النميمة

Slander

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the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

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Publishers Note

Slander and backbiting has been condemned by the Noble Qur'ân which compares the act of carrying tales to that of carrying wood. The allegory is superb. Just as wood spreads fire, so does backbiting which ignites passions, creates ill-will, and foments hatred.

There are several Verses in the Noble Qur'ân denouncing the tendency to evil talk:

﴿ هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّآءٍۭ بِنَمِيمٍ ﴾ [القلم: ١١]

"A slanderer going about with calumnies." (68:11)

﴿ مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴾ [ق: ١٨]

"Not a word does he utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it)." (50:18)

﴿ وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴾ [الهمزة: ١]

"Woe to every slanderer and backbiter." (104:1)

The Arabic word for slandering is *Nameemah*, referred to as the act of carrying tales from one

person to another. However, *Nameemah* is much more than this. It also includes disclosure of information, whether oral, written, or symbolic expression, calculated to tarnish a person's image.

This and other aspects of *Nameemah* have been highlighted in this small book. The publication is yet one more in the series of small books brought out by Darussalam Publishers and Distributors to educate the people on true Islamic values by discussing issues that have a bearing on our day-to-day conduct.

In this regard, Darussalam has published many books on various topics which include religious fundamentals, Islamic guidelines, monotheism, implication of the *Sunnah* and the creed factors. Some books have been prepared in the form of easy questions and answers so that every reader, be he a child or an adult, a well-learned or a person with little education, may understand it without any difficulty.

On day-to-day problems, the most popular series of books published by Darussalam is *Fatawa* presentations. Up till now we have published

Fatawa on Fasting, *Zakat* & *Taraweeh*, and Islamic *Fatawa* regarding women. More books of this series are under printing in other languages also besides the English language.

We invite the readers to thoroughly study the books published by Darussalam, and send their reviews, comments and suggestion to us so that we may be able to improve the publications produced by us.

We hope that this publication will appeal to both Muslims and non-Muslims. Through this, they will get an idea of the importance that Islam attaches to the need for right conduct, which leads to right action. May Allâh the Almighty guide us on the right path. *Ameen*!

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager
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Slander

The Muslim *Ummah* is distinctive with the qualities of love and brotherhood, affection adorns the hearts and smiles beautify the faces. The principles among the believers are those of brotherhood and good friendship. Allâh has said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ ﴾ [الحجرات: ١٠]

"The believers are nothing else than brothers." (49:10)

Allâh has prohibited the believers from anything that may induce enmity and hatred amongst them:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةَ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءَ فِى ٱلْخَمْرِ وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَعَنِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴾

[المائدة: ٩١]

"*Shaitan* wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allâh and from S*alât*. So, will you not abstain?" (5:91)

Allâh has conferred His favor upon His slaves

in joining their hearts. He said:

﴿وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا﴾ [آل عمران: ١٠٣]

"And remember Allâh's favor on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together so that by His Grace you became brethren." (3:103)

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○ وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾ [الأنفال: ٦٢، ٦٣]

"He it is Who has supported you with His help and with the believers, and He has united their hearts. If you had spent all that is in earth you could not have united their hearts, but Allâh has united them." (8:62-63)

Every *Mukallaf* [1] should safeguard his tongue against all kinds of loose talk except when it is evident that talking will be a means of beneficence. When talking and being quiet are

[1] *Mukallaf*: a competent person in complete control of all faculties.

both equal as a prudent measure, then the *Sunnah* is to abstain from speech. This is because even lawful speech may lead to unlawful or unpleasant matters. This is, unfortunately, a common practice.

Abu-Hurairah ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ واليَوْمِ الآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أو لِيَصْمُتْ».

"Whosoever believes in Allâh and the Last Day should speak what is good or be silent." (Agreed upon)

This *Hadith* is clear and indisputable that a person should not talk unless what he wants to say is good and there is benefit from it. However, when he doubts whether there would be benefit or good, he should then not speak. *Imam* Shafi'ee said:

"If a person wishes to say something then he should think before he starts talking. If there is good, then he should speak, otherwise he should not."

The Islamic Ruling on Slander

Nameemah is an abomination. It is very widely spread amongst people and very few are safe from it. *Nameemah* is prohibited by *Ijmaa'* [5]. There are many clear references from the Qur'ân, *Sunnah* and *Ijmaa'* of the *Ummah* about the prohibition of *Nameemah*. Al-Hafiz Al-Munthiri said:

> "The *Ummah* has agreed on the prohibition of *Nameemah* and that it is one of the greatest sins in consideration with Allâh."

Nameemah was prohibited because of the hatred and enmity that it might cause amongst Muslims.

[5] *Ijmaa'*: consensus of the *Muslim* scholars

The *Daleel* (evidence) On the Prohibition of Slander

Allâh ﷻ has said:

﴿هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّآءٍۭ بِنَمِيمٍ﴾ [القلم: ١١]

"A slanderer going about with calumnies." (68:11)

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"Not a word does he utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it.) (50:18)

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"Woe to every slanderer and backbiter." (104:1)

The slanderer is the *Nammaam*.

﴿حَمَّالَةَ ٱلْحَطَبِ﴾ [المسد: ٤]

"...and his wife too, who carries wood." (111:4)

In reference to this *Sûrah*, it was said that she was a *Nammaamah* who used to carry tales to spread mischief among people. The tales were

Motives for Slandering

There are hidden motives that incite men to carry *Nameemah* from person to person, among these are the following:

1. Some are ignorant of the prohibition of *Nameemah* or the fact that it is a major sin that leads to a great evil, as well as causing enmity, separation amongst friends, destruction of houses, spreads malice and causes fights amongst Muslims.
2. To get things off one's chest, such as hatred and malice. A *Nammaam* does this by spreading *Nameemah* among friends. He criticizes the person that others like.
3. Joining — by agreeing — with a group of friends. A person tries to get closer to the group by bringing news to them and telling them about new things about others.
4. The intention of hurting the person being discussed; such as talking to a person in authority or power with the intention of harming the person by any means.

5. To show love and loyalty to the person he tells things. He acts in a way that he did not like what was said about his friend, so he tells his friend what the people say about him.
6. Joking or "fooling around". There are many gatherings that are held for only joking, laughing, "fooling around" and talking about others.
7. Pretending knowledge of people and their secrets and status. The person talks about someone and discloses secrets of another.

The Two-Faced

Dear brothers, more serious than *Nameemah* is the person that instigates two people who have enmity between themselves. He tells everyone what they would like to hear. If he does not convey any talk but only made enmity between the two people seem right to both of them, then he is one with two tongues. If he promises everyone of them that he will be with him on his side or if he praises everyone for their enmity to the other, or he praises one of them then leaves and criticizes him, then he is a double-faced person. A person should either be quiet or praise the person who has the right. He should praise him in his absence or presence as well as in front of his opponent. The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

«مَنْ كَانَ لَهُ وَجْهَانِ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَانَ لَهُ لِسَانَانِ مِنْ نَارٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ».

"Whoever has two faces in this world, will have two tongues of fire on the Day of Resurrection."

(Related by Abu Dawud but the *Sanad* for this *Hadith* is not sound)

The Prophet ﷺ is also reported to have said:

«تَجِدُونَ مِنْ شِرِّ عِبَادِ اللهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: ذَا الْوَجْهَيْنِ الَّذِي يَأْتِي هَؤُلَاءِ بِحَدِيثٍ وَهَؤُلَاءِ بِحَدِيثٍ».

"You will find that the worst of Allâh's slaves on the Day of Resurrection is the two-faced person. He comes to some people with one face and to others with another face." (*Al-Bukhâri* and *Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah ﷺ narrated that Allâh's Messenger ﷺ said:

«تَجِدُونَ النَّاسَ مَعَادِنَ: خِيَارُهُمْ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ خِيَارُهُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ إِذَا فَقِهُوا، وَتَجِدُونَ خِيَارَ النَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الشَّأْنِ أَشَدَّهُمْ لَهُ كَرَاهِيَةً، وَتَجِدُونَ شَرَّ النَّاسِ ذَا الْوَجْهَيْنِ، الَّذِي يَأْتِي هَؤُلَاءِ بِوَجْهٍ، وَهَؤُلَاءِ بِوَجْهٍ».

"You find people like metals (in their qualities). The best of them during the days of *Jahiliyyah* are the best when they enter Islam if they understand Islam. The worst