

## THE PROHIBITION OF BACKBITING

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ  
كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ،  
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى  
سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.  
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has decreed and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter.

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

Living in a society, Muslims are required to maintain brotherhood and harmony based on noble moral values. We are taught to love, care for, and help one another, as well as to protect each other's dignity. Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him [pbuh]) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim:

الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ، وَلَا يُسْلِمُهُ، مَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ كَانَ  
 اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ بِهَا كُرْبَةً مِنْ  
 كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Which means: A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfills the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever brings his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever screens a Muslim, Allah will screen him on the Day of Resurrection.

Muslims should not spread other Muslims' shame. Not only that, we are also prohibited from revealing the disgrace of others that we consider our enemies.

For example, the act of politicians smearing and spreading the shame of individuals from different political parties is rampant. Today, politicians are using the internet as a channel to defame others, create conflict, launch personal attacks and shame their opponents. Sometimes it is followed by abusive words without considering sins or religious prohibition.

Allah the Almighty forbid us from acting in this manner as mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 24 (Surah An-Nur), verse (ayat) 19:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
 إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا  
 وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

Which means: *Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you do not know.*

### **Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

The act of spreading the disgrace of others comes in various forms such as circulating the story of someone's failure in marriage, recording and disseminating videos of others sexual acts, spreading someone's humiliating pictures, or mocking someone's physical form. We are forbidden to mock, insult, or shame others for being too fat; being too skinny; having dark skin, an ugly face or physical disability; etc. All of these are considered gossiping, humiliating and belittling others which are all detested by Allah the Almighty as stated in the Quran in Chapter 104 (Surah Al-Humazah), verse (ayat) 1:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴿١﴾

Which means: *Woe to every fault-finding backbiter.*

To gossip, to condemn or to expose the shame of others is like eating our own dead brother's flesh. Allah the Almighty warned us about this in the Quran in Chapter 49 (Surah Al-Hujurat), verse (ayat) 12:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَجْتَبَوْا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّكُم بِبَعْضِ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُّحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّكُم بَعَضُكُمْ بَعْضًا أَيُّحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّكُم بَعَضُكُمْ بَعْضًا

اللَّهُ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

Which means: *O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah ; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.*

The enemies of Islam will rejoice when they see Muslims hating, insulting, disgracing and defaming each other leading to division. Those with hatred and maliciousness in their hearts towards their brothers in faith have the characteristics of hypocrites. These feelings will not benefit anyone; instead they will destroy unity which weakens Muslims even more.

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

As an end to this sermon, let us together cleanse ourselves from any abomination, such as envy, jealousy, disgracing others, gossiping or shaming others. Islam prohibits us from degrading others in order to preserve the harmony of our brotherhood. Let us follow the teachings of our Prophet (pbuh) to uphold each other's good name as commanded by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 85 (Surah Al-Buruj), verse (*ayat*) 10:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ

عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٠﴾

Which means: *Those who persecute (or draw into temptation) the Believers, men and women, and do not turn in repentance, will have the Penalty of Hell: They will have the Penalty of the Burning Fire.*

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعَنِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ  
وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيْمُ. أَقُولُ  
قَوْلِيْ هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ،  
وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.