you feel ashamed of people you know and strangers, have shame before
Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ.*

When every animal is afraid of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ, then why should man too not fear Him?

¹⁶⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 467

¹⁷⁰ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 469

Incident: Once Dawood عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام engaged in worship for one year at the edge of a river. He then said, “O Allaah! My back has bent in your worship, and I have cried in abundance, but I do not know whether my final abode will be in Jannah or Jahannum.” A frog said, “O Dawood! After worshipping Allaah for one year, you are boasting before Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ. By Allaah, I have been worshipping Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ for thirty years in this place, and then too my body is shaking with the fear of Allaah.” On hearing this, Dawood عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام cried excessively. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁷¹

Incident: Dawood عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام cried for forty days in sajdah. He did not raise his head until plants began growing from his tears and covered his head. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁷²

When great people like Dawood عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام can cry so much, then it is necessary for people like us who are involved in backbiting and in other major sins day and night to cry all the time. Sa’di states,

O nafs! Fear for your sins so that on the Day of Judgement, you do not have to fear anything.

However, we are living with a veil over our heads. Moulana Rumi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ states in Mathnawi,

O simple-minded person! You are attacking yourself like a lion attacks you.

Due to this, when people hear the harms of backbiting and the punishment meted out due to engaging in it, they begin crying. However, when the gathering commences, the fear leaves their heart. The softness in their heart is like that of women. When women hear some shattering news, they begin wailing. After one hour, the thought does not even cross their mind. These people are similar to them.

O Allaah! Make us amongst the pious and those who will be granted salvation.

Aameen

¹⁷¹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 486

¹⁷² Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol.4 page 180

HARM 20 – OPPOSITION TO RASULULLAAH ﷺ

Rasulullaah ﷺ prohibited people from backbiting. He would rebuke the sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ in this matter. Close to his demise, in his farewell sermon, he prohibited every person from backbiting and declared backbiting to be a means of destruction.

HARM 21 – FASTING BECOMING MAKROOH

By backbiting, ones fast becomes makrooh. In Ashiatul-Lama'at, it is stated that according to Sufyan Thawri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, backbiting breaks a person's fast. This is established from certain narrations.

Mujaahid رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

خصلتان يفسدان الصيام الغيبة والكذب

Two qualities spoil (break) the fast: backbiting and lies. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹⁷³

Incident: Two people were fasting. They performed Zuhr or Asr salaah with Rasulullaah ﷺ. After the salaah, Rasulullaah ﷺ said to the two of them, "Repeat your wudhu as well as your Zuhr and Asr salaah. Continue your fast but make a qadha of your fast." They asked, "O Rasulullaah! Why are you commanding us to do so?" He ﷺ replied, 'Because you had backbitten.'" (Mishkaat and Shuabul-Imaan) ¹⁷⁴

Incident: Once Rasulullaah ﷺ commanded the people to fast. He said, "None of you should break his fast until I grant him permission." In the evening, people came one by one asking Rasulullaah ﷺ permission to break their fast. One man came and said, "O Rasulullaah! There are two young women from your family who are fasting. They are feeling shy to come to you. Give them permission to break their fast." Rasulullaah ﷺ turned away from him. The man repeated the request and again Rasulullaah ﷺ turned away from him. After the third request, Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "They did not fast. How did

¹⁷³ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 1 page 234

¹⁷⁴ Mishkaat no. 4873, Shuabul-Imaan no. 6303

they fast when they spent the whole day eating the flesh of people! Go and command them to vomit if they are fasting.” He returned to them and informed them. They both vomited a clot of blood. He returned to Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and informed him. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ remarked, “By that Being in whose control my life lies, if it remained in your stomachs, the fire would have eaten it.” (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹⁷⁵

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

أَرْبَعٌ يُفْطِرْنَ الصَّائِمَ وَيَنْقُضْنَ الْوُضُوءَ وَيَهْدِمْنَ الْعَمَلَ الْغَيْبَةَ، وَالْكَذِبَ، وَالنَّمِيمَةَ وَالنَّظَرَ إِلَى مُحَاسِنِ الْمَرْأَةِ الَّتِي لَا يَحِلُّ لَهُ النَّظَرُ إِلَيْهَا، وَهَنْ يَسْقِيَنَّ أَصُولَ الشَّرِّ كَمَا يَسْقِي الْمَاءُ أَصُولَ الشَّجَرِ

Four actions break the fast and wudhu and destroy other righteous actions: backbiting, lies, carrying tales and looking at women whom one is forbidden to look at. These actions irrigate the roots of evil just as water irrigates the roots of trees. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁷⁶

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

خَمْسٌ يَفْطِرْنَ الصَّائِمَ الْكَذِبَ وَالْغَيْبَةَ وَالنَّمِيمَةَ وَالْيَمِينَ الْكَاذِبَةَ وَالنَّظَرَ بِشَهْوَةٍ

Five actions break the fast: lies, backbiting, carrying tales, false oaths and evil glancing. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁷⁷

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ، فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ فِي أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ

Whoever does not abstain from lies (whilst fasting), then Allaah has no need for him leaving out eating and drinking. ¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 141, Kitaabus-Samt no. 170 and Dhammul-Gheebah no. 32 of Ibn Abid-Dunya

¹⁷⁶ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 211 page 164

¹⁷⁷ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 1 page 234, Kanzul-Ummal no. 23820

¹⁷⁸ Bukhaari no. 1903

This means that Allaah ﷻ does not turn His attention to that fast. Mulla Ali Qari رحمه الله writes in Mirqaat, “The meaning of (قَوْلُ الزُّورِ) is any type of falsehood, including lies, backbiting and carrying of tales.”

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

كَمْ مِنْ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صَوْمِهِ إِلَّا الْجُوعُ وَالْعَطَشُ

How many fasting people there are who gain nothing from their fast except hunger and thirst (since they were engaged in backbiting). (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹⁷⁹

Point of note: Fasting is of three types. The first is where a person abstains from eating, drinking and fulfilling sexual desires. As for other prohibited actions like backbiting, etc. he continues to indulge in them as he does on other days. This is the fasting of the general masses.

The second type is where the fasting person abstains from all prohibited actions like backbiting, etc. This is the fast of the special people.

The third type is where a person leaves all types of worldly connections and devotes his heart to the service and worship of Allaah ﷻ. This is the fast of the perfect ones (kaamileen).

By committing sins like backbiting, the fast does not break¹⁸⁰, but the fast becomes makrooh and substandard. Therefore, the fast of the special ones and the perfect ones do not remain with backbiting, even though the fast is correct in itself. For this reason, the Hanafis and others interpret these ahaadeeth stating that Rasulullaah ﷺ was showing his dislike and anger at those who backbite, and pointed to the fact that fasting cannot reach the level of perfection due to sins like backbiting but becomes defective. And Allaah knows best!

Advice: People are always backbiting and causing harm to others, moreso when fasting. Due to excessive hunger whilst fasting, Shaitaan takes control of people. They then tread the path to Jahannum. That is why I become very angry on the

¹⁷⁹ Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen vol. 1 page 235, similar narration in Ibn Majah no. 1690, Ibn Hibbaan no. 3841, Musnad Ahmad no. 9685

¹⁸⁰ (according to the majority of jurists-translator)

fasting people today. They swear people, speak ill of Muslims and engage in futilities in the masjid instead of engaging in tilawat. It is amazing that when the moon of Ramadhaan is sighted, people spread out their bedding in the masjid, outwardly making a show of worshipping Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ. However they do nothing besides backbiting and discussing worldly matters. Whilst fasting, they engage in more evil acts. They have no time for tilawat and dhikr. Their company is with evildoers. Their final result will be the Fire. May Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ guide all to keep the mouths sealed whilst fasting, to engage in dhikr and salawaat on Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and to abstain from all forms of futility. Aameen O Sustainer of the universe.

HARM 22 – CREATING OF ENMITY

Shaikh Sa'di رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ has said, "Fights between two people is like a fire, and the one who creates the enmity is like the one putting the firewood."

When people discuss the faults of another, then they are plagued with evil thoughts regarding him, they begin to hate him, and they constantly search for his faults. When they hear of his faults once, then as soon as they think of him, his faults appear in their minds. Without mentioning his faults to others, they feel uncomfortable.

Incident: A person spoke ill of a Muslim before one intelligent person. The intelligent man remarked, "You firstly delayed in coming to me. Now you have come to me with three wrongs: you have created enmity in my heart for my brother, you have engrossed my empty heart (in evil thoughts) and you have caused me to possess evil thoughts of yourself, whom I regarded as trustworthy before." (*Tambeehul-Ghaafileen*)¹⁸¹

EXPOSING SECRETS:

It is prohibited to expose a Muslim brother's fault before anyone. However, this sin has become common nowadays. Therefore, it is best to reduce association with people and not to cause harm to them.

¹⁸¹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 217 Page 170, Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 156

STATEMENT OF IMAM GHAZAALI رَحِمَهُ اللهُ

Imam Ghazaali رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has written in the chapter regarding the rights of Muslims,

وَاحْذَرْ صُحْبَةَ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَقِيلُونَ عَثْرَةً وَلَا يَغْفِرُونَ زَلَّةً وَلَا يَسْتُرُونَ عَوْرَةً وَيُحَاسِبُونَ عَلَى النَّقِيرِ وَالْقَطْمِيرِ
وَيَحْسُدُونَ عَلَى الْقَلِيلِ وَالْكَثِيرِ

Abstain from the company of such people who do not accept any excuse, do not forgive errors, do not conceal mistakes, take every small matter into account and are jealous over all things. ¹⁸²

STATEMENT OF UMAR رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ

Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said,

ليس لفاجر حرمه

There is no honour for an open sinner. (Ihya-uloomid-Deen)¹⁸³

This means that it is correct to backbite him.

HARM 23 – WUDHU REMAINS INCOMPLETE

Details of this have passed.

¹⁸² Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 212

¹⁸³ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 153

THE BENEFITS OF ABSTAINING FROM BACKBITING

There are great benefits in abstaining from backbiting. The person who does so gains great status.

BENEFIT 1: SAVING ONESELF FROM EATING THE FLESH OF A MUSLIM

Backbiting is like eating the flesh of a Muslim. The narrations have passed already.

Incident: Rasulullaah ﷺ commanded some people to pick their teeth. They remarked, “O Rasulullaah! We have not eaten anything today. Why should we pick our teeth?”

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “By Allaah! I see the flesh of your brother between your teeth.” They had spoken ill of that person.” (Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)¹⁸⁴

Incident: Some-one asked Umm-Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا regarding backbiting. She informed the person that one Jumuah (Friday) morning, Rasulullaah ﷺ set out for Jumuah. Her neighbour from amongst the Ansaar came to her. They spoke ill and laughed at some men and women. They continued doing so until Rasulullaah ﷺ returned from Jumuah. When they heard his voice, they kept quiet. He ﷺ stood at the door of his house, placed the corner of his shawl on his nose and said, “Oof! Go out, vomit and clean yourselves with water.” Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا went out and vomited quite a bit of meat. When she saw the meat, she was surprised, since she had last eaten meat a week ago. Rasulullaah ﷺ asked her as to what came out when she vomited. When she informed him, he said, “That was the meat which you had consumed that morning. Neither you nor your friend should ever do this action again.” Her friend informed her that she too had vomited a similar amount of flesh. (Ibn Mardawayhi has narrated this as quoted in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 570, quoting from Musnad Abd ibn Humaid

¹⁸⁵ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7-page 572/3

BENEFIT 2: SAVING ONESELF FROM THE SIN OF ADULTERY

Backbiting is worse than adultery. The person backbiting is like one who is committing adultery. Such narrations have passed before. One other narration will be mentioned here:

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِنَّ الرِّبَا نَيْفٌ وَسَبْعُونَ بَابًا أَهْوَنُ بَابًا مِنَ الرِّبَا مِثْلُ مَنْ أَتَى أُمَّهُ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ وَدَرَّهَمٌ مِنَ الرِّبَا أَشَدُّ مِنْ خَمْسٍ وَثَلَاثِينَ زَنِيَةً وَأَشَدُّ الرِّبَا وَأَرَبَى الرِّبَا وَأَخْبَثُ الرِّبَا انْتِهَاكَ عَرَضُ الْمُسْلِمِ وَانْتِهَاكَ حَرَمَتُهُ

Interest has more than 70 doors. The lightest door is like one who commits adultery with his mother in Islam. One dirham of interest is more severe than committing adultery thirty-five times. The worst and most severe form of interest is taking the honour of a Muslim. (Shuabul-Imaan)¹⁸⁶

BENEFIT 3: FAST NOT BEING SPOILT

According to some, backbiting destroys the fast, as was mentioned before.

Incident: In Ramadhaan, one person was cupping another and whilst doing so, they indulged in backbiting. Rasulullaah ﷺ passed by them and said,

أَفْطَرَ الْحَاجِمُ وَالْمُحْجُومُ

The one cupping and the one cupped have broken their fast. (Bayhaqi)¹⁸⁷

Point: According to some, the fast of the cupper is broken, by cupping. Their proof is the words of Rasulullaah ﷺ (أَفْطَرَ الْحَاجِمُ وَالْمُحْجُومُ). However, if the hadeeth is in accordance to what Bayhaqi has narrated that both were backbiting, and it is for this reason that Rasulullaah ﷺ uttered those words, then this hadeeth will not be a proof for those jurists. And Allaah ﷻ knows the truth, because He is truth, by Him is the truth, truth emerges from Him and returns back to Him.

¹⁸⁶ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6289, similar narration in al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 7151, Musannaf Abdur-Razzaaq no. 15345

¹⁸⁷ Ould not locate the first part. The second part is found in many kitaabs, such as As-Sunanul-Kubra no. 8276, Abu Dawood no. 2369, ibn Majah no. 1681

BENEFIT 4: WUDHU NOT AFFECTED

By backbiting, one's wudhu is affected. It is for this reason that according to the Hanafis, if a person backbites or speaks lies in the state of wudhu, then it is best for him to perform wudhu again.

Statement: Ibrahim Taabi'ee رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

الْوُضُوءُ مِنْ الْحَدَثِ وَأَذَى الْمُسْلِمِ

*Wudhu is performed due to hadath and causing harm to a Muslim.*¹⁸⁸

Incident: Two men were sitting by the door of a masjid. A man who had been effeminate and then abandoned this quality passed by them. The two men said, "Some of that quality still remains in him." The salaah commenced. They entered the masjid and performed salaah with the people. Thereafter they felt uncomfortable with what they had said. So they went to Ataa and asked him what to do. He commanded them to repeat their wudhu and salaah and to keep a qadha fast if they had been fasting.¹⁸⁹

Advice: Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said,

الْحَدَثُ حَدَثَانِ حَدَثٌ مِنْ فَمِكَ وَحَدَثٌ مِنْ نَوْمِكَ وَحَدَثٌ أَلْفَمُ أَشَدُّ الْكُذْبِ وَالْغَيْبَةِ

*Hadath (impurity) is of two types: one is from your mouth, and one is from your sleep. The impurity of the mouth is worse: lies and backbiting. (Durr-Manthoor)*¹⁹⁰

BENEFIT 5: ABSTAINING FROM HARAAM

The prohibition of backbiting is established unanimously (by ijma') from the verses of the Qur'aan and ahaadeeth, as has been mentioned above:

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

الْمُؤْمِنُ حَرَامٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِ لَحْمُهُ عَلَيْهِ حَرَامٌ أَنْ يَأْكُلَهُ وَيَغْتَابَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ وَعَرَضَهُ عَلَيْهِ حَرَامٌ أَنْ يَخْرِقَهُ
وَوَجْهَهُ عَلَيْهِ حَرَامٌ أَنْ يَلْطَمَهُ

It is forbidden for a believer to consume the flesh of another believer and to speak ill of him in his absence, it is forbidden for him to attack the honour of another

¹⁸⁸ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6300

¹⁸⁹ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 143

¹⁹⁰ Shuabul-Imaan no. 6298

believer, and it is forbidden for him to slap the face of another believer. (Ad-Durrul-Manthoor quoting from ibn-Mardawayhi¹⁹¹)

Advice: The prohibition of backbiting is not known to many people today. Therefore, if some-one says to them that they are perpetrating a forbidden action, they become upset, and say, “Are you accusing us of adultery?” They do not understand that just as how adultery is forbidden, backbiting is also forbidden. Adultery is not the only prohibited action. Details of this have passed. It is for this reason that people supplicate to Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ for protection of adultery but remain engrossed in backbiting. May Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ guide such people and bring them from evil towards righteousness! Aameen.

BENEFIT 6: SAVING ONESELF FROM WOUNDING THE TONGUE

Sufyaan Thawri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

لَأَنْ أَرْمِي رَجُلًا بِسَهْمٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَرْمِيَهُ بِلِسَانِي، لِأَنَّ رَمِيَ اللِّسَانَ لَا يُخْطِئُ وَرَمِيَ السَّهْمِ قَدْ يُخْطِئُ
It is more beloved to me to attack a person with an arrow than to attack him with my tongue, because the attack with the tongue does not miss, whilst the attack with the arrow misses at times. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁹²

BENEFIT 7: SAVING ONESELF FROM SORROW

The person who attacks people and does not control his tongue is eventually sorrowful. However, this sorrow is to no avail, as the words which emerge from the mouth cannot be returned. It is for this reason that the pious abstain from futile speech, and utter only that which is necessary, so that they are saved from sorrow and can laugh in the hereafter.

Incident: Abdullah ibn Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ whilst reciting labbaik on Mount Safa during Hajj would advise himself,

يَا لِسَانُ قُلْ خَيْرًا تَغْنَمُ وَاسْكُتْ عَنْ شَرِّ تَسْلِمُ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَنْدَمَ

¹⁹¹ Vol. 7 page 573

¹⁹² Page 219 no. 277

O tongue! Say good words, you will receive great rewards. Abstain from evil speech, you will remain safe before you regret. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)¹⁹³

Incident: Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ passed by a swine on the road and said to it, 'Pass by safely.' His companions asked him, "Are you saying this to a swine?" Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said,

إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ أَعُوذَ لِسَانِي الْمُنْطِقَ بِالسُّوءِ

I fear that some evil emerges from my tongue. (Muwatta)¹⁹⁴

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ سَرِهَ أَنْ يَسْلَمْ فَلْيَلِزِمِ الصَّمْتَ

He who likes to be safe (from sorrow and problems) should remain quiet.

(Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹⁹⁵

Incident: Luqmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was an Abyssinian slave. His wisdom became apparent once when his master asked him to slaughter a goat and to bring to him the two best pieces of flesh to him. He did so and brought the heart and tongue. Another time, he asked him to slaughter another goat and to bring to him the two worst pieces of flesh. Again he brought the tongue and heart. When asked the reason, Luqmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ answered, "There are no pieces of flesh better than these two when they are correct. If they are corrupt, then there is nothing worse than them." *(Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁹⁶*

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ وَقِيَ شَرَّ قَبْقِبِهِ وَذَبَذَبَهُ وَلَقَلَقَهُ فَقَدْ وَقِيَ الشَّرَّ كُلَّهُ

A person who is saved from the evil of his stomach, private part and tongue is saved from all types of evils. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)¹⁹⁷

Advice of Luqmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: Luqmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to his son,

¹⁹³ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 110

¹⁹⁴ Muwatta no. 2817

¹⁹⁵ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 109, As-Samt of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 11

¹⁹⁶ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 276 page 218

¹⁹⁷ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 109

يَا بُنَيَّ مَنْ يَصْحَبْ صَاحِبَ السُّوءِ لَمْ يَسْلَمْ، وَمَنْ يَدْخُلْ مَدْخَلَ السُّوءِ يُتَّهَمُ، وَمَنْ لَا يَمْلِكْ لِسَانَهُ يَنْدَمُ

O my beloved son! Whoever accompanies evil people will not be saved (from falling into evil company). Whoever enters evil places will be accused. Whoever cannot control his tongue will face regret. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)¹⁹⁸

BENEFIT 8: SAVING ONESELF FROM COMMITTING A MAJOR SIN

HADEETH: Uqbah ibn Aamir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as to which action will be a means of salvation for a person. He صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied,

أَمْلِكْ عَلَيْكَ لِسَانَكَ، وَلَيْسَعَكَ بَيْتَكَ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَى خَطِيئَتِكَ

Control your tongue, stay in your homes (so that you can be engaged in the worship of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ by turning away from others) and cry over your sins.

(Musnad Ahmad as quoted in Mishkaat)¹⁹⁹

It is for this reason that many of the abstinent chose the approach of keeping quiet at all times, as they feared that they may fall into some prohibited speech if they spoke.

INCIDENT: Ibrahim Taymi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says, “A person who stayed in the company of Rabi’ ibn Khaytham for twenty years said that he never heard any word from him by which he could be faulted.” Moosa ibn Saeed says that when Husain رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was martyred, one of Rabi’s students said, “If Rabi’ speaks, then today he will speak. He went to him and informed him of the news. Rabi’ looked to the heavens and recited the following verse,

اللَّهُمَّ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، أَنْتَ تَحْكُمُ بَيْنَ عِبَادِكَ: فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ

O Allaah, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, You will judge between your servants concerning that over which they used to differ. (Zumur verse 46)

He did not utter any other word. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²⁰⁰

HADEETH: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

¹⁹⁸ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 273 page 216

¹⁹⁹ Musnad Ahmad no. 22235, Tirmidhi no. 2406

²⁰⁰ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 272 page 215

مَنْ صَمَتَ نَجَا

Whoever remains silent, will attain salvation. (Daarimi as quoted in Mishkaat)²⁰¹

STATEMENT: Taoos رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

لساني سبع إن أرسلته أكلني

My tongue is a wild animal. If I let it free, it will eat me up. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)²⁰²

As long as a wild animal is kept in a cage, it does not cause harm. When left free, it can destroy many people's lives. Similar is the condition with the tongue.

NARRATION: Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to one young person,

يَا شَابُّ إِنْ وَقِيتَ شَرَّ ثَلَاثٍ فَقَدْ وَقِيتَ شَرَّ الشَّبَابِ: إِنْ وَقِيتَ شَرَّ لَفْلَقِكَ يَعْنِي لِسَانَكَ، وَدَبْدَبِكَ يَعْنِي فَرْجَكَ،
وَقَبْقَبِكَ يَعْنِي بَطْنَكَ

O young boy! If you are saved from three things, you will be saved from the evil of youth: the evil of the tongue, private part and stomach. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²⁰³

MAN'S LIFE

ADVICE: The life of man is divided into three portions: One is of childhood until the age of puberty. The second portion is of youth and the third portion is of old age. It is apparent that a person cannot worship Allaah in old age, since this is a period of weakness. When a person is immature, he does not possess correct understanding and therefore is not inclined to acts of worship. Secondly, acts of worship are not compulsory on him as yet.

So the only time of worship is in one's youth when a person has strength and ability. However, at this age, Shaytaan overpowers a person, and a person follows his carnal desires. If he has to commit fornication, backbite or consume forbidden wealth, it is of no consequence to him.

²⁰¹ Daarimi no. 2755, Tirmidhi no. 2501

²⁰² Ihyaa Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 111, As-Samt of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 39 from Sufyaan quoting the people of the past.

²⁰³ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 276 page 218

Shaikh Sa'di رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "Regard your free time as a great bounty, since the entire world is equal to one breath. According to the people of intelligence, one breath is better than the entire world."

Faqih Abul-Laith has made mention of the statement of a wise person which translates as,

"You passed your childhood in play, your youth in fulfilment of desires and your old age in weakness, now what worship of Allaah will you do?"

If a child engages in worship, then this is no achievement, as he merely imitates the actions of his elders. He has no powerful desires troubling him at that time. If an old person engages in worship, then this too is not surprising, as he realizes that his end is near, so he is forced to worship Allaah. If a young person however engages in abundance of worship and abstains from utilizing his limbs in evil, despite having excessive desire and being attacked by Shaytaan, then he is worthy of praise. Sa'di رَحِمَهُ اللهُ states, "O young one! Engage in acts of worship and obedience today since your youth will not remain tomorrow.'

However, the young person who outwardly performs acts of worship like salaah and salawaat upon Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, but is engaged in backbiting, attaining unlawful wealth, ogling at young girls, advising others to engage in prohibited actions, then the evil of his youth has not ended until he does not leave a life of sin. Remember abandoning sin is better than performing (optional) actions of worship.

ADVICE OF A WISE PERSON:

كُلُّ سَفَلَةٍ يَعْمَلُ الطَّاعَةَ، وَلَكِنَّ الْكَرِيمَ مَنْ يَتْرُكُ الْمَعْصِيَةَ

Every person, including lowly people, do acts of righteousness, but a noble person is he who abstains from sins. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen no. 559 page 374

By sinning, a black dot is formed in the heart. As a person continues to sin, the black dot intensifies.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا أَذْنَبَ كَانَتْ نُكْثَةً سَوْدَاءَ فِي قَلْبِهِ، فَإِنْ تَابَ وَتَزَعَّ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ، صُقِلَ قَلْبُهُ، فَإِنْ زَادَ، زَادَتْ

When a believer sins, a black dot forms on his heart. If he repents and abstains from the sin, the heart becomes polished. If he does another sin, then it increases.

(Ibn Maajah)²⁰⁵

Advice: For this reason, Sirri Saqati رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

إِنِّي لَأَنْظُرُ إِلَى أَنْفِي كُلَّ يَوْمٍ مَرَاتٍ مَخَافَةً أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدْ أَسْوَدَ وَجْهِي

I look at my nose daily a few times, out of fear that perhaps it has become black due to my sins. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²⁰⁶

The writer states that many youngsters are extremely handsome in their youth. After maturing, we see that the colour of their faces change due to the sins they commit. And Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ knows best.

BENEFIT 9: SAVING ONESELF FROM EATING THE FLESH OF A CORPSE

As mentioned earlier, backbiting is like eating the flesh of one's brother. Another incident has been mentioned.

Incident: Once Rasulullaah ﷺ passed by a dead mule. On seeing it, he remarked,

أَنْ يَأْكُلَ أَحَدُكُمْ مِنْ هَذَا حَتَّى يَمْلَأَ بَطْنَهُ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ الْمُسْلِمِ

Eating this and filling your belly is better than eating the flesh of a Muslim person.

(Ibn Abi Shaibah as quoted in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)²⁰⁷

BENEFIT 10: SAVING ONESELF FROM GRIEF ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

When people will catch hold of the person who used to backbite on the Day of Judgement, he will be terrified. The evil actions of others will be loaded onto him. On that day, the quality of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ's greatness and anger will be manifest.

²⁰⁵ Ibn Maajah no. 4244, Tirmidhi with similar wording no. 3334

²⁰⁶ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 185

²⁰⁷ Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaibah no. 25537

Besides this, the faults of people will be exposed in a huge gathering, and the book of deeds will be spread out.

ADVICE: Awzaai رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ said, "This has reached me that it will be said to someone on the Day of Judgement, "Stand up and take your right from so-and-so person." He will say, "I have no right on him." It will be said, "Why not? He spoke about you regarding you on a certain day regarding a certain matter." (Ad-Durrul-Manthhor)²⁰⁸

ADVICE: Imam Ghazaali رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ states,

فهذا إنما يرجي لعبد مؤمن ستر على الناس عيوبهم واحتمل في حق نفسه تقصيرهم ولم يحرك لسانه بذكر مساوئهم ولم يذكرهم في غيبتهم بما يكرهون لو سمعوه

This (the favours of Allaah) are hoped for a believing servant who concealed the faults of people, kept them to himself, did not make mention of their weaknesses and in their absence, did not mention any such statement that if they had to hear it, they would be displeased.

O Allaah! O Most Merciful! Grant myself, my parents, my uncles, my family members and my teachers shade under Your Throne on the Day of Judgement, and do not take us to task in reckoning! Aameen, O Sustainer of the worlds!

BENEFIT 11: GAINING THE PLEASURE OF RASULULLAAH ﷺ

When Rasulullaah ﷺ is informed in his resting place that a certain person has committed a sin, he becomes saddened and seeks forgiveness for the person. On the other hand, when the news of a person's righteous actions reach him, he becomes extremely happy.

Therefore, when he is informed that a certain person is backbiting another, he becomes distressed, and when he is informed that a person has abstained from backbiting, he becomes elated.

O Allaah! Make it such that Nabi ﷺ is pleased with us and join us with him on the day the pious are resurrected. Aameen, O Most Merciful of those who show mercy!

CAUSES OF BACKBITING AND THE CURE TO ABSTAIN

²⁰⁸ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 576, Shuabul-Imaan no. 6313

There are many causes which lead people to backbite. Therefore, one should stay away from these causes, so that he could save himself from this sin. Therefore, I will now enumerate the causes which lead to backbiting, and the manner in which one can save himself from these actions.

FIRST CAUSE: Anger- when a person is upset with another, he speaks ill of him. This is of different forms:

a.) Anger in worldly matters: An example of this is when a person hears that another is swearing him or speaking ill of him, he goes into a rage. Shaytaan incites him, and he now starts speaking ill of the other person, without even investigating whether the first person had in reality spoke ill of him or not.

HADEETH: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ خَزَنَ لِسَانَهُ سَتَرَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ، وَمَنْ كَفَّ غَضَبِهِ كَفَّ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَذَابَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ اعْتَدَرَ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَبْلَ عُذْرِهِ

*The one who controls his tongue, Allaah will conceal his faults (on the Day of Judgement.) The one who controls his anger, Allaah will keep back from him His punishment. The one who seeks forgiveness before Allaah, Allaah will accept his forgiveness.*²⁰⁹ (Bayhaqi)

First cure: Regard the person narrating the incident as a liar. He is a talebearer, and his speech should not be accepted.

ADVICE: Faqeeh Abul-Laith رحمه الله said that when some-one informs you that so-and-so person has done a certain wrong to you and has said certain things about you, then six things are binding upon you:

- 1.) Do not believe him, because the testimony of a talebearer is rejected.
- 2.) Stop him from this action, because prohibiting an evil action is compulsory.
- 3.) Hate him for the pleasure of Allaah, since he is a sinner, and having hatred for the sinner is compulsory, as Allaah جلَّ جلاله hates him.

²⁰⁹ Shuabul-Imaan no. 7958, Musnad Abu Ya'la no. 4338, Al-Ahaadeethul-Mukhtarah no. 2066

- 4.) Do not think evil of your brother who is not before you, as evil thoughts of a Muslim is forbidden.
- 5.) Do not look for the faults of the person regarding whom evil was spoken about as Allaah ﷻ has prohibited spying.
- 6.) Do not do the action of the talebearer which you yourself dislike i.e. do not inform anyone of the information which the talebearer presented to you.²¹⁰

Incident: Once, Zuhri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was sitting in the gathering of Sulaiman ibn Abdul Malik. A man came to him. Sulaiman said to him, "I have been informed that you spoke ill of me." The man replied by saying that he had not said such a thing. Sulaiman said, "The person who informed me is truthful." Zuhri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said to him, "A carrier of tales cannot be truthful." Sulaiman said, "You have spoken the truth." He then said to the man, "Go with peace." (Ihya)²¹¹

Advice: The condition of the people is amazing. If a person who is famous as a liar says, "So-and-so person speaks ill of you," then you believe him and develop enmity for your Muslim brother. Friendship is then built up with the talebearer, so that he can convey more stories. He is treated as being completely truthful, like a Nabi. If he does not bring any stories, then you ask him, "Don't you have some news?"

When your wife comes from a gathering, you ask her, "Did anyone praise me or not?" If he knows that he was praised, he becomes extremely happy. On the other hand, if he hears that some-one has spoken evil of him, then he regards his wife's speech as revelation, and becomes extremely angry. May Allaah ﷻ keep us on the straight path and save us from these faults! Aameen!

Second cure: When you hear from someone that a certain person has spoken ill of you, then realize that you are full of faults. You should then make an endeavour to rid yourself of all faults and weaknesses and understand that the person has spoken the truth regarding you.

²¹⁰ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 174-175

²¹¹ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 156

Third cure: You should understand that if a person has spoken ill of you, then it is possible that this has occurred because of some harm you have afflicted him. Therefore, be kind to him. Meet him courteously, so that the enmity in his heart be removed. You should not cause more harm to him by complaining and speaking ill of him.

Fourth cure: If the person has spoken ill of me, then he has committed a sin without cause. May Allaah ﷻ forgive his error! If I have to speak ill of him, then I too will receive punishment.

Incident: When news would reach Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله that a certain person had spoken ill of him, then he would act very gently with that person and would not backbite. (Muhammad Khawarizmi has narrated it in Musnad Imam A'zam)

b.) A person swears you, and you become angry. You then speak ill of him in his absence. In such a case, a person should control himself and adopt forbearance.

Incident: Once when Rasulullaah ﷺ was sitting with some of his companions, a man reviled Abu Bakr and insulted him. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه remained silent. He insulted him a second time, and Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه controlled himself. He insulted him a third time and Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه answered him. Rasulullaah ﷺ got up when Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه answered back.

Abu Bakr asked, "Are you angry with me, O Messenger of Allaah?"

Rasulullaah ﷺ replied, "An angel came down from the heavens and he was rejecting what the man had said to you. When you started retaliating, a devil came down. I was not going to sit when the devil came down." (Abu Dawood)²¹²

Incident: Once Imam Abu Hanifah رحمه الله was sitting in Masjid-Khaif in Mina when a person came and said, "O disbeliever! I asked you a certain question, and you gave me an answer contrary to that of Hasan Basri رحمه الله." Imam Saheb رحمه الله said, "Hasan Basri has erred. The reality is according to the ruling I had passed." The

²¹² Abu Dawood no. 4896

people present wanted to hit the man. Imam Saheb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ prohibited them from doing so. He then said, “O man, you have referred to me as a disbeliever. Allaah knows that I have not taken any partner with Him, I do not possess hope in any being besides Him, and I fear nothing but His punishment.” When mention of the punishment was made, Imam Saheb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was overcome by fear and he began crying, tears flowing profusely. This person felt ashamed on seeing this and asked Imam Saheb for forgiveness. Imam Saheb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ replied, “I have forgiven you already.” (Muhammad Khawarizmi has narrated it in Musnad Imam A'zam from Abdur-Razzaq ibn Humam)

Point of note: Even though Imam Saheb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ stated that Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ had erred, this form of backbiting is permissible, as explained earlier that this is permissible in matters of deen.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

لَيْسَ الشَّدِيدُ بِالصُّرْعَةِ، إِنَّمَا الشَّدِيدُ الَّذِي يَمْلِكُ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ الْغَضَبِ.

A strong one is not he who overcomes another in wrestling. A strong person is he who controls himself at the time of anger. (Muwatta Imam Malik) ²¹³

The author states, “There are two reasons for this: 1.) To control the nafs is extremely difficult, since it is a powerful enemy who can destroy man. Therefore the one who can overcome it is really a strong person. 2.) Wrestling is done with the physical limbs, whilst controlling one’s anger is the work of the heart. Internal beauty is better than external beauty.

Statement: Abu Bakr Warraq رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, “Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ has sought six things from His servants. It is necessary on His servants to fulfil them: two are connected to the heart: honouring the laws of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ and respecting the creation of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ; two are connected to the tongue: affirming the oneness of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ and speaking softly with the creation of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ; two are connected to character:

²¹³ Muwatta imam Malik no. 2637, Bukhaari no. 6114, Muslim no. 2609

being firm on the commands of Allaah ﷻ and having the quality of forbearance.” (*Tadhkiratul-Awliyaa*)

Incident: A person from the Bani Israil had written three hundred and sixty books in philosophy. He now thought that he had reached a certain rank in the sight of Allaah ﷻ. Allaah ﷻ sent revelation to the Nabi of the time, “Say to so-and-so person that you have filled the world with hypocrisy. You did not intend My pleasure at all in these books. I will not accept any portion of your hypocrisy.” The man then went into solitude and stayed alone in a hole in the ground. He said, “Now I will gain the pleasure of Allaah.” Allaah ﷻ sent revelation to the Nabi of that time, “You will not gain My pleasure until you meet with people and remain patient when they cause difficulty to you.” The man emerged, entered the marketplace, met with, sat and ate with the people. Allaah ﷻ again sent revelation to the Nabi of that time, ‘Now he has gained My pleasure.’ (Ihya Uloomid-deen)²¹⁴

c.) Backbiting due to opposition – A person causes harm to one. He now exposes the faults of the first person before people and speaks ill of him, because the other has caused him harm.

CURE: On such occasions when a person is extremely upset and he desires to take revenge since the other person has caused him harm, then it is necessary for him to forgive the other and to avoid backbiting him. He should realize that if he does good to the other, then on the Day of Judgement, he will gain some of his righteous deeds. If on the other hand, he speaks ill of the other, then the other person’s evil deeds will come into his book of deeds.

VIRTUE OF DOING GOOD TO OTHERS

Incident: Amongst the many advices found in the scriptures of Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام are the following:

²¹⁴ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 240

O son of Adam! Forgive the one who oppresses you and be kind to the one who harms you, so that you may enter Jannat and gain Our mercy.” (Raudhatul-Waa’izeen)

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

لَا تَكُونُوا إِمْعَةً، تَقُولُونَ: إِنْ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسُ أَحْسَنًا، وَإِنْ ظَلَمُوا ظَلَمْنَا، وَلَكِنْ وَطِنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ، إِنْ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسُ أَنْ تُحْسِنُوا، وَإِنْ أَسَاءُوا فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا

Do not be a people without a will of your own, saying, 'If people treat us well, we will treat them well; and if they do wrong, we will do wrong,' but accustom yourselves to do good if people do good, and do not behave unjustly if they do evil. (Tirmidhi)²¹⁵

Advice: If people today are caused any harm, they are not prepared to forgive. They actually say, “If some-one harms us, we will harm his father. If some-one swears us, we will swear his whole family. Yes, if some-one does good to us, we will do good to him.” They do not realize that there is no excellence in repaying kindness with kindness. Excellence is when a person repays evil with kindness.

Statement: Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said,

لَيْسَ الْإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تُحْسِنَ إِلَى مَنْ أَحْسَنَ إِلَيْكَ مُكَافَأَةً إِنَّمَا الْإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تُحْسِنَ إِلَى مَنْ أَسَاءَ إِلَيْكَ

Kindness is not that you be good to the one who shows kindness to you. That is a recompense. Kindness is to be good to those who harm you.

(At-Tafseerul-Kabeer) ²¹⁶

Incident: A person saw Rasulullaah ﷺ in a dream. He asked, “O Rasulullaah! Should I live with people or go in solitude and worship Allaah?” Rasulullaah ﷺ said to him, “Leaving people and worshipping Allaah is no excellence. Excellence is to live with people and bear difficulties afflicted by them.” (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)²¹⁷

d.) To be kind to one’s servants

²¹⁵ Tirmidhi no. 2007

²¹⁶ Surah Aal-Imraan verse 134

²¹⁷ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 202

At times, a worker does not fulfil his duties as he ought to do so. The master becomes angry and complains about the worker before others. He causes great difficulty to the worker, at times hitting the worker to the extent that he bleeds, swearing him and embarrassing him before others.

This evil habit can be cured in different ways:

FIRST CURE: A person should not become angry when some-one does something against his nature. He should not utter harsh words to him. Think that if we become so upset when he disobeys us, how angry does Allaah ﷻ become when we displease Him? If we cause harm to our workers, then Allaah ﷻ will become angry with us.

Narration: Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says,

وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ خَدَمْتُهُ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ، أَوْ تِسْعَ سِنِينَ، مَا عَلِمْتُ قَالَ لَشَيْءٍ صَنَعْتُ: لِمَ فَعَلْتَ كَذَا وَكَذَا، وَلَا لَشَيْءٍ تَرَكْتُ: هَلَا فَعَلْتَ كَذَا وَكَذَا

I swear by Allah, I served him for seven or nine years, and he never said to me about a thing which I had done, 'Why did you do such and such?' Nor about a thing which I left, 'Why did you not do such and such?' ²¹⁸

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِخْوَانُكُمْ جَعَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَحْتَ أَيْدِيكُمْ، فَأَطْعِمُوهُمْ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ، وَأَلْبِسُوهُمْ مِمَّا تَلْبَسُونَ، وَلَا تَكْلِفُوهُمْ مَا يَعْينُهُمْ، فَإِنْ كَلَفْتُمُوهُمْ فَأَعِينُوهُمْ

'(Slaves are) your brothers whom Allaah has put under your control, so feed them with the same food that you eat, clothe them with the same clothes you wear, and do not burden them with so much that they are overwhelmed; if you do burden them, then help them. (Ibn Maajah) ²¹⁹

Incident: A man came and sat in front of Rasulullaah ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I have two slaves who lie to me, deceive me, and disobey me,

²¹⁸ Abu Dawood no. 4773

²¹⁹ Ibn Maajah no. 3690

and I scold them and hit them. So what is my case (on the day of Qiyaamah) because of them?" He said, "The extent to which they betrayed you, disobeyed you and lied to you will be measured against how much you punish them. If your punishing them is equal to their sins, then the two will be the same, nothing for you and nothing against you. If your punishing them is above their sin, some of your rewards will be taken from you and given to them." So the man left and began weeping and crying aloud. Rasulullaah ﷺ then said, "You should read what Allaah said in His Book, "And We shall set up the Balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything..." till the end of the verse. So the man said, "By Allaah, O Messenger of Allah! I see nothing better for myself than me parting with them. Bear witness that they are all free." (Tirmidhi)²²⁰

SECOND CURE: When a servant or slave wrongs you, then realize that this is an opportunity to show your kindness and mercy, and not complain. Allaah ﷻ loves those who do good and grants them great favours.

Incident: It is narrated regarding Maymoon ibn Mehraan رَحِمَهُ اللهُ that once his slave girl dropped some gravy on him from a utensil. He wanted to hit her. She remarked, "He looked up at her angrily. Immediately, she recited, "O my master, practise on the verse وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ (those who control their anger), to which he said, "I have controlled my anger." She then said, "Practise on the verse thereafter, وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ (those who forgive people). He replied, "I have forgiven you." She said, "then practise on the verse thereafter, وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (And Allaah loves those who do good.) He replied, "Very well! I set you free for Allaah's pleasure." (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²²¹

Advice: Very amazing is the condition of people today. They lack the quality of mercy. If any slave/slave-girl does wrong, they beat and belittle him/her. This is common amongst the womenfolk. If the slave-girl does any action contrary to her

²²⁰ Tirmidhi no. 3165, Musnad Ahmad no. 264-1

²²¹ Tambeehul-Ghafileen no. 258 page 204

likes, she becomes angry, disgraces her, and hits her until she even bleeds at times. Those who always are in the company of women eventually attain these qualities. They then oppress their slaves and slave-girls, following in the footsteps of their wives.

SECOND CAUSE: Pride and arrogance –this is of different types:

a.) A person can be proud due to his family lineage and therefore speaks ill of other people's lineage.

Narration: Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

لا يحقرن أحد أحدًا من المسلمين

No one should ever despise any Muslim. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²²²

Every person should realize that Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ has created us originally from Adam and Hawa عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ, even if our latter forefathers were of different ranks and levels of piety. So if we are looking at our origin, one cannot be better than another, since we have all come from the same source. If we have to look at our final result, then the basis is taqwa. A person who is pious, but his family lineage is not superior, is on the straight path, whilst a person who is deficient in Allah's worship will regret in the Hereafter, even though he is amongst the noble class. Therefore it is the height of foolishness to look down and speak ill of others due to family lineage. Sa'di states, "Pride is the work of ignoramuses. Those who are the friends of Allaah do not possess pride."

Hadeeth: Amongst the advices Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave to the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ on the 11th Zul-Hijjah in Mina during the final Hajj was,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، وَإِنَّ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، أَلَا لَا فَضْلَ لِعَرَبٍ عَلَى عَجَمِيٍّ، وَلَا لِعَجَمِيٍّ عَلَى عَرَبِيٍّ، وَلَا لَأَحْمَرَ عَلَى أَسْوَدَ وَلَا أَسْوَدَ عَلَى أَحْمَرَ، إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَى، إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

O people! Your Sustainer is one and your father is one. Listen! There is no virtue for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor any virtue for a non-Arab over an Arab, there is no virtue for a red-skinned person over a black-skinned person nor any virtue for

²²² Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 338

a black-skinned person over a red-skinned person, except for taqwa. (Allaah ﷻ states,) “Verily the most honourable of you in the sight of Allaah is the one with the most amount of taqwa.” (Durre-Manthoor from Tabaraani)²²³

BIRTH OF THE DOG: If some-one poses the question that what was the thing created from the body of Adam ﷺ without any contact with Hawa رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهَا, so the answer is the dog. When Allaah ﷻ created the form of Adam ﷺ from sand, Iblees spat on him. The angels removed that part of soil. The spot from where the sand was removed became the navel of man. Allaah ﷻ created a dog from the sand which Iblees spat on. (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)²²⁴

REMOVE THE PRIDE OF FAMILY LINEAGE

People today have no fear of the Hereafter. They are neither concerned with taqwa nor zuhd. Every person speaks highly of his lineage and degrades others. They do not understand that family lineage will be of no benefit in the Hereafter, when there will be no assistant and helper, except taqwa, which will be a form of salvation, in front of Jahannum. (O Allaah! Have mercy on us the day when none will have mercy besides You!)

b.) A person can be proud due to his beauty. Therefore, he looks at others with disdain.

Cure 1: Realize that Allaah ﷻ has created all forms. Some are beautiful and some are ugly. So a person cannot be taunted due to his physical features, and there is no harm in having an ugly form. Shaikh Sa’di رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ states, “The act of pride is disliked from an intelligent person, and this is not appropriate from a person of intellect.”

The cause of success in both the worlds is abstinence and acts of worship, as well as kindness and noble characteristics. Therefore, man should never regard any of Allah’s creation to be lowly.

²²³ Musnad Ahmad no. 23489, Shuabul-Iman no. 4774, Al-Mu’jamul-Awsat of Tabarani no. 4749

²²⁴ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 2 page 21

Incident: Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام once saw a dead dog. He despised it. Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ sent revelation to him, “This is Our creation. You then create something similar to it.” Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام on hearing this began crying and wailing (فصار يبكي وينوح). For this reason, he is called Nuh. (Nuzhatul-Majaalis)²²⁵

Cure 2: A person should realize that no person is free from faults. He himself is not free from all faults. As long as there is a fault within him, it is the height of foolishness to mention the faults of others and to be proud of his own beauty or perfections.

Hadeeth: Once Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said in a khutbah,

طُوبَى لِمَنْ شَغَلَهُ عَيْبُهُ، عَنْ غُيُوبِ النَّاسِ

Glad tidings be to the one whose own faults turns his attention away from the faults of others. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen)²²⁶

Cure 3: Realize that success is based on taqwa and not beauty.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

الْمُسْلِمُونَ إِخْوَةٌ لَا فَضْلَ لِأَحَدٍ عَلَى أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَى

Muslims are brothers of one another. None has virtue over another except by taqwa. (Tabaraani as narrated in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)²²⁷

For a person to regard his form as handsome and others as ugly and to speak ill of another's outward features is not the work of an intelligent person. Even if a person has the beauty of Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, it will be turned into dust once he passes away and enters the grave.

“Beneath the earth, the honour of a king and pauper are the same. The sand leaves place for every person.”

²²⁵ Nuzhatul-Majaalis vol. 1 page 80

²²⁶ Musnad al-Bazaar no. 6237, Shuabul-Imaan no. 10079

²²⁷ Al-Mu'jamul-Kabeer of Tabaraani no. 3547

Incident: A jurist once came before Umar ibn Abdil Azeez رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. He was surprised to see that the form of Umar ibn Abdil-Azeez had changed due to abundance of worship and exertion. He رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "O so-and-so, if you saw me three years after I enter the grave, when my eye-balls will emerge and flow down my cheeks; when my lips will shrink exposing my teeth, when pus will emerge from my mouth, when my mouth will remain open, when my stomach will protrude and go over my chest, the back will emerge from my behind, and insects and pus will emerge from my nostrils, then you will see a scene much more surprising than what you see now."

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Incident: Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah, the commander of the army of Hajjaj, passed close by Mutarraf ibn Abdillah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ walking with great pride and arrogance. Mutarraf رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, advising him, remarked, "O servant of Allaah! This is a walk which Allaah and his Rasul dislike!"

Muhallab retorted, "Have you not recognized me?"

He answered, "Why not! I know you very well."

اولك نطفة مذرة وآخرك جيفة قذرة وانت بين ذلك تحمل العذرة

Your beginning was a filthy drop of semen, your ending will be a foul-smelling corpse, and between these two conditions, you are carrying impurities.

Hearing this, Muhallab lowered his head, and repented, resorting not to do this action in future.²²⁹

Ibn Awf رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has mentioned these advices in a poetic form,

عَجِبْتُ مِنْ مُعْجَبٍ بِصُورَتِهِ ... وَكَانَ بِالْأَمْسِ نُطْفَةً مَذْرَةً

I am amazed at a person who is proud over his form, whereas yesterday he was a filthy drop of semen.

وَفِي غَدٍ بَعْدَ حُسْنِ صُورَتِهِ ... يَصِيرُ فِي اللَّحْدِ جِيفَةً قَذْرَةً

And tomorrow, after having a beautiful form, he will become in the grave a foul-smelling corpse.

²²⁸ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 493

²²⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 pg. 85 no. 234

وَهُوَ عَلَى تَيْهِهِ وَخَوْتِهِ ... مَا يَنْ تَوْبِيهِ يَحْمِلُ الْعَذْرَةَ

Despite his arrogance and pride, he is carrying impurities between his clothing.

Advice: Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said,

العجب من ابن آدم يغسل الخراء بيده كل يوم مرة أو مرتين ثم يعارض جبار السموات

I am surprised at the son of Adam who washes his excreta everyday once or twice, and then too he opposes the controller of the heavens.²³⁰

c.) A person can be proud due to his movements and intellect. Therefore he backbites and speaks ill of others, feeling that they are foolish and lacking in intellect, or that they cannot move around properly.

Cure: Realize that we do not know our final result. Perhaps the one who we regard to be foolish is accepted in the sight of Allah and will go straight to Jannat, since the cause of success is not one's acts of worship, but the grace of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ. Many a times, it so happens that the people who outwardly seem to be mad, are in actual fact most deserving of Jannat. On the other hand, distinguished people, in the knowledge of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ, are the worst of creation. Therefore, to boast over ones intellect and to backbite others regarding their actions is the height of stupidity. There is no consideration of outward weakness since the world will soon terminate. The actual thing to see is the final result of a person. At times, it seems that a person is wretched, but in reality he is successful. It is our experience that many awliya seem outwardly to without any status, but in the sight of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ, they possess great status, and their supplications are easily accepted.

Incident: Ibnul-Mubarak رَحِمَهُ اللهُ states, "I came to Madinah Munawwarah in a year when there was severe drought. People emerged one day for salat-ul-istisqa. I emerged with them. Suddenly a dark-skinned slave appeared. He was wearing a lungi and had a sheet around his shoulders. He sat next to me, and I heard him saying, "O Allaah! We are big sinners. You have kept back water to correct us. I ask You, O Most Forebearing, Most Tolerant! Send down water at this moment, at this

²³⁰ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 338

moment.” He continued saying “at this moment, at this moment,” until clouds gathered in the sky and rain fell in torrents from all sides....” (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²³¹

In today’s times, if anyone sees a person who is not good-looking, they regard him as mad, at times they dishonour him and mock him. They do not understand that he may be from amongst the perfect ones, as has been mentioned above.

Yunus رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ relates, “Whenever I saw Hasan Basri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, he was like a man who had been afflicted with a new calamity.” (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²³²

If people today see a person who does not speak to others, they regard him to be insane or proud. (We seek Allaah’s protection!)

Incident: It is narrated that Uwais Qarni رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ would go to a person lecturing. On hearing his speech, he would cry. When the Fire was mentioned, he would scream out and go away from there. People would follow him and call out, ‘Mad man, mad man.” (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²³³

In short, one’s salvation and result is not based on one’s outward movements, but on one’s intention and actions. Therefore, to backbite regarding some person’s external movements is not appropriate. And Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ knows best!

THIRD CAUSE: Pride due to an abundance of worship – A person normally boasts regarding the abundance of worship he does, and then starts to look down upon those who do not engage in acts of worship at all or engage in acts of worship much less than he does. This leads him to backbiting:

- # So-and-so is evil because he does not engage in acts of worship.
- # He is a great sinner because he has pride in him.
- # He is worthy of the Fire because he is a great sinner.
- # Even though he is a ruler, he is an oppressor.
- # He is evil because he is filled with jealousy.

²³¹ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 1 page 308

²³² Tambeehul-Ghaafileen vol. 1 page 199 no. 251

²³³ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 188

The cause of this backbiting is that a person regards himself to be free of faults and looks towards the faults of others. Due to his abundant acts of worship, he regards himself to be an inhabitant of Jannat, and he regards others as lowly, due to their deficiency in acts of worship.

First cure: An increase in acts of worship does not necessarily mean that the heart is clean. Even though outwardly good acts are found in a person, it does not mean that his internal possesses goodness. It is possible that the Changer of hearts [Allaah ﷻ] eventually turns his heart away from acts of worship. On the other hand, the evil of a person deficient in acts of worship is not definite. Perhaps this person will repent, gain salvation and get direct entry into Jannat.

Incident: A very sinful person in a certain area of Basrah passed away. His wife could not find anyone to assist with his janaazah, since none of his neighbours wanted to have anything to do with him, due to his excessive wrongdoings. His wife hired two labourers and they helped her to take him to the graveyard. They could not find anyone to perform his janaazah salaah, so she then took him to a jungle to bury him. A very great saint lived in a nearby mountain. The woman saw him, and it seemed as if he was waiting for the janaazah. He came down from the mountain to perform the janaazah salaah. The news spread in the village that the saint has emerged to perform the salaah of some-one. The people all rushed there. The saint lead the salaah with the people behind. The people were surprised as to why the saint had performed the janaazah salaah over this man. He said to them, "I was told in a dream to go to that certain place, where I would see a woman standing alone by a janaazah, and that I should perform his salaah, as he has been forgiven." The people became more astonished. The pious saint then asked the wife regarding her husband's condition and actions. She replied, "He was as you know him. He would spend the entire night at the tavern, drinking." The saint remarked, "Think carefully, are you aware of any good actions of his which he did?" She replied, "Yes, he had three qualities. Firstly, daily, he would become sober in the morning. He would change his clothes, make wudhu and perform Fajr salaah in congregation. Then he would return to the tavern and continue his evil. Secondly, his house would never be empty of an orphan or two. He would shower

more kindness upon them than his upon own children. He would keep a fine watch over them. Thirdly, in the darkness of the night, at times, he would become sober. He would cry and say, “O my Sustainer! Which corner of Hell have you reserved for this wretched one?” The doubt which the saint had was removed and he went away. (*Ihya Uloomid-Deen*)²³⁴

Incident: A pious young man saw a worshipper in a dream entering Jahannum, and he saw a king entering Jannat. He asked people in his dream the reason for this. They replied, “The worshipper used to engage in much worship. However, he had one fault. He used to visit the king over and again to earn worldly benefits from him. Therefore, he went to Jahannum. Even though the king was a despot, his beliefs were correct, and he used to meet the pious with great sincerity. Allaah ﷻ liked this action of his, and Allaah ﷻ therefore forgave him. (*Gulistaan of Shaikh Sa’di*)

The crux of what we have mentioned is that the basis of salvation is not on outward acts of worship, because conditions can change. If a person always has a tasbeeh in his hands and wears tattered clothing, it cannot be said for certain that he is an inhabitant of Jannat. Similarly, it is not definite that a person who always engages in evil will have an evil ending. It is possible that Allaah ﷻ will appreciate a small act of his worship and forgive his sins. Therefore, to regard oneself as better because one’s acts of worship and to regard others as lowly and speak ill of them is extremely evil.

Second cure: If a person worships Allaah ﷻ, then he should not become proud over his acts of worship, and he should not speak ill or disgrace others, regarding them to be inhabitants of Jahannum. He should realize that no person is free from sin since none of us are sinless. When he himself commits sins at some stage, then why should he regard others as evil and censure them?

Incident: One of the neighbours of Umar ibn Zarr رحمه الله passed away. Since he was an evil-doer, majority of people stayed away from his janazah. However, Umar

²³⁴ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 485

attended the janazah salaah. When this person was lowered into the grave, Umar stood by his graveside and said, “May Allah have mercy on you! You lived your life with tawheed, and you performed salaah. Even though people say you were a sinner and wrongdoer, (I say) who is there amongst us who has not committed a sin and wrong-doing?” (*Ihya Uloomid-Deen*)²³⁵

FOURTH CAUSE: Sitting in wrong company

When a person sees a few friends of a similar age sitting together and happily gossiping about others, he also desires to go and join them. A person who merely follows Shaytaan is pushed forward by him to this gathering, where he then engages in backbiting. A person slightly weak in religion is caught up in a dilemma. When Shaytaan whispers these thoughts in his mind, the angel says to him, “It is better to stay away from people and live in solitude.” Shaytaan then says, “Why are you putting yourself in that difficulty? None of your companions are doing so.” The angel tells him, “There is only harm in these people’s company. There is destruction to your life in the hereafter. If you control yourself for a few moments, you will not land yourself in Jahannum. If you do not attend the gathering of backbiting, you will gain great enjoyment in the hereafter. If however, you follow your carnal desires, and listen to your friends, then in the hereafter, you will be severely punished.” If the person is intelligent and is accustomed to worship, he will give preference to the advices of the angel over the advices of Shaytaan, and not attend such a gathering. If however a person is generally engaged in sin, he will obey Shaytaan. Shaytaan is like a dog. If a dog does not get food at a certain place, then by chasing it away once, it will run away. However if bread is placed before it, then it will not move away by being chased away once. It will continue looking at the bread. However, if it is chased away many times, then only will it move. Similarly, if the soul is free from sin, then Shaytaan flees from it by a mere word or two from the angels. However, if the soul is sullied with sin, then Shaytaan overpowers it and troubles it. There is a great effort needed to chase him away.

²³⁵ *Ihya Uloomid-Deen* vol. 4 page 485

Cure: When a person desires to go to such gatherings, then think of your result in the hereafter. Their company will be of no benefit, but great harm. A poet states, "Wife, son and wealth will only accompany you to the grave in extreme sadness, but none will accompany you in the darkness of the grave."

Think that the enjoyment of these gatherings is but for a few moments, but the difficulties which one has to suffer is extremely long. To gain enjoyment for one second and suffer for a long period is the height of foolishness.

Shaikh Sa'di رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has stated, "By allowing the nafs to grow up in sin is causing one's enemy to daily grow stronger. A person nurtured a pup [baby of a wolf]. When it grew up, it tore its master to pieces."

A doctor tells a sick person, "If you do not eat for three days, then you will be cured from this sickness. Otherwise your sickness will increase, and you will regret." Merely on his statement, the sick person will be prepared to undergo difficulty for three days, so that he can regain his health, and save himself from further illness. This is despite the fact that the word of the doctor is not definite. At times, it may happen that a person does not eat for three days, but his sickness increases.

So when this is our condition with a worldly doctor, then why do we not listen to the most truthful spiritual doctor when he prescribes medication for our sinful conditions? He has stated, "Whoever saves his tongue from the faults of people, Allah will conceal his faults on the Day of Judgement." Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ will not disgrace him. Sitting with friends for a moment and suffering thereafter for a long time is not the work of an intelligent person. That is why the Ambiya and pious did not accept the words of any persons.

Incident: Yahya عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام entered Baytul-Muqaddas when he was eight years old. He looked at the worshippers, who were wearing simple clothing. Some were making great sacrifices in their acts of worship. This affected him. He thereafter returned home. On the way, he passed by some youngsters playing. They called out to him, "O Yahya! Come and play with us!" He replied, "I have not been created for play."

He went to his parents, asked their permission and went back to Baitul-Muqaddas to worship Allah and serve the people.” (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²³⁶

We make du’aa that Allaah ﷻ makes our hearts completely pre-occupied with Him, and no one else. Aameen!

FIFTH CAUSE: Sitting in the company of evil ulama

At time, ulama are engaged in backbiting. When people see them so audaciously committing this action, they too become bold and engage in this evil action. If some-one cautions them in this regard, they say, “So-and-so scholar is doing the same. If this was wrong, then he would not have done it.”

First cure: Understand that those who backbite and do not even repent are not in reality ulama. By merely studying books, one does not gain true knowledge. When a person practises on that knowledge, then a person becomes a learned and pious person. Shaikh Sa’di رَحْمَةُ اللهِ said, “No matter how much knowledge you acquire, if you do not practise on it, you are an ignoramus. If a few books are loaded onto an animal, then it will not become a research scholar or intelligent.”

Sufyan ibn Uyaynah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ said,

مَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا يَعْلَمُ فَهُوَ مِنْ أَعْلَمِ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ تَرَكَ الْعَمَلَ بِمَا يَعْلَمُ، فَهُوَ الْجَاهِلُ

He who practises on what he knows, then he will be from amongst the most knowledgeable of people. He who does not practise on his knowledge is an ignoramus. (Tambeehul-Ghafileen)²³⁷

When a person sees a scholar backbiting, then he should regard him as ignorant and not follow him, since he is like a bee which does not give honey but causes harm. Advise him with the words of Shaikh Sa’di رَحْمَةُ اللهِ, “If you do not give honey, then do not sting me.”

²³⁶ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 4 page 183

²³⁷ Tambeehul-Ghafileen page 435 no. 677

Second cure: The scholar who does not practise on his knowledge by backbiting, for example, is under the anger of Allaah ﷻ. On the Day of Judgement, he will be censured and severely reprimanded. Many warnings have been sounded in the Qur'aan, ahaadeeth and statements of the pious regarding a non-practising scholar.

Athar: Abu Darda رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

ويل لمن لا يعلم مرة وويل لمن يعلم ولا يعمل سبع مرات

One curse be on the one who does not know, and seven curses be on the one who knows but does not practise.” (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²³⁸

Incident: Someone asked Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ a question and said, “The fuqaha (jurists) are of this view. Hasan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ asked him, “Have you ever seen a faqeeh? A true faqeeh is he who is abstinent in worldly matters, turns his attention to the Hereafter, has understanding of his deen and is punctual on the worship of his Sustainer.” (Tambeehul-Ghafileen)²³⁹

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

إِنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَالِمٌ لَمْ يَنْفَعَهُ عِلْمُهُ

The person who will be most severely punished on the Day of Judgement will be the one whose knowledge did not benefit him. (Bayhaqi and Abdul-Wahhab Sha'rani in Kashful-Ghummah An Ahwaalil-Ummah)²⁴⁰

Eesa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said,

مثل الذي يتعلم العلم ولا يعمل به كمثل امرأة زنت في السر فحملت فظهر حملها فافتضحت

The example of one who gains knowledge but does not act on it is like a woman who fornicated secretly, but then she falls pregnant. When her fault becomes apparent, she is disgraced.

²³⁸ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol. 1 page 63

²³⁹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 435, no. 677

²⁴⁰ Shuabul-Imaan no. 1642, Al-Mu'jamus-Sagheer no. 507

Similarly one who does not practise on his knowledge (but appears very pious amongst the people), Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ will disgrace him on the Day of Judgement before the whole of creation.” (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²⁴¹

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَثَلُ الْعَالِمِ الَّذِي يُعَلِّمُ النَّاسَ الْخَيْرَ وَيَنْسَى نَفْسَهُ كَمَثَلِ السِّرَاجِ يُضِيءُ لِلنَّاسِ وَيَحْرِقُ نَفْسَهُ

The example of the scholar who teaches others good and forgets himself is like the example of the candle which gives light to others but burns itself. (Bazaar as mentioned in Targheeb of Mundhiri)²⁴²

Advice: Shaikh Sa’di رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said, “A scholar who does not abstain from sins is like a blind person in whose hands there is a torch.” He also said, “The person who wastes his life without doing anything beneficial is like a person who has thrown away his wealth and did not buy anything.”

Many other such statements have been mentioned regarding those scholars who do not practise on their knowledge. Therefore, when a person sees a scholar involved in any sin like backbiting, then he should not follow him, otherwise he will suffer the same punishment and will then regret.

Third cure: When a person sees a scholar who is not practising on his knowledge, then he should not look at his actions, but rather at his advices. If a person had to ask the scholar, “Is backbiting permissible?” he will definitely say that backbiting is prohibited. A famous statement of Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is,

انظر الى ما قال ولا تنظر الى من قال

Look to see what he says, and do not look at the person who said it.

ADVISE TO NON-PRACTISING SCHOLARS

There are some people in this era who are called alim (a learned scholar), but in reality they are zalim (an oppressor).

²⁴¹ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol.1 page 64

²⁴² Al-Mu’jamul-Kabeer of Tabarani no. 1681

They pass their time in backbiting and keep jealousy in their hearts. They spend no time to cleanse their internal. Some are such that they are lazy in basic acts of worship. They find it difficult to perform the Jumuah khutbah. In salaah, their minds are engaged in things of this world. These evil ulama whom the Ambiya and pious warn us of are the same ones who do not fear Allaah ﷻ, engage audaciously in major sins, fear the worldly rulers and read their regulations with great respect, whilst not having any respect for the Speech of Allaah ﷻ, and disregard it. It is as though they regard the rank of Allaah's speech to be lower than that of the ruler. Allaah ﷻ states in the Tawraat,

يا عبدي أما تستحي مني يأتيك كتاب من بعض إخوانك وأنت في الطريق تمشي فتعدل عن الطريق وتقعّد لأجله وتقرؤه وتندبره حرفاً حرفاً حتى لا يفوتك شيء منه وهذا كتابي أنزلته إليك انظر كم فصلت لك فيه من القول وكم كررت عليك فيه لتأمل طوله وعرضه ثم أنت معرض عنه أفكنت أهون عليك من بعض إخوانك يا عبدي يقعد إليك بعض إخوانك فتقبل عليه بكل وجهك وتصغي إلى حديثه بكل قلبك فإن تكلم متكلم أو شغلك شاغل عن حديثه أومأت إليه أن كف وها أنا ذا مقبل عليك ومحدث لك وأنت معرض بقلبك عني أفجعلني أهون عندك من بعض إخوانك

O My servant! O my servant! Are you not ashamed of your behavior towards Me? If you receive a letter from a friend while you are travelling on a road, you stop on the side of the road and sit at a suitable place. You then read it with full attention and try to understand every word therein, so that no single point escapes you. But here is My Book which I have revealed to you. In it, I have expounded and explained everything in detail for your sake. In it, I have repeatedly emphasized important matters, so that you may ponder over its length and breadth (i.e. every detail). But you show an attitude of indifference. Do you consider Me less important than even your friend? O my servant! When one of your friends sits with you and talks to you, you pay full attention to him. You listen to his words and take them to heart. If anybody speaks to you or interrupts your conversation with him, you stop him with a gesture. But when I turn my attention towards you and talk to you through My Book, you turn your attention away from Me. Do you consider Me less important than your friends?" (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²⁴³

²⁴³ Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol.1 page 275

Due to the ulama not practising, there is no effect in their advices. A person who fears Allaah and abstains from every sin, there is effect in his advices.

Advice: Maalik ibn Deenaar رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has said,

إن العالم إذا لم يعمل بعلمه زلت موعظته عن القلوب كما يزل القطر عن الصفا

When an aalim does not practise on his knowledge, his advices fall away from the heart just as raindrops fall away from a stone. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²⁴⁴

It is necessary for people that when they see such ulama giving advice, they should say to them, “First tell yourself before teaching others.”

Advice: Yahya ibn Muaz Raazi is quoted in Tazkiratul-Awliya as having said, “Do not sit in the company of three types of people: 1.) an ignorant sufi 2.) an attention-seeking qari (reciter) 3.) a negligent scholar.”

The condition of the general masses today is that when they are prevented from discussing worldly matters in the masjid or laughing at the faults of people, they say, “Look, that alim is also doing so. So what harm is there if we do likewise?” They do not understand that such statements are foolish. If a person intentionally is going to Jahannum, no intelligent person will join him. May Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ guide them and include us amongst the abraar (exceptionally pious)!

SIXTH CAUSE: Jealousy

When a person is jealous over another, he passes his time in backbiting and speaking ill of others.

Cure: If jealousy is found in the heart, then it is necessary to remove it from the heart, and to control one’s tongue regarding that person. He should not waste his time in speaking ill of others. Rather he should realize that jealousy is a major sin, and he needs to cleanse his heart from this evil. If he cannot clean his heart, then at least control the tongue, so that one does not fall into two sins.

²⁴⁴ Vol.1 page 63

SEVENTH CAUSE: Having trust in the grace and mercy of Allaah ﷻ

When a person engages in backbiting and is told to stop, he says, “Allaah is Most Merciful, Most Forgiving. He will overlook our sins and be kind to us.”

First cure: Even though Allaah ﷻ is most Forgiving, Most Merciful, He is also Most Powerful. How do we know that Allaah ﷻ will shower His mercy upon us? If He decides to take us to task for the smallest sin, then who can assist us? Backbiting is a major sin. Who says that Allaah ﷻ will not punish? What will be our condition on that day when even the Ambiya will be fearful and will cry over their faults? When this will be their condition, whereas they know that they will not enter Jahannum, what will be our state since we are full of sins? One day, Dawood عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام remembered his sins. He was overcome with great fear, and holding his hand over his head, he ran away into the mountains, wailing and sobbing. (*Ihya Uloomid-Deen*)²⁴⁵

Second cure: Realize that Allaah ﷻ is All-Forgiving in matters related to Him. However, in backbiting, which is the right of the servant, the servant has the full right. If he demands his right in the Hereafter, Allaah ﷻ will please him, due to His quality of justice.

EIGHT CAUSE: Hatred - When a person hates another, then he looks for faults in him and speaks ill of him.

Cure: When a man is caused distress by another, then he should not hate the person and complain about him, even though Shaytan will create these whisperings in his heart.

Guidance: Many people hate others today and continuously complain about them, even though they meet them cordially. Externally they show love, but internally they possess enmity. Outwardly they take oaths that they are friends, but within, they attack like scorpions.

²⁴⁵ Vol.4 page 182

لَا خَيْرَ فِي وَدِّ امْرِئٍ مُتَمَلِّقٍ ... خُلُوِ اللِّسَانِ وَقَلْبُهُ يَنْلَهَبُ
يَلْقَاكَ يَخْلِفُ أَنَّكَ لَكَ وَاِمَقٌ ... إِذَا تَوَلَّى عَنْكَ فَهُوَ الْعَقْرَبُ

There is no goodness in befriending a flatterer, his tongue is sweet, but his heart is burning with hatred.

When he meets you, he takes an oath that he loves you, and when he turns away from you, he is a scorpion.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

إِذَا تَعَلَّمَ النَّاسُ الْعِلْمَ وَتَرَكَوا الْعَمَلَ وَتَحَابَوْا بِاللِّسَنِ وَتَبَاغَضُوا بِالْقُلُوبِ وَتَقَاطَعُوا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّى أَبْصَارَهُمْ

When people will acquire knowledge and abstain from practising, they will express love with the tongues, and have hatred in the hearts. They will then cut off ties. Allaah will then curse them, causing them to become deaf and blind.

(Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²⁴⁶

EVIL OF HATRED: The author of this book had delivered some lectures regarding the evil of hatred. Some people who possessed lot of hatred for Muslims, and even family members, came forward, and explained that if those people became sick, they would not even go to visit them. I asked them the reason for not speaking with them, keeping hatred in the heart for them and not visiting them when sick. They answered, “These people have caused us tremendous grief and difficulty. We are extremely angry with them.” I asked them, “Do you follow your nafs or is your nafs subservient to you? It is necessary for you to keep this in mind when they cause harm to you, and not to keep hatred in the heart.”

Incident: A pious person saw Rasulullaah ﷺ in a dream and asked him, “Should I stay aloof from people?” Rasulullaah ﷺ said to him, “it is better that you stay with people and bear their difficulties.” (*Nuzhatul-Majalis*)

After explaining all of this to them, they said to me, “You are taking the side of our enemies.” When I said these words to those who possessed hatred, they said, “We don’t hate them.” So I said, “Why do you not meet them then?” they replied, “So

²⁴⁶ Vol.1 page 47. A similar narration is found in Al-Mu’jamul-Awsat no. 1578

that trouble doesn't start again." I said, "Visiting the sick is sunnat. How can you abstain from it?" They then kept quiet.

NINTH CAUSE: Mocking people – At times people backbite others, just to mock them.

Cure: remember that if you mock someone in the world, you will be mocked at on the Day of Judgement in front of everyone.

TENTH CAUSE: Possessing evil thoughts – When a person harbours evil thoughts, then he looks for his faults and exposes them.

Cure: Know that harbouring such thoughts and backbiting is prohibited. If the bad thought is based on mere conjecture, then this is the height of foolishness since this quality most likely is not in the person.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

الظَّنُّ خُطِيٌّ وَبُصِيٌّ

Thoughts are correct at times and incorrect at times.

(Ibn Mardawayhi as quoted by Allamah Suyuti in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)²⁴⁷

A person should never rely on his thoughts. If some-one has informed you of the evil of any person due to which you harbour ill thoughts, then ask yourself how do you know the truthfulness of the one informing you? No revelation is coming to you regarding the matter. Perhaps he has lied to you. Besides this, the person who has described the fault to you is a person who backbites, and such a person is a fasiq (open transgressor). His word cannot be accepted. If you harbour ill thoughts because of physically seeing another engaged in an evil act e.g. fornication, then repel the thought in this way that perhaps he has sought forgiveness after erring once. Therefore, he has now overpowered Shaytaan. If a person says something due to which evil thoughts are created within one, then repel the thought by interpreting his speech to mean something which has a correct meaning.

²⁴⁷ Ibn Majah no. 2470

Hadeeth: Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

لَا تَظُنَّنِ بِكَلِمَةٍ خَرَجَتْ مِنْ أَخِيكَ سُوءًا وَأَنْتَ تَجِدُهَا فِي الْخَيْرِ عَمَلًا

Do not think ill of any word which emerges from the lips of your brother when you can find a suitable interpretation. (Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)²⁴⁸

ELEVENTH CAUSE: Increasing ones honour before worldly rulers – At times, a person backbites before the ruler, so that he can gain some status and he can lower another.

Cure: Realize that if a Muslim is disgraced before a ruler and your honour is enhanced, then there is not much benefit for you as this honour is of this world, which will soon terminate. The comfort of this world, even though it may last for some time, will come to an end eventually. Finally, one will have to face a severe reckoning before Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ.

Umayyah became unconscious. When he regained consciousness, he said the following poem,

كل عيش وإن تطاول دهرًا ... صائر أمره إلى أن يزولا

إن يوم الحساب يوم عظيم ... شاب فيه الوليد يومًا ثقيلا

Every enjoyment, even if it lasts a long time, will eventually terminate.

The day of Resurrection is a severe day, in which a young person will become old.

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Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ وَالْآخِرِ، وَيَشْهَدُ أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلْيَسْغُهُ بَيْتُهُ، وَلْيَبْكُ عَلَى خَطِيئَتِهِ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ وَالْآخِرِ، وَيَشْهَدُ أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا لِيَعْتَمَ، أَوْ لِيَسْكُتْ عَنْ شَرٍّ فَيَسْلَمْ

Whoever believes in Allaah and the Last Day, and he testifies that I am the Messenger of Allah, then let him stay in his house and cry over his sins. And whoever believes in Allaah and the Last Day, and he testifies that I am the

²⁴⁸ Mudaaratun-Naas of Ibn Abid-Dunya no. 45, narrated in Shuabul-Imaan no. 7992 by Saeed ibnul-Musayyab from an unnamed sahabi

²⁴⁹ As-Siraajul-Muneer, commentary of Al-Jamius-Sagheer vol. 1 page 13

Messenger of Allah, then let him speak good so that he may gain reward, or keep quiet from uttering evil, so that he may be safe from punishment.

(At-Targheeb quoting from Tabarani) ²⁵⁰

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

"مَنْ أَكَلَ بِرَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ أَكَلَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُطْعِمُهُ مِثْلَهَا مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ، وَمَنْ كَسَى ثَوْبًا بِرَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَكْسُوهُ مِثْلَهُ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ"

Whoever eats a piece of flesh of his Muslim brother, Allaah will feed him a similar portion of Jahannum. If anyone clothes himself with a garment at the cost of a Muslim's honour, Allah will clothe him with like amount of Jahannam. ²⁵¹

Advice: If a ruler praises a person or asks regarding his condition, then those close to the rulers expose his faults, so that the ruler does not turn his attention to that person. They do not realize that the ruler is merely a slave of Allaah ﷻ. It is against logic to do such works by which the slave is pleased and the true master (Allaah ﷻ) is displeased.

TWELFTH CAUSE: Intention to disgrace a Muslim – Some backbite so that the other person's honour and dignity is taken away, and he becomes degraded amongst the people.

Cure: Remember that dishonour in this world is honour in the Hereafter, and that honour in this world is dishonour in the Hereafter. If that person is disgraced in this world, then he will be granted honour on the Day of Judgement, and the condition of the one who had backbitten will be evil, when all his good deeds will be transferred to the other person's book of deeds, and the other person's evil deeds will be transferred to his book of deeds.

Advice: Imam Ghazali رحمه الله has stated,

²⁵⁰ Al-Mu'jamul-Kabeer of Tabarani no. 7706

²⁵¹ Abu Dawood no. 4881

فما أشد فرحك اليوم بتمضمضك باعراض الناس ويناولك أمواتهم وما أشد حسراتك في ذلك اليوم إذا وقف ربك على بساط العدل وشوفهت بخطاب السياسة وأنت مفلس فقير عاجز مهين لا تقدر على أن ترد حقا أو تظهر عذرا فعند ذلك تؤخذ حسناتك التي تعبت فيها عمرك وتنقل إلى خصمائك عوضا عن حقوقهم

How happy you are today by attacking the honour of people and consuming their wealth! How sorrowful you will be on that day when Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ will be dealing with people with complete justice and you will be addressed in His court, whilst you will be bankrupt, poor, weak, disgraced, unable to return any right or make apparent any excuse? At this time, your good deeds in which you made effort for throughout your life, will be transferred to your opponent, in lieu of their rights.

(Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²⁵²

THIRTEENTH CAUSE: To prove oneself innocent – If someone accuses us of a certain weakness, then we are at pains to prove that he has some weakness, so that people feel we are free from that weakness.

Cure: Understand well that if a person has attributed some weakness to us which is contrary to reality, then this is slander. Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ will punish him on the Day of Judgement. On the other hand, if he has mentioned some fault which in reality is within us, then there is no need to feel bad. Rather make an effort to remove that fault.

FOURTEENTH CAUSE: To make people laugh – When people are sitting in a gathering, then a person takes out the faults of others so that everyone can have a good laugh. In doing so, the gathering is deprived of divine mercy. If some-one does not go to the gathering as he feels uncomfortable there, he is mocked and jeered at.

Cure: Remember that it is the height of foolishness when people are happy over harm which is caused to you. If people laugh at a person who falls into a well, the person will never jump in just to please them. Similarly, if people are standing in the blazing sun, and one person manages to get a place under a shade, then it is

²⁵² Ihya Uloomid-Deen vol.4 page 521

obvious that this person will look to his own comfort. He will not worry about the people. Therefore, by backbiting, one is causing great harm to himself, and there is only loss in conforming to the desires of the people. Therefore, one should abstain from such laughter and conformity.

FIFTEENTH CAUSE: Removing faults from oneself by indicting others – When a person knows a certain person is going to speak ill of him before a ruler, he takes out the faults of that person first (e.g. he is my enemy, he speaks lots of lies, etc.) so that the ruler does not accept the backbiting done by the other person.

Cure: Understand well that no harm will be caused to us in this world and the hereafter by him mentioning our faults. Why then should we speak ill of him? When he speaks ill of us, he is only blackening his book of deeds and bestowing upon us his righteous deeds. If Allaah's help is with us, then all our matters are sorted out. Just as he exposes our faults, Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ will expose his faults, and disgrace him before the people. When man exposes another's weakness, then Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ exposes his weaknesses.

Note: Even though there are many causes which lead to backbiting, we have only written those which are prevalent in this era. Since the remaining were not so beneficial, they have been left out. In the books Aynul-ilm and Ihyaa, etc. a few causes have been mentioned. In this book, I have gathered many causes.

وما توفيقى إلا بالله عليه توكلت وإليه أنيب

CHAPTER EIGHT – EXPIATION OF BACKBITING

Man should endeavour to control his tongue and save himself from backbiting. It should not happen that he backbites and causes his own destruction in this world and the hereafter. However, if Shaytan overcomes one and he falls into sin, then if the sin is related to the rights of Allaah ﷻ, like salaah, etc, then he should turn to Allaah ﷻ sincerely in repentance. Sa'di رَحْمَةُ اللهِ states,

“O sinner! Do not sleep. Stay awake and cry for the sins you have committed.”

However for repentance to be accepted, it is necessary that there be sorrow in the heart, words of istighfaar on the tongue, and a firm intention not to commit that sin in the future. When a person fulfils these conditions, then Allaah ﷻ sends down His favours.

A poet says, “No matter who you are, a disbeliever, a fire-worshipper or idol-worshipper, return. My court is not one of despair. Even if your repentance breaks a hundred times, do not worry. Come back.”

If the sin is related to the right of a fellow human being, then mere repentance is not sufficient. The person will need the affected person to forgive him. Since backbiting involves the right of another, it is not sufficient to merely seek forgiveness. Rather, it is necessary to please the person backbitten and to gain his forgiveness.

Remember that there are two rights involved when one backbites:

1.) Allaah ﷻ and His Rasul ﷺ has commanded us not to backbite. So the person backbiting is disobeying Allaah and His Rasul ﷺ, and is following Shaytaan. Its expiation is to remember the punishment of backbiting, shed tears and seek forgiveness verbally. One should also feel sorrow in the heart and make a firm pledge not to repeat the action in future.

Narration: Abdullah ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said,

من ذكر خطيئة ألم بها فوجل منها قلبه محيت عنه في أم الكتاب

Whoever remembers a sin, and fear of Allaah is created in his heart, then the sin is removed from his book of deeds. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen) ²⁵³

2.) The second right involves the person who has been backbitten. Regarding expiation of his right, there are different views:

a.) As soon as one seeks forgiveness from Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ, the sin falls off. There is no need to ask the affected person for forgiveness.

Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

يكفيه الاستغفار دون الاستحلال

Seeking forgiveness is sufficient, not istihlaal [i.e. there is no need to ask the person for forgiveness]. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen) ²⁵⁴

Abdullaah ibn Mubarak رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

إذا اغتاب رجل رجلا فلا يُخبره به، ولكن يستغفر الله

When one man backbites another, he should not inform him of it, but seek forgiveness from Allaah. (Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)²⁵⁵

b.) Besides seeking forgiveness from Allaah, it is necessary to praise the person backbitten, seek forgiveness for him from Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ and make abundance of du'aa for him. If the person who backbites does these actions, then he will emerge from the sin of backbiting. This is understood from some ahaadith and statements of the pious:

Mujahid رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

كفارة أكلك لحم أخيك أن تني عليه وتدعو له بخير

The expiation for you eating the flesh of your brother is that you praise him and supplicate on his behalf. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen) ²⁵⁶

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

كَفَّارَةُ الْغَيْبَةِ أَنْ تَسْتَغْفِرَ لِمَنْ اغْتَابَكَ

The expiation of backbiting is to seek forgiveness for the one who you backbit. (Ad-Durrul-Manthoor) ²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 153

²⁵⁵ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 577, Shuabul-Imaan no. 6367

²⁵⁶ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 153

²⁵⁷ Ad-Durrul-Manthoor vol. 7 page 577, Shuabul-Imaan no. 6367

c.) Besides seeking repentance from Allaah ﷻ, it is necessary to ask the person for forgiveness, whether he knows that evil was spoken about him or not.

d.) If the person comes to know that he was spoken about, then it is necessary to ask him for forgiveness as well, otherwise he should suffice on asking Allaah for forgiveness.

Conclusion: The author states that none of these views are laudable. There is detail in this matter. The person who was backbitten is either alive or dead. If alive, he is close by or far. If he is alive, then he either knows that people backbit him or not. If the news reached him, then does he know the full details or not. There is a different ruling for every scenario.

If the person knows in detail what was spoken about him, then the backbiter should go to him and sincerely ask him for forgiveness. He should say, "Sir! We spoke ill of you in so-and-so matter, as you know. I am ashamed. Please forgive me. In-sha-Allah in future, we will not speak ill of you." However the condition is that it must be done sincerely. If a person seeks forgiveness outwardly and there is no regret in the heart, then there is no benefit. In fact, he will be regarded amongst the hypocrites.

If the person knows briefly what was spoken about him, then one should not tell him the exact details, but merely say, "We have backbitten you. Please forgive us."

If the person knew what was spoken about him, but he has passed away now or is gone to such a place where it is not possible to meet him and ask for forgiveness, then the backbiter should seek forgiveness on his behalf and praise him in front of people. Perhaps due to these praises, Allaah ﷻ will not take him to task and the person will not demand his rights. This is the case which Mujahid رحمه الله was referring to, as mentioned above, as well as the hadeeth of Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "The expiation of backbiting is to seek forgiveness for the one who you backbit."

If the person does not know that people have backbitten him, then it is sufficient to seek forgiveness only. One should also make a firm decision not to backbite him in future. If the person is informed, then this will actually create enmity and hatred.

This is the meaning of the words of Abdullah ibn Mubaarak رَحِمَهُ اللهُ which has been quoted above from Ad-Durrul-Manthoor. The incident of Ibn Seereen has also passed. Once Ibn Seereen رَحِمَهُ اللهُ whilst mentioning a certain person said that he is very dark skinned. Then he said, “I realize that I have backbitten about him when I said that he is very dark-skinned. I repent from this sin, and I ask forgiveness from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.” (Narrated by Mulla Ali Qari in Aiyunul-Ilm)

In short, to remove the effects of backbiting, two actions are necessary. One is to ask Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ for forgiveness, Sulaiman Jamal in Haashiyatul-Jamal states that there is no difference of opinion regarding this. The second is to ask the affected person for forgiveness if possible. If the person who has backbitten does not ask for forgiveness, then he will be apprehended on the Day of Judgement, because people will demand rights for the smallest amount of oppression meted out to them before Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ.

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

يَقْتَصُّ لِلْخَلْقِ بَعْضُهُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ، حَتَّى لِلْجَمَاءِ مِنَ الْقِرْنَاءِ، وَحَتَّى لِلدَّرَّةِ مِنَ الدَّرَّةِ

Recompense will be taken on the Day of Judgement from some of the creation over others, to the extent that revenge will be taken from an animal with no horns over the one which had horns (and butted it), and from one ant over another.” (Musnad Ahmad as quoted in At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb)²⁵⁸

Incident: Ayeshah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said regarding one woman that her tongue is sharp. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “O Ayeshah! You have backbitten her. It is necessary for you to ask her for forgiveness.” (Keemeya-e Sa’adat of Imam Ghazali)

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

الْغَيْبَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الزِّنَا

Backbiting is worse than fornication.

The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ asked, ‘O Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, why is that?’ He صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ answered,

²⁵⁸ Musnad Ahmad no. 8756

الرَّجُلُ يَزْنِي ثُمَّ يَتُوبُ، فَيَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ، وَإِنَّ صَاحِبَ الْغِيْبَةِ لَا يَغْفِرُ لَهُ حَتَّى يَغْفِرَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ

A person fornicates, then repents. Allaah will accept his repentance. However the one who backbites will not be forgiven until the person affected does not forgive him. (Ibn Mardaway as quoted in Ad-Durrul-Manthoor)²⁵⁹

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ مَظْلَمَةٌ لِأَخِيهِ مِنْ عَرْضِهِ أَوْ شَيْءٍ، فَلْيَتَحَلَّلْهُ مِنْهُ الْيَوْمَ، قَبْلَ أَنْ لَا يَكُونَ دِينَارٌ وَلَا دِرْهَمٌ، إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ أُخِذَ مِنْهُ بِقَدَرٍ مَظْلَمَتِهِ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ حَسَنَاتٌ أُخِذَ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ صَاحِبِهِ فَحُمِلَ عَلَيْهِ

Whoever committed a wrong against his brother – whether it be by way of dishonouring him or anything else – he should seek his pardon today, before there comes a time [day of Resurrection] when neither deenaar nor dirham will be of any avail to him. If the person who committed the wrong has any good deeds, they will be taken away from him in proportion to the wrong that he committed. If he has no good deeds, the evil deeds of the wronged person will be taken and placed onto his shoulders.” (Bukhaari) ²⁶⁰

Amazing point: Abu Aasim رحمه الله said, ‘Since I heard that backbiting is forbidden, I have not backbitten anyone.” (Hayaatul-Hayawaan)²⁶¹

Amazing point: Since many sins occur due to incorrect usage of the tongue, the caterpillar sings out,

من سكت سلم

He who keeps quite is safe. (Nuzhatul-Majalis)²⁶²

Advice: People do not control their tongues. They backbite and then do not even ask the person for forgiveness. Actually, they regard it to be a disgrace. They do not ponder over the fearsome day of Qiyaamat. In actual fact, they are causing oppression to their own souls. The pious of the past used to fear reckoning and the punishment of the Hereafter so much that their bodies used to tremble.

²⁵⁹ Al-Mu’jamul-Awsat of Tabaraani no. 6590, Shuabul-Imaan no. 6315

²⁶⁰ Bukhaari no. 2449

²⁶¹ Hayaatul-Hayawaan vol. 2 page 319

²⁶² Nuzhatul-Majalis vol. 1 page 144

Incident: An ant walked on the chest of Sulayman عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام whilst he was sleeping. When Sulayman عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام felt it, he took it and flung it off him. The ant said, “O Nabi of Allaah! For what is this power? Do you not know that you will have to stand before a powerful King who will take the oppressor to task on behalf of the oppressed?” Sulayman عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام fell unconscious. When he regained consciousness, he asked, “Will you not forgive me for my oppression?” He replied, “I will, on three conditions. 1.) Do not turn away a beggar. 2.) Do not laugh with pride in this world. 3.) Your status should not turn you away from the one who seeks your assistance.”
(Nuzhatul-Majalis)²⁶³

People should abstain from backbiting. If they fall into this action, they should seek the person’s forgiveness so that they can save themselves from His punishment in the Hereafter.

²⁶³ Nuzhatul-Majalis vol. 1 page 144

CHAPTER NINE – CHAPTER ON FORGIVING ONE WHO HAS BACKBITTEN YOU

The person backbitten has a right over the person who spoke ill of him. However if the person who backbites is sorrowful over his action and seeks forgiveness, then the person affected should overlook his right and forgive him, even though it is not compulsory on him to do so. Therefore, Saeed ibnul-Musayyab رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said,

لا أحلل من ظلمني

I will not make permissible the action of the one who oppressed me.

(Ihya-Uloomid-Deen) ²⁶⁴

However, it is the general habit of the pious and righteous to forgive and overlook the faults of people. In this lies the happiness of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ. When a person makes apparent humbleness before Him, then Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ forgives his sins.

Incident: When Zainul-Aabideen رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ would emerge from his house in the morning, he would say,

اللهم إني أتصدق اليوم أو أهب عرضي اليوم لمن يغتاني

I give my honour in charity today for the one who has backbit me (i.e. I forgive him and will not take him to task). (Hayatul-Hayawaan) ²⁶⁵

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

أَيَعِجْزُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ كَأَبِي ضَمْصَمَ كَانَ إِذَا خَرَجَ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي قَدْ تَصَدَّقْتُ بِعَرْضِي عَلَى النَّاسِ

Are you unable to be like Abu Damdam? When he used to emerge from his home, he would say, "O Allaah, I have given my honour in charity today to the people."

(Ihya-Uloomid-Deen) ²⁶⁶

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

أَنَّ لِلْجَنَّةِ بَابًا لَا يَدْخُلُهُ إِلَّا مَنْ عَفَا عَمَّنْ ظَلَمَهُ

In Jannat there is a door which none will enter except the one who forgave those who oppressed him. (Nuzhatul-Majalis) ²⁶⁷

²⁶⁴ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 154

²⁶⁵ Hayaatul-Hayawaan vol. 1 page 202

²⁶⁶ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 3 page 154

²⁶⁷ Nuzhatul-Majaalis page 153

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ حَاسِبُهُ اللَّهُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا، وَأَدْخَلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ قَالُوا: مَا هُنَّ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ، بِأَيِّ أُنْتِ وَأُمِّي؟ قَالَ:
تُعْطِي مَنْ حَرَمَكَ، وَتَصِلُ مَنْ قَطَعَكَ، وَتَغْفُو عَنْ مَنْ ظَلَمَكَ

“Whoever possesses three qualities, Allaah will make his reckoning easy and enter him into Jannat through His mercy.” The Sahabah asked, “What are those three qualities, O Nabi of Allaah, may my parents be sacrificed for you.” He ﷺ replied, “Give to those who deprive you, join ties with those who cut off ties and forgive those who oppress you.” (Tabaraani, At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb and Nuzhatul-Majaalis) ²⁶⁸

²⁶⁸ Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat of Tabaraani no. 5064, Al-Mustadrak of Haakim no. 3912, As-Sunanul-Kubra of Bayhaqi no. 21132, Musnadul-Bazzaar no. 8635

CHAPTER TEN – EVIL OF LISTENING TO BACKBITING

Just as it is prohibited to backbite, it is prohibited to listen to backbiting. Listening to backbiting, not preventing the other from backbiting and exhibiting happiness on the dishonour of another Muslim is a major sin.

Narration: Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates,

نَهَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ الْغِيْبَةِ، وَعَنِ الاسْتِمَاعِ إِلَى الْغِيْبَةِ.

Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ prohibited backbiting and listening to backbiting. (Afandi has narrated this in Seerat-Ahmadiyyah in the chapter on the harms of the ears)²⁶⁹

When a person hears backbiting, then four things are necessary for him:

1.) He should not harbour bad thoughts about the one who is being backbitten, and he should neither regard as true the evil qualities narrated about him, nor narrate it to others. He should understand that the person who has backbitten has committed one major sin, therefore his words cannot be trusted. Perhaps he possesses enmity for the other person and is therefore saying evil things about him. It is not definite that the narrator is truthful.

2.) He should not join the gathering and expose additional faults of his brother. He should know that the backbiter is disliked by Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ. By joining him, one is bringing upon himself the anger of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ, and he will be subjected to punishment in the Hereafter.

Incident: Once Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said to his companions, “If you happen to pass a person sleeping, and the wind exposes some portion of his private part, will you conceal it?” They replied in the affirmative. He said, “No, in fact, you will expose the remaining portion.” They said, “SubhanAllaah! How is it possible for us to expose the remaining portion?” He said, “Sometimes a fault of a person is mentioned before you, then you mention even more evil things about him. So you actually are removing his clothing and exposing the remaining portion of his private parts.”²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ Al-Mu'jamul-Kabeer of Tabarani no. 14136

²⁷⁰ Tambeehul-Ghafileen Page 161 no 211

Incident: Khaalid Raba'ee states, "I was in the Jaami' masjid. People started backbiting. I prevented them. They then stopped. After a while, they began speaking ill of another person. This time I did not stop them but joined them in the discussion.

That night I saw in a dream a tall dark-looking man who had a tray with a piece of swine flesh. He told me to eat it. I replied, "Must I eat swine? By Allaah, I will never eat it." He then severely rebuked me and said, "You ate something worse than this."

He then shoved the swine meat in my mouth. I then woke up. For the next thirty or forty days, whenever I ate food, I could feel the taste of that flesh and its odour in my mouth. (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²⁷¹

3.) When a Muslim hears of another being backbitten, then he should praise that brother and assist him, so that the person backbiting stops his evil action, otherwise he will also be disgraced on the Day of Judgement, which will cause him great distress and anguish.

Incident: A person spoke ill of Imam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in the gathering of Abdullah ibn Mubarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. He said, "Woe to you! Are you speaking ill of a man who performed five salaats with one wudhu for forty-five years, and he used to recite the whole Qur'an in one raka'at?"²⁷²

VIRTUE OF DEFENDING A MUSLIM BROTHER'S HONOUR AND COMING TO HIS AID

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ ذَبَّ عَنْ عَرَضِ أَخِيهِ رَدَّ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَذَابَ النَّارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تَلَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Whoever defends the honour of his brother, Allaah will repel from him the punishment of the Fire on the Day of Judgement. (At-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb)²⁷³

²⁷¹ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 165 no. 211

²⁷² Raddul-Muhtaar vol.1 page 62

²⁷³ At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb no. 4313, quoting from Abush-Shaikh in his book At-Tawbeekh

Jabir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

مَنْ نَصَرَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ بِالْغَيْبِ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

Whoever helps his Muslim brother in his absence, Allaah will help him in this world and the hereafter. (Ibn Abid-Dunya and Afandi in Seerat-Ahmadiyyah)²⁷⁴

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ دَبَّ عَنْ حِمِّ أَخِيهِ بِالْغَيْبَةِ، كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُعْتَقَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ

Whoever defends his brother when he is being backbitten, it is the right of Allaah to free him from the Fire.

(Musnad Ahmad ibn Hambal as quoted in At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb)²⁷⁵

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَنْ أَذِلَّ عِنْدَهُ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَمْ يَنْصُرْهُ، وَهُوَ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْصُرَهُ أَذَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَى رُءُوسِ الْخَلَائِقِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

When a Muslim is disgraced before someone and he has the ability to assist him, but does not do so, Allaah will disgrace him before all of creation on the Day of Judgement. (Abu Nuaym Asfahani has narrated this as quoted by Suyuti ion Jamius-Sagheer)²⁷⁶

The commentator of Jamius-Sagheer, Allamah Azeezi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ writes, “From this hadeeth, we learn that not assisting a Muslim is forbidden and a major sin.”

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

مَا مِنْ أَمْرٍ يَخْذُلُ أَمْرًا مُسْلِمًا فِي مَوْضِعٍ تُنْتَهَكُ فِيهِ حُرْمَتُهُ وَيُنْتَقَصُ فِيهِ مِنْ عِزِّهِ، إِلَّا خَذَلَهُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوْطِنٍ يُحِبُّ فِيهِ نَصْرَتَهُ، وَمَا مِنْ أَمْرٍ يَنْصُرُ مُسْلِمًا فِي مَوْضِعٍ يُنْتَقَصُ فِيهِ مِنْ عِزِّهِ وَيُنْتَهَكُ فِيهِ مِنْ حُرْمَتِهِ، إِلَّا نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوْطِنٍ يُحِبُّ نَصْرَتَهُ

No (Muslim) man will desert a man who is a Muslim in a place where his respect is being violated and his honour vilified without Allah deserting him in a place where he wishes His help; and no (Muslim) man who will help a Muslim in a place

²⁷⁴ Dhammul-Gheebah wan-Nameemah no. 108

²⁷⁵ Musnad Ahmad no. 27609

²⁷⁶ Musnad Ahmad no. 15985

where his honour may be vilified, and his respect violated without Allah helping him in a place where he wishes His help. (Abu Dawood)²⁷⁷

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ حَمَى عَرَضَ أَخِيهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا بَعَثَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مَلَكًا - يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ - يَجْمِعُهُ عَنِ النَّارِ

Whoever protects the honour of his brother in this world, Allaah will send an angel to him on the Day of Judgement which will protect him from the Fire. (Ibn Abid-Dunya as narrated in At-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb)²⁷⁸

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ رَدَّ عَنْ عَرَضِ أَخِيهِ رَدَّ اللَّهُ عَنْ وَجْهِهِ النَّارَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Whoever protects the honour of his brother, Allaah will protect his face from the Fire on the Day of Judgement. (Tirmidhi) ²⁷⁹

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ اغْتَيْبَ عَنْهُ أَخُوهُ الْمُسْلِمَ فَلَمْ يَنْصُرْهُ، وَهُوَ يَسْتَطِيعُ نَصْرَهُ أَدْرَكَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

The person before whom his Muslim brother is backbitten, and he does not assist him, whilst having the ability to do so, then he will receive the (punishment of the) sin in this world and the Hereafter. (Abush-Shaikh has narrated it, as quoted by Afandi in Seerate-Ahmadiyyah)²⁸⁰

A person spoke ill of another in the presence of Rasulullaah ﷺ. Someone defended that person. Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ رَدَّ عَنْ عَرَضِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ لَهُ حِجَابٌ مِنَ النَّارِ

Whoever protects the honour of his brother, it will be a barrier for him from the Fire. (Ihya-Uloomid-Deen) ²⁸¹

²⁷⁷ Abu Dawood no. 4884

²⁷⁸ Dhammul-Gheebah wan-Nameemah no. 104

²⁷⁹ Tirmidhi no. 1931

²⁸⁰ At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb no. 4316

²⁸¹ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 206

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

الْمُؤْمِنُ مِرْآةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنُ أَخُو الْمُؤْمِنِ، يَكْفُفُ عَلَيْهِ صَيِّعَتَهُ، وَيَحْطُوهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ

*A believer is the mirror of another believer. (Just as one's form is seen in the mirror, similarly each person's faults is known to another, as a person's own faults are not noticeable by him.) A believer is the brother of a believer. Each person should attempt to save the life and wealth of his brother from destruction and protect him (so that no one complains or backbites about him.)*²⁸²

4.) The one hearing the backbiting should command righteousness either verbally, or by indication with the eyes or hands. A poet says, "If I see a blind man in front of a well, and I sit quiet not going forward to stop him, then this is my fault."

If one cannot stop another due to fear of some leader, etc. then one should wake up from the gathering and go away. If this is not possible, then one should regard this act of backbiting to be evil, and not sit happily there.

Statement: Imam Ghazali رحمه الله said,

الساکت شریک المغتتاب

The person sitting quietly partners the backbiter in sin.

Incident: When Ma'iz Aslami رحمه الله was stoned to death because of engaging in adultery, one man said to another, "This man is evil. He came over-and over to Rasulullaah ﷺ who kept on sending him away. Now he was killed like a dog." Rasulullaah ﷺ kept quiet. Later he passed by the carcass of a donkey. He said to the two of them, "Eat from this." They asked, "From the carcass of a donkey, O Rasulullaah?" He ﷺ said, "The honour of your brother which you took away is worse. By the oath of that Being in whose control is Muhammad, verily he is diving in one of the rivers of Jannat." (Ibn Hibban as quoted in At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb)²⁸³

In this hadeeth, Rasulullaah ﷺ referred to both of them as having backbitten, whereas only one had spoken and the other had listened. We learn from here that the person listening is a partner of the one backbiting. Therefore,

²⁸² Abu Dawood no. 4918

²⁸³ Ibn Hibbaan no. 4400

it is compulsory to prevent the other from backbiting, as far as possible, and not to sit quietly in a gathering of backbiting.

Therefore, the pious and learned do not sit in gatherings of backbiting. They prohibit those who backbite from backbiting, come to the defence of their Muslim brothers, and even praise them.

Incident: Once Ibrahim Ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ اللهُ went for a meal to some-one's house. When they sat down, people said that a certain individual had not arrived. One person remarked, "He is heavy. That is why he is delayed in coming." When Ibrahim ibn Adham رَحِمَهُ اللهُ heard this, he stood up and walked away, saying to his nafs, "It is because of you that I had to hear backbiting. If you were not hungry, the opportunity of going for an invite and listening to backbiting would not have occurred." Thereafter, he did not eat for three days." (Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)²⁸⁴

Incident: Ibn Aishah narrates that once Hajjaj invited the jurists of Basrah and Kufa. We went there, and Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was the last to enter. Hajjaj honoured him and asked for a chair to be brought and placed next to his seating place. Hajjaj then started speaking to us and asking questions. Suddenly mention was made of Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. He spoke ill of Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and we did the same, to gain closeness to him and fearing his evil. Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ sat quietly, biting his thumb. Hajjaj said, "O Abu Saeed! Why do I see you quiet?" He said, "What must I say?" Hajaj asked, "What is your opinion regarding Abu Turab?" He said, "I heard Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ state,

وما جعلنا القبلة التي كنت عليها إلا لنعلم من يتبع الرسول ممن ينقلب على عقبيه وإن كانت لكبيرة إلا على الذين

هدى الله وما كان الله ليضيع إيمانكم إن الله بالناس لرءوف رحيم

We assigned your former qiblah (direction of salaah) only to distinguish those who would remain faithful to the Messenger from those who would lose faith. It was certainly a difficult test except for those guided by Allah. And Allah would never destroy your imaan. Surely Allah is Ever Gracious and Most Merciful.

Ali is amongst the people of imaan whom Allah guided. So I say, "He is the cousin of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, his son-in-law, the most beloved person to him, the

²⁸⁴ Tambeehul-Ghaafileen page 166 no. 211

possessor of many blessings from the side of Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ, neither you nor any other person will be able stop him or become a barrier from him acquiring them.” I say, ‘If Ali had faults, then Allaah is sufficient for him. By Allaah, I do not find any speech regarding him more just than this.”

The face of Hajjaj changed and turned colour. He rose angrily from his chair and entered his house. We then left. (Ihya Uloomid-Deen)²⁸⁵

Hadeeth: Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ

Whoever sees an evil, then let him change it with his hand. If he is unable, then with his tongue. If he is unable to do so, then with his heart, and that is the lowest level of imaan. (Muslim)²⁸⁶

Incident: Miqdam ibn Ma’dikarib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and a man of Banu Asad from the people of Qinnisrin went to Mu’awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Mu’awiyah said to Miqdam, “Do you know that Hasan ibn Ali has passed away?” Miqdam recited the Qur’anic verse, “We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return.”

A man asked him, “Do you think it a calamity?” He replied, “Why should I not consider it a calamity when it is a fact that Rasulullaah ﷺ used to take him on his lap, saying, “This one (Hasan) belongs to me and Husayn belongs to Ali?”

The man of Banu Asad said, “(He was) a live coal which Allah has extinguished.”

Miqdam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “Today I shall continue to make you angry and make you hear what you dislike. He then said, “O Mu’awiyah, if I speak the truth, declare me true, and if I tell a lie, declare me false.”

Mu’awiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: Do so.

Miqdam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: I adjure you by Allah, did you hear Rasulullaah ﷺ forbidding us to wear gold?

Mu’awiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: Yes.

Miqdam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: I adjure you by Allah, do you know that Rasulullaah ﷺ prohibited the wearing of silk?

²⁸⁵ Ihya-Uloomid-Deen vol. 2 page 346

²⁸⁶ Muslim no. 49

Mu'awiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: Yes.

Miqdam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: I adjure you by Allah, do you know that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ prohibited the wearing of the skins of beasts of prey and riding on them?

Mu'awiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: Yes.

Miqdam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: I swear by Allah, I saw all this in your house, O Mu'awiyah.

Mu'awiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: I know that I cannot be saved from you, O Miqdam.

Mu'awiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then ordered to give him what he did not order to give to his two companions and gave a stipend of two hundred (dirhams) to his son. Al-Miqdam then divided it among his companions, and the man of Banu Asad did not give anything to anyone from the property he received. When Mu'awiyah was informed about it, he said, "Al-Miqdam is a generous man; he has an open hand (for generosity). The man of Banu Asad withholds his things." (Abu Dawood)²⁸⁷

Note: Remember that Muawiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was not happy with this person backbiting. He was about to stop him when Miqdam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ did it. Therefore there was no need for him to do it. And Allaah knows best.

In short, it is necessary for a person to completely abstain from backbiting and listening to backbiting; and he should continue supplicating to Allaah جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ for protection.

²⁸⁷ Abu Dawood no. 4131

CONCLUSION

By the grace of Allaah ﷻ, this book has reached completion. Despite having less time, the author did not leave any stone unturned in making an effort for this book. We beg Allaah ﷻ to accept it.

The books which I referred to whilst preparing this book are:

- 1.) Ihya-Uloomid-Deen by Imam Ghazali رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 2.) Tambeehul-Ghaafileen by Shaikh Samarqandi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 3.) Kitabul-Aathaar of Imam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 4.) Musnad Imam A'zam by Muhammad Khawarizmi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 5.) Nuzhatul-Majalis wa Muntakhabun-Nafais by Abdur-Rahman Safoori رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 6.) Kashful-Ghummah an Ahwalil-Ummat by Shaikh Abdul –Wahhab Sha'rani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 7.) Hayatul-hayawan by Shaikh Kamauluddeen Dameeri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 8.) Ainul-Ilm by Muhammad ibn Uthman ibn Umar Balkhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 9.) Sharh Ainul-Ilm by Mulla Ali Qari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 10.) Gulistan by Shaikh Sa'di رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 11.) Bostan by Shaikh Sa'di رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 12.) Sunan Abu Dawood
- 13.) Jami' Tirmidhi
- 14.) Saheeh Muslim
- 15.) Saheeh Bukhari
- 16.) Sunan ibn Majah
- 17.) Muwatta Imam Malik
- 18.) Jamius-Sagheer by Allamah Suyuti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 19.) Sharh Jamius-Sagheer by Shaikh Ali Azeezi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 20.) Mishkatul-Masabeeh by Shaikh Waliyuddin Al-Khateeb Tabrezi
- 21.) At-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb by Allamah Mundhiri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 22.) Khizanatur-Riwaayaat
- 23.) Tanweerul-Absaar
- 24.) Durre-Mukhtaar
- 25.) Raddul-Muhtaar by Allamah Shami رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 26.) Matalibul-Mu'mineen
- 27.) Sharh Saheeh Muslim by Imam Nawawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

- 28.) Durre-Manthoor by Allamah Suyuti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 29.) Tafseer Kabeer by Imam Razi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 30.) Tafseer Jalalain by Allamah Mahalli رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and Allamah Suyuti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 31.) Hashiyah Jalalyn by Sulaiman Jamal رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 32.) Tafseer Ma'alimut-Tanzeel by Muhyis-Sunnah Baghawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 33.) Tafseer Mazhari by Qadhi Thanauallah Panipati رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 34.) Fatawa Bazzaziyah
- 35.) Fatawa Tatarkhaniyah
- 36.) Hashiyah Tahtawi on Durre-Mukhtaar
- 37.) Ashiatul-Lama'at commentary of Mishkat
- 38.) Mirqaat commentary of Mishkat
- 39.) Tareekh Ibn Khallikan
- 40.) Jawahirut-Tafseer
- 41.) Madarijun-Nubuwwah by Shaikh Abdul-Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 42.) Nafahatul-Ins by Moulana Jami
- 43.) Tazkiratul-Awliya
- 44.) Keemiyae-Sa'adat by Imam Ghazali رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
- 45.) Rawdatul-Waaizeen by Mulla Mu'een Miskeen Harawi, author of Ma'arijun-Nubuwwah

I have made an effort to attribute every hadeeth, incident, statement and fine point to its source. To beautify the subject matter, poems with translations have been included. The object of this book is only to advise people, since no book has been written in such detail in simple language till now, even though Mufti Muhammad Inayat Ahmad has written a booklet on this subject, but I have not seen this book till now. If my object was to make apparent my knowledge, I would have written this book in Arabic, so that my status can become apparent. Now I hope that people with goodness in them will read this book from beginning till the end, ponder over the advices and purify their souls.

فلقد نصحتك ان قبلت نصيحتي فالنصح اعلى ما يباع او يوهب

In sha Allah, the general people will gain benefit from this book, and the ulama will gain enjoyment from it. It is my appeal to the readers of this book to supplicate for this sinful servant.

اللهم اغفر لي ولوالدي ولا قاري ولا سا تذ تي ولشيوخى ولا حباي ولقباي ولمن له حق على ولمن اغتبه ولمن اغتابني ولمن اذاني و لمن كتب هذه الرسالة ولمن طبع هذه الرسالة وشهرها ولمن نظر في هذه الرسالة واستفاد من هذه العجالة و أمتنى و امت والدى بجوار النبي المختار صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى اله واصحابه وازواجه وبناته وذرياته وعترته ومن تبعه اللهم انى قد الفت هذه الرسالة لا للدنيا بل للدين فاجعلها لوجهك يا مبين واجعلها نافعة لمن نظرها و فكر فيها واغفر لمن نقلت عنه في هذه الرسالة حديثا او اثرا وارشادا او غير ذلك اللهم انا عبدك المجرمون ان تزدنا فمن يرحمنا ونحن في رحل من ذنوبنا انت العواد بالمغفرة ونحن العوادون بالذنوب الهى فارحم علينا يوم لا يرحم الا انت امت الاحياء منا مع حسن العاقبة والعافية ونجنا من عذاب بيت السكنة بيت الوحشة وجنينا من ظلمات بيت الغربة ومن عقارب بيت الهيبة ومن احوال المحشر يوم العرض الأكبر واجعلنا من رفقاء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فاني احبه كما تحب و ترضى ولا تناقشنا في الحساب الهى امرتنا فتركنا و نخبنا من الغيبة وغيرها من اصناف الذنوب فارتكبنا وحسبنا رجائنا و خشيتنا اللهم يا من هو ارحم من كل راحم ادخلنا الجنة بغير حساب وسهل علينا الجواز على الصراط يوم العذاب ووقفنا للصالحات وجنبنا عن السيئات اللهم انك قلت واذا سألك عبادي عني فاني قريب فيا من هو اقرب من حبل الوريد يا مجيد تب علينا واجعلنا من الناجين الابرار يوم القيامة و من الضاحكين الاخيار يوم الندامة اللهم تقبل منا دعاءنا بحرمة من هو مولانا به تغفر ذنوبنا وتستر عيوبنا به تحط اوزارنا اللهم انا جعلنا حبيبك صلى الله عليه وسلم وسيلتنا فلا تطردنا امين امين يارب العلمين وصلى الله على خير خلقه سيدنا محمد واله وصحبه اجمعين . چهارشنبه ۱۳ جمادى الاولى ۱۳۸۳ هجرى، مقام حيدر آباد دكن حافظ ابو الحسنات محمد عبد الحى لکهنوى

Wednesday 3 Jumadal-Ula 1283 hijri

Hyderabad, Daccan

Hafiz Abul-Hasanaat Muhammad Abdul Hay Lakanawi

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Darul-Uloom Azaadvile