Al-Islam.org
Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project
Published on *Al-Islam.org* (https://www.al-islam.org)

Backbiting

Backbiting الغِيبَةُ

Prohibition of Backbiting

النَّهيُ عنِ الغِيبَةِ

1ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): مَرَرتُ ليلةَ أُسرِيَ بي على قَومٍ يَخمِشُونَ وُجوهَهُم بأظفارِهِم، فقلتُ: يا جَبرَئيلُ، مَن هؤلاءِ ؟ فقالَ: هؤلاءِ الذينَ يَغتابُونَ الناسَ ويَقَعُونَ في أعراضِهِم.

1– The Prophet (S) said, ‘On the night that I was taken on my Night-Journey [to the heavens], I passed by a group of people scratching their own faces with their nails, so I asked, ‘O Gabriel, who are these people?’ so he replied, ‘These are people who backbit about other people and disparaged their reputations.’[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 1, p. 115]

2ـ الترغيب والترهيب: قالَ رسولُ اللّه (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): الغِيبَةُ أشَدُّ مِن الزِّنا، قيلَ: وكيفَ ؟ قالَ: الرجلُ يَزني ثُمّ يَتوبُ فَيَتُوبُ اللّهُ علَيهِ، وإنّ صاحِبَ الغِيبَةِ لايُغفَرُ لَهُ حتّى يَغفِرَ لَهُ صاحِبُهُ.

2– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Backbiting is worse than adultery’, at which he was asked, ‘How so?’ He replied, ‘A man commits adultery, then repents, and Allah pardons him for it, whereas the backbiter is not forgiven until his victim forgives him.’[al-Targhib wa al-Tarhib, v. 3, p. 511, no. 24]

3ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): الغِيبَةُ جُهدُ العاجِزِ.

3– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Backbiting is the attempt of one who is incapable [of doing better himself].’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 461]

4ـ . . الإمامُالحسينُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ) ـ لِرجُلٍ اغتابَ عِندَهُ رجُلاً ـ: يا هذا، كُفَّ عنِ الغِيبَةِ؛ فإنّها إدامُ كِلابِ النارِ

4– Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) said to a man who was backbiting about a man in his presence, 'Stop backbiting, for verily it is the food of the dogs of Hell.'[Tuhaf al-'Uqul, no. 245]

5ـ . . الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): لا تَغتَبْ فتُغتَبُ، ولا تَحفِرْ لِأخِيكَ حُفرَةً فَتَقَعَ فيها ؛ فإنَّكَ كما تَدينُ تُدانُ

5– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'Do not backbite lest you become a victim of backbiting, and do not dig a hole for your brother lest you fall in it yourself, for you will be paid back whatever you put in.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 75, p. 249, no. 16]

6ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): قالَ رَجُلٌ لعليّ بنِ الحسينِ ': إنَّ فُلانا يَنسُبُكَ إلى أ نّكَ ضالٌّ مُبتدِعٌ ! فقالَ لَهُ عليُّ بنُ الحسينِ ': مارَعَيتَ حقَّ مُجالَسَةِ الرجُلِ حيثُ نَقَلتَ إلَينا حَديثَهُ، ولا أدَّيتَ حَقّي حيثُ أبلَغتَني عن أخي ما لَستُ أعلَمُهُ ! ... إيّاكَ والغِيبَةَ فإنّها إدامُ كِلابِ النارِ، وَاعلَمْ أنّ مَن أكثَرَ مِن ذِكرِ عُيوبِ الناسِ شَهِدَ علَيهِ الإكثارُ أ نّهُ إنّما يَطلُبُها بقَدرِ ما فيهِ.

6– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) narrated, 'A man once came and told Ali b. al-Husayn (a.s.) [i.e. Imam Zayn al-Abidin], 'Verily x has said that you are astray and that you are an innovator!' So Ali b. al-Husayn (a.s.) said to him, 'Neither have you observed the right of the man you sat with by transmitting to us what he spoke about, nor have you observed my right by informing me of something about my brother which I would not have known! ... Beware of backbiting for verily it is the food of the dogs of Hell, and know that whoever frequently talks about people's faults, the frequency of his backbiting is a witness [to the fact] that he only finds faults in others according to the extent present in himself.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 75, p. 246, no. 8]

Backbiting and Faith

الغيبَةُ وَالدّينُ

7ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): الغِيبَةُ أسرَعُ في دِينِ الرجُلِ المُسلمِ مِن الآكِلَةِ في جَوفِهِ

7– The Prophet (S) said, 'Backbiting eats away at a man's faith faster than a gangrenous sore can eat away to the inside.'[al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 357, no. 1]

8ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): مَنِ اغتابَ مُسلِماً أو مُسلمَةً لم يَقبَلِ اللّهُ صَلاتَهُ ولاصيامَهُ أربَعينَ يَوما ولَيلةً، إلّا أن يَغفِرَ لَهُ صاحِبُهُ.

8– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Whoever backbites a fellow Muslim man or woman, Allah neither accepts his prayer nor his fasting for forty days and nights, until and unless the victim of his backbiting forgives him.’[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 75, p. 258, no. 53]

9ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): يُؤتى بأحَدٍ يَومَ القِيامَةِ يُوقَفُ بينَ يَدَيِ اللّهِ ويُدفَعُ إلَيهِ كتابُهُ فلا يَرى حَسَناتِهِ، فيقولُ: إلهي، ليسَ هذا كتابِي! فإنّي لا أرى فيها طاعَتي؟! فيقالُ لَهُ: إنّ رَبَّكَ لايَضِلُّ ولايَنسى، ذَهَبَ عَمَلُكَ باغتِيابِ الناسِ. ثُمّ يُؤتى بآخَرَ ويُدفَعُ إلَيهِ كتابُهُ فَيَرى فيهِ طاعاتٍ كثيرَةً، فيقولُ: إلهي، ما هذا كتابِي! فإنّي ما عَمِلتُ هذهِ الطّاعاتِ! فيقالُ: لأنَّ فلاناً اغتابَكَ فَدُفِعَت حَسَناتُهُ إلَيكَ.

9– The Prophet (S) said, ‘On the Day of Resurrection, a man will be brought forth to stand before Allah, and his book of deeds will be presented to him, and he will not see any of his good deeds therein, upon which he will exclaim, ‘My God, this is not my book! For verily I do not see any of my acts of obedience therein?!’ So he will be told, ‘Verily your Lord neither loses nor forgets [deeds], but your deeds have gone because of your backbiting people.’ Then another man will be brought forth, and will be presented his book of deeds, and he will see many acts of obedience recorded therein, and will exclaim, ‘My God, this is not my book! For verily I did not perform all these acts of obedience!’ and he will be told, ‘It is because so and so backbit you, so his deeds have been transferred to you.’[Jami’a al–Akhbar, p. 412, no. 1144]

The Meaning of Backbiting

تَفسيرُ الغيبَةِ

10ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) ـ لأبي ذرّ ـ: .... يا أباذرٍّ، إيّاكَ والغِيبَةَ؛ فإنَّ الغِيبَةَ أشَدُّ مِن الزِّنا ... قلتُ: يارسولَ اللّهِ، وما الغِيبَةُ؟ قالَ: ذِكرُكَ أخاكَ بما يَكرَهُ، قلتُ: يارسولَ اللّهِ، فإن كانَ فيهِ ذاكَ الذي يُذكَرُ بِهِ ؟ قالَ: اِعلَمْ أنَّكَ إذا ذَكَرتَهُ بما هو فيهِ فقد اغتَبتَهُ، وإذا ذَكَرتَهُ بما ليسَ فيهِ فَقَد بَهَتَّهُ.

10– The Prophet (S) said to Abu Dharr, ‘O Abu Dharr, beware of backbiting, for verily backbiting is worse than adultery…’ [Abu Dharr narrates], I asked, ‘O Prophet of Allah, and what is backbiting?’ to which he replied, ‘Your mentioning something about your fellow brother that he would not like.’ I asked, ‘O Prophet of Allah, and what if the thing mentioned about him was actually true about him?’ so he replied, ‘Know that if you say something about him that is true then you have indeed backbit about him, and if you what you have said is not true, then you have indeed slandered him.’[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 77, p. 89, no. 3]

11ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): الغِيبَةُ ذِكرُكَ أخاكَ بما يَكرَهُ

11– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Backbiting is to say something about your brother that he would not like.’[Kanz al–’Ummal, no. 8024]

12ـ الترغيب والترهيب عن عَمرُو بن شُعَيبٍ ـ عن أبيهِ عن جدّهِ ـ: أنّهم ذَكَرُوا عندَ رسولِ اللّهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) رجُلاً فقالوا: لا يَأكُلُ حتّى يُطعَمَ، ولا يَرحَلُ حتى يُرحَلَ لَهُ، فقالَ النبيُّ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): اغتَبتُمُوهُ، فقالوا: يا رسولَ اللّهِ، إنّما حَدَّثْنا بما فيهِ ! قال: حَسبُكَ إذا ذَكَرتَ أخاكَ بما فيهِ.

12– ‘Aamr b. Shu’ayb narrated, on the authority of his father, on the authority of his grandfather, that some people spoke about a man in the presence of the Prophet (S), saying, ‘He does not eat unless he is fed, and does not go out unless a mount is made ready for him.’ So the Prophet (S) said, ‘You have talked about him behind his back’ to which they replied, ‘O Prophet of Allah, we have only said what is true!’ so he exclaimed, ‘It is bad enough to talk about your brother regarding what is true [let alone what is false]!’[al–Targhib wa al–Tarhib, v. 3, p. 506, no. 13]

13ـ الإمامُ الكاظمُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): مَن ذَكَرَ رجُلاً مِن خَلفِهِ بما هُو فيهِ ممّا عَرَفَهُ الناسُ لم يَغتَبْهُ، ومَن ذَكَرَهُ مِن خَلفِهِ بما هُو فيهِ ممّا لايَعرِفُهُ الناسُ اغتابَهُ.

13– Imam al–Kazim (a.s.) said, ‘He who talks about someone behind his back, mentioning what is true about him, and what people already know, then he has not backbit about him, whereas he who talks about someone behind his back about something that is true but that people do not know about, then he has backbit about him.’[al–Kafi, v. 2, p. 358, no. 6]

People whom one is allowed to Backbite

مَن يَجوزُ اغتِيابُهُ

14ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): أربَعةٌ لَيست غِيبَتُهُم غِيبَةً: الفاسِقُ المُعلِنُ بِفِسقِهِ، والإمامُ الكَذّابُ إن أحسَنتَ لم يَشكُرْ وإن أسَأتَ لم يَغفِرْ، والمُتَفَكِّهونَ بالأُمَّهاتِ، والخارِجُ عنِ الجَماعَةِ الطاعِنُ على أُمَّتِي الشاهِرُ علَيها بسَيفِهِ.

14– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Four types of people are such that talking about them behind their backs is not considered backbiting: the immoral person who makes a public display of his immorality; the dishonest leader who, even if you were to be good to would not appreciate you and if you were to be bad to would not forgive you; those who joke about their [and others’] mothers; and one who is a dissenter, who defames my community, and draws his sword against it.’[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 75, p. 261, no. 64]

15ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): حتّى مَتى تَرعَوُونَ عن ذِكرِ الفاجِرِ؟! اِهتِكُوهُ حتّى يَحذَرَهُ الناسُ

15– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Until when will you sidestep talking about the impudent person?! Disgrace him [through disclosing his insolent acts] so that people may be on their guard against him.’[Kanz al–’Ummal, no. 8074]

Listening to Backbiting

سَماعُ الغيبَةِ

16ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): السامِعُ لِلغِيبَةِ كالمُغتابِ

16– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The one who listens to backbiting is as [bad as] the backbiter.’[Ghurar al–Hikam, no. 1171]

17ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ) ـ وقد نَظَرَ إلى رجُلٍ يَغتابُ رجُلاً عندَ ابنِهِ الحسنِ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ) ـ: يابُنَيَّ، نَزِّهْ سَمعَكَ عن مِثلِ هذا ؛ فإنّهُ نَظَرَ إلى أخبَثِ ما في وِعائِهِ فَأفرَغَهُ في وِعائِكَ!

17– Imam Ali (a.s.) saw a man backbiting someone in the presence of his son, al–Hasan (a.s.), to whom he said, ‘O my son, steer your hearing clear of such a person, for verily he took the most repulsive thing from his mind and poured it into yours!’[al–Ikhtisas, p. 225]

18ـ الإمامُ زينُ العابدينَ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): حقُّ السَّمعِ تَنزيهُهُ عن سَماعِ الغِيبَةِ، وسَماعِ ما لايَحِلُّ سَماعُهُ

18– Imam Zayn al–Abidin (a.s.) said, ‘The right of the ears is to keep them pure from listening to backbiting, and from that which is unlawful to listen to.’[al–Khisal, p. 566, no. 1]

The Reward for Deterring Backbiting

ثَوابُ رَدِّ الغيبَةِ

19ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): مَن تَطَوَّلَ على أخِيهِ في غِيبةٍ سَمِعَها فيهِ في مَجلِسٍ فَرَدَّها عَنهُ، رَدَّ اللّهُ عَنهُ ألفَ بابٍ مِن السُّوءِ فِي الدنيا والآخِرَةِ.

19– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Whoever does a good service to his fellow brother by deterring people from talking behind his back in a gathering where he hears them backbiting him, Allah will repel from him a thousand types of evil in this world as well as in the Hereafter.’[Amali al-Saduq, p. 350]

20ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): مَن اُغتِيبَ عِندَهُ أخوهُ المسلمُ، فاستَطاعَ نَصرَهُ فلم يَنصُرْهُ، خَذَلَهُ اللّهُ فِي الدنيا والآخِرَةِ.

20– The Prophet (S) said, ‘He in whose presence a fellow Muslim brother is talked about behind his back, and who does not defend him despite having the ability to do so, Allah disgraces him in this world as well as in the Hereafter.’[al-Faqih, v. 4, p. 372]

The Penance for Backbiting

كَفّارَةُ الاغتِيابِ

21ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) ـ وقد سُئلَ عن كَفّارَةِ الاغتِيابِ ـ: تَستَغفِرُ اللّهَ لِمَنِ اغتَبتَهُ كُلَّما ذَكَرتَهُ

21– The Prophet (S) was asked about the penance for backbiting, to which he replied, ‘You must seek Allah’s forgiveness on behalf of the one you have talked about every time you remember him.’[al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 357, no. 4]

22ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إذا اغتابَ أحَدُكُم أخاهُ فلْيَستَغفِرِ اللّهَ ؛ فإنَّها كفّارَةٌ لَهُ

22– The Prophet (S) said, ‘When one of you backbites about his fellow brother, he must seek forgiveness from Allah for that is penance for it.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 8037]

Source URL: https://www.al-islam.org/mizan-al-hikmah-scale-wisdom/backbiting#comment-0