

[Home](#) > [The Ahlul-Bayt; Ethical Role-Models](#) > [Section One: General Ethics](#) > [Talebearing](#) > How to Deal with the Talebearer?

Talebearing

Talebearing is to inform against people matters that they dislike to divulge, for the purpose of entrapping them. The talebearer is in fact the meanest and most malicious individual since he is characterized by backbiting, betrayal, hypocrisy, spoiling the mutual amicability, and seeding divergence among people:

“Do not yield to one persistent in swearing, backbiting, gossiping, obstructing virtues, a sinful transgressor, ill-mannered, and morally corrupt or that because he may possess wealth and children. When Our revelations are recited to him. (68: 14)”

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

The Prophet (S) said: “May I tell you of the vilest of you? They are the talebearers who sow enmity between associates and stick defects to those who are acquitted of defects¹.”

Imam al-Baqir (a) said: “It is forbidden for the revilers and the talebearers to be in Paradise².”

Imam as-Sadiq (a) said to al-Mansour; the Abbasid caliph: “Do not accept the wording of those whom Allah forbid to be in Paradise and whom Allah decided to make Hell their eternal abode if they speak ill of your relatives and folks whose right is obligatory upon you. The talebearers are surely perjurers. They are the partners of Eblis in his efforts of exciting enmity between people. Allah says:

“Believers, if one who publicly commits sins brings you any news, ascertain its truthfulness carefully, lest you harm people through ignorance and then regret what you have done. (49:6)³”

Incentives of Talebearing

There are two incentives of talebearing:

- To defame the one against whom information are said, or
- To curry favor with and to flatter slavishly the one to whom information are carried.

Disadvantages of Talebearing

Talebearing is the result of two serious vices: backbiting and tattling. Every item of backbiting is tattling, but not every tattling is backbiting. Hence, the disadvantages of talebearing are more serious than those of backbiting, since it includes the divulgement of secrets and defamation of the one against whom tales are born. In certain cases, talebearing result in bloodshed, usurpation of properties, violation of sanctities, and abuse of dignities.

How to Deal with the Talebearer?

Because the talebearer is the most dangerous corruptive, it is necessary to beware of him, as well as his plots and corruption. This may be achieved by following the advices bellow:

- It is obligatory to belie the talebearers, because they are sinful and distrustful.
- It is necessary to avoid mistrusting one's faithful brother just because some information are told against him:

“Believers, stay away from conjecture; acting upon some conjecture may lead to sin. (49: 12)”

- One must not spy and inspect the talebearers' news:

“Do not spy on one another or backbite. (49: 12)”

- One must avoid bearing the tales of the talebearers, lest he becomes talebearer and backbiter in the same time.

It is related that, once, a man bore some tales about another before Amirul-Mu'minin (a) who said to him: “We will inspect that which you have born to us. If it is true, we will hate you. If it is not, we will punish you. If you like, now, we may overlook the matter.” The man asked Amirul-Mu'minin (a) to overlook it⁴.

Muhammad Ibn al-Fudhayl narrated that he asked Imam al-Kadhim (a) what he should do if trustworthy people inform him against a man, but that man would deny when he is faced. The Imam (a) instructed: “You should belie even your hearing and sight if they tell you something wrong about your believing brother. Moreover, if fifty swearing witnesses testify before you against your believing brother, but he would deny their testimonies, you should believe him and disapprove the fifty witnesses. Never inform against your believing brother anything that he dislikes to divulge or anything that defames his personality, lest you are one of those about whom Allah says:

“Those who like to publicize indecency among the believers will face painful torment in this world and in the life to come. Allah knows what you do not know. (24: 19)5”

- [1.](#) Quoted from al-Wafi; part 3 page 164 (as quoted from al- Kafi).
- [2.](#) Quoted from al-Wafi; part 3 page 164 (as quoted from al- Kafi).
- [3.](#) Quoted from Bihar ul-Anwar; Kitab ul-Ashara, 190 (as quoted from al-Amali).
- [4.](#) Quoted from Safinat ul-Bihar; vol. 2 page 613.
- [5.](#) Quoted from Bihar ul-Anwar; Kitab ul-Ashara, 188, as quoted from Thawab ul-A'mal.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/ahlul-bayt-ethical-role-models-sayyid-mahdi-sadr/talebearing#comment-0>