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Slander, Dangerous weapon of cowards

One of the greatest and most dangerous and in the meantime most popular corruptions of tongue is slander.

Slander indicates mentioning hidden weak points and faults of the others so that if they hear, they will be disturbed. These points are either concerned with religious, moral, spiritual and social aspects, or with corporeal aspects, including face, body's limbs, corporal powers, and actions and behaviours, or his attachments, such as wife, child, and or his clothing, house, etc.

The most important motives for slander

There are several motives for slander:

1- Malice and revenge: as there is no easier and simpler way than slander and damaging a person's reputation and character for extinguishing flames of spite and revenge, blazing in the heart of some people.

2- Envy: as the envious person always wishes for end of blessings of the envied one, when he cannot achieve his purpose, for compensating it, he tries to damage the envied person's reputation and credit through slander and revealing his weak points, and relieves the fire of his envy in this way.

3- Acquitting oneself from a committed sin: in other words one tries to simplify or justify his action through mentioning the faults of others.

4- Mockery and deride: of course mockery and deriding others has several motives, and after rooting of its factors in man's entity, one of the ways of realization of this goal is slander.

5- Recreation and amusement: there are a lot of people who engage in mentioning weak points and faults of the others only for recreation and amusement or warming circles and meetings, because no other sin is sweeter than slander for people.

It should be also noted that people not only enjoy recreation and amusement, but also enjoy causing others to laugh.

6– Excitation of curiosity instinct: this instinct which is one of the most powerful man's instincts, invites man to urge others for slander and revealing weak points of different individuals, and perhaps the sweetness of slander for some people originates from the false satiation of this instinct. Such people enjoy knowing mysteries and faults of others and are curious about them, and therefore make the others to slander more eagerly and enthusiastically.

Of course, taking into account these factors can be an effective help to us for treatment of slander and identifying its senses.

It should be also notified that in most cases, these factors do not show off themselves simply and naturally in man's existence because his conscience and mental personality does not allow it. So they change its appearance and slander about people in the form of compassion or forbid of wrong and or giving lesson to others, and suppose that they have done a sacred action, while the main motive is one of the above factors, and man's spirit changes its appearance for deceiving conscience and escaping its stress and torment, and on the contrary, it is proved that such slander is more dangerous than its other types and treating it, is more difficult.

Dangers of slander

Now, we mention the importance of this sin in view of Qur'an and traditions of Prophet (S) and Prophet's Household (A.S.), and then will analyze the individual and social vices that it will cause.

Although most people do not respect this vital issue, the original Islamic resources have put an extra emphasis on it. The most vigorous interpretations are seen in the Holy Qur'an and traditions concerning slander, and we have selected following ten cases among them, and perhaps these ten parts are adequate for realizing the importance of this sin in view of Islam.

1– Slander in view of Holy Qur'an

Holy Qur'an has considered slander as an inhuman action, and has introduced it as eating flesh of a dead brother. Obviously, anthropophagy in such a way is the most repulsive action which may be done by a person, and this interpretation is exclusively mentioned for this sin.

Of course, the reason of this assimilation is clear. Because in Islam's view, a Muslim brother's reputation and prestige is respectable as his blood, as it is mentioned in the Prophetic tradition:

«كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى لْمُسْلِمِ حَرامٌ: دَمُهُ وَ مالُهُ وَ عِرْضُهُ».

Everything of a Muslim is forbidden for another Muslim: his blood, wealth and reputation.[1]

And there is no doubt that slander lowers the reputation of a Muslim brother, and damages his honour.

It is noteworthy that in Holy Qur'an suspicion, spying, and slander are respectively forbidden where it says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَحِيمٌ

O ye who believe! Shun much suspicion; for lo! some suspicion is a crime. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Ye abhor that (so abhor the other)! And keep your duty (to Allah). Lo! Allah is Relenting, Merciful. (49:12)

And this interpretation may indicate that first a man is involved in suspicion, and suspicion leads him to spying, and spying too ends in revealing hidden faults of individuals and this is the source of slander.

2- Slander is not compatible with belief

As it is stipulated in Barae tradition:

خَطَبَنا رَسُولُ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حَتَّى اسْتَمَعَ الْعَوائِقُ فِى بُيُوتِها فَقالَ: «يا مَعْشَرَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِلِسانِهِ وَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِقَلْبِهِ لا تَغْتابُوا الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَ لا تَتَّبِعُوا عَوْراتِهِمْ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ تَتَبَّعَ عَوْرَةَ اَخِيهِ تَتَبَّعَ اللهُ عَوْرَتَهُ وَ مَنْ تَتَبَّعَ اللهُ عَوْرَتَهُ يَفْضَحُهُ وَ لَوْ فِى جَوْفِ بَيْتِهِ».

Barae says: Prophet (S) spoke for us, and so loudly that even the girls in the houses too heard. He said: O the group who has believed by tongue, but not by heart. Do not slander about a Muslim, and do not spy their secret affairs, the one who is curious for the secret affairs of his religious brothers, God shall reveal his own secret affairs and scandalizes him inside his own house.[2]

The point of non-compatibility of slander with the spirit of belief may indicate that the first sign of belief is observing the right of a believer, and this is in contradiction with slander.

3- Slander is considered as spreading obscenity

Imam As-Sadiq (A.S.) said:

مَنْ قالَ فِى مُؤْمِن ما رَأَتْهُ عَيْناهُ وَ سَمِعَتْهُ اُذُناهُ فَهُوَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قالَ اللهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ: (اِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ اَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفاحِشَةُ فِى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذابٌ اَلِيمٌ).»

One who says what he has seen and heard about a believer, is among those that God has told about them: those who like the vices to spread among believers, there shall be a painful chastisement for them.3

The point of this issue is also clear, because considering that in most cases faults are included among religious faults, revealing hidden faults of people may cause the others to take impertinence and insolence for performing sin and disobedience, and consequently spreading obscenity.

4- The corruption of slander is more severe than adultery

In the famous tradition of Jaber and Abou Saeid Khadri, it is narrated from Prophet (S):

«اَلْغِيبَةُ اَشَدُّ مِنَ الزِّنا».

Slander is worse than adultery.4

The reason mentioned under this tradition for its severity is that an adulterer may be forgiven by God through repentance (because adultery is the Right of God), but the repentance of slanderer without satisfaction of the other party, will not be accepted (because it is the Right of People).

There may be another point in addition to above aspect as the reason for intensity of slander comparing with adultery, that is slander ruins the basis of unity, compassion, intimacy and good opinion in the society, and damages the society severely in this way,–as will be discussed later, but adultery does not have such influence despite of its significance.

5- Slander hinders acceptance of deeds and prayers

It is mentioned in Moaze tradition that sometimes deeds of servants shine as the sun's rays, and ascend to the heaven, but they are returned and beaten to the face of their owners, and an angel says:

«اَمَرَنِی رَبِّی اَنْ لا اَدَعَ عَمَلَ مَنْ یَغْتابُ النّاسَ یَتَجاوَزُ اِلی رَبِّی».

My Lord has instructed me to prevent reaching the goods deeds of slanderers towards My Lord.

This point may indicate that as it is inferred from different traditions, in general, deeds of those who are indebted to people will not be accepted by God, and as we know slander is a sort of transgression to people's rights and damaging the capital of their reputation.

6- Slander is not compatible with Islamic brotherhood

It is narrated from Prophet (S):

«لا تَحاسَدُوا وَ لا تَباغَضُوا وَ لا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً وَ كُونُوا عِبادَ اللهِ اِخْواناً».

Do not envy and spite each other and do not slander about each other, and O, God's servants be brother with each other.5

It is understood from the last phrase that opposite point of envy, enmity and slander is God's servitude and Islamic brotherhood. It goes without saying that the first sign of brotherhood is kindness and intimacy, which could never be compatible with slander.

And pointing to those two great faults in the tradition may be for being among the causes of slander, because envy usually is the source of enmity and spite, and they too in their turn are the sources of slander.

7- Slander destroys good deeds

This sense is mentioned in different traditions. In a tradition from Imam As-Sadiq (A.S.) is narrated:

«اَلْغِيبَةُ حَرامٌ عَلى كُلِّ مُسْلِم... وَ الْغِيبَةُ تَأْكُلُ الْحَسَناتِ كَما تَأْكُلُ النّارُ الْحَطَبَ».

Slander is forbidden for each Muslim, and surely slander destroys good deeds as the fire destroys wood.6

And it is narrated in a tradition from Prophet (S):

«مَنْ كانَتْ لِاَخِيهِ عِنْدَهُ مَظْلَمَةٌ فِى عِرْض اَوْ مال فَلْيَسْتَحْلِلْها مِنْهُ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَيْسَ هُنالِکَ دِينارٌ وَ لا دِرْهَمٌ اِنَّما يُؤْخَذُ مِنْ حَسَناتِهِ فَاِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ حَسَنَةٌ اُخِذَ مِنْ سَيِّئاتِ صاحِبِهِ فَزِيدَتْ عَلى سَيِّئاتِهِ».

One, who is indebted to his religious brother in respect to reputation or wealth, should seek his forgiveness, before that day in which there is not any Drachma and Dinar. In that day, it will be deducted from his good deeds, and if he does not have any good deed, the sins of other party will be added to his sins.7

Slander destroys good deeds probably because it destroys one of the greatest spiritual capitals of the one who is slandered about, that is his reputation, honour and social prestige, and since compensation of this "Right of People" is often impossible through material ways, thus Great God compensates it through spiritual affairs: He transfers good deeds of the slanderer to the book of deeds of the slandered, and if he does not have any good deed, God transfers sins of the slandered to the book of deeds of the slanderer, and it is compensated to the same degree that reputation of that person is damaged through transfer of good deeds and sins.

8- Slander devaluates worships and services

It is realized from some traditions that slander is one of the factors invalidating ritual ablution and fasting.

God's Prophet (S) says:

«اَلْجُلُوسُ فِی الْمَسْجِدِ انْتِظاراً لِلصَّلاةِ عِبادَةٌ ما لَمْ یُحْدِث; فَقِیلَ: یا رَسُولَ اللهِ! وَ مَا الْحَدَثُ؟ قالَ: الإِغْتِیابُ»

Waiting in the mosque for prayer is worship, until a ritual impurity is not performed; it was questioned: what is ritual impurity? He said: slander.8

And somewhere else he says:

«وَ مَنِ اغْتابَ مُسْلِماً بَطَلَ صَوْمُهُ وَ نَقَضَ وُضُوءُهُ».

One, who slanders about a Muslim, his fasting and ritual ablutions are broken.9

Its point may indicate that worship creates a condition of proximity to God and spiritual luminosity in man, and when he stains his tongue to slander after ritual ablution or when fasting, that spirituality is significantly decreased, and that individual falls down from the degree of proximity to God. In the above tradition, this sense is interpreted as "violator" (breaker).

9- Slander excludes man from God's protection and includes him in Satan's protection

As it is narrated from Imam As-Sadiq (A.S.) in the tradition of Mofzal Ebne Omar:

«مَنْ رَوی عَلی مُؤْمِن رِوایَةً یُرِیدُ بِها شَیْنَهُ وَ هَدْمَ مُرُوَّتِهِ لِیَسْقُطَ مِنْ اَعْیُنِ النّاسِ اَخْرَجَهُ اللهُ مِنْ ولایَتِهِ اِلی ولایَةِ الشَّیْطانِ فَلا یَقْبَلُهُ الشَّیْطانُ».

One who narrates with the purpose of backbiting and dishonouring a believer to be reproached before people, God shall evict him from His protection to Satan's protection, and Satan too does not accept him.10

Of course, this tradition is not merely concerned with slander. Rather, slander is one of its senses, because the purpose of slander in all individuals is destroying character of the other party and cavilling at him, even indirectly.

But exclusion from God's protection according to the Qur'anic verses indicates that God, *who leads and supervises believers and guides them from darkness into the light* 11, will not lead such people anymore.

Because protector means guide and leader as well as helper and assistant, as we read:

وَمَا كَانَ لَهُمْ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

And they will have no protecting friends to help them instead of Allah. (***42:46***)

And it is also mentioned in the sense of saviour from humiliation as we read:

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مِنَ الذُّلِّ

Who hath no partner in the Sovereignty, nor hath He any protecting friend through dependence. And magnify Him with all magnificence. (***17:111***)

And it also means forgiver of sins as:

أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا ۖ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ

Thou art our Protecting Friend, therefore forgive us and have mercy on us, Thou, the Best of all who show forgiveness. (***7:155***)

Therefore, slanderers are deprived from all of these divine graces for being evicted from God's protection and entering Satan's protection.

And the phrase "Satan too does not accept him" may indicate that Satan can not undertake the responsibility of their protection and supervision, and thereby leaves them alone.

10- A part of ill effects of slander remains even after repentance.

It is stated in the traditions of Islamic leaders:

اَوْحَى اللهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ اِلى مُوسَى بْنِ عِمْرانَ اَنَّ الْمُغتابَ اِذا تابَ فَهُوَ آخِرُ مَنْ يَدْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ وَ اِنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَهُوَ اَوَّلُ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ النّارَ».

God inspired to Moses, son of Emran, that if the slanderer repents, he will be the last one entering paradise, and otherwise, he will be the first one entering the fire.[12]

The point of this tradition may represent that slander has both "Right of God" and "Right of People" aspects, and its "Right of People" aspect is more than other rights of people, because slander destroys the capital of people's reputation, the capital which in contrary with material capitals is often

irrecoverable, and this causes the slanderer to be saved posterior than the others. On this account, in some traditions, dishonouring a Muslim is considered as the highest usury as Ense narrates from Prophet (S):

«اِنَّ اَرْبَی الرِّبا عِرْضُ الرَّجُلِ الْمُسْلِمِ».

The most critical usury is dishonouring a Muslim.[13]

Social and individual vices of slander

III- effects of slander in social view:

Slander causes great vices in social view:

1- When slander is spread in the society, it destroys one of the greatest social capitals which is the spirit of brotherhood, unity and intimacy, and ruins the foundations of good opinion and public confidence which is the first requisite of social cooperation.

As outspread of slander causes the people to become aware of hidden weak points of each other, and since most of people are not free from any weak point, knowing them spreads suspicion in the society, and this pessimism and suspicion annihilates the spirit of cooperation and collaboration, and the society will be deprived from all of its concerned blessings, and practically individuals are subjected to "social seclusion".

The previously described tradition;

«لا تَحاسَدُوا وَ لا تَباغَضُوا وَ لا یَغْتَب بَعْضُکُمْ بَعْضاً وَ کُونُوا عِبادَ اللهِ اِخْواناً»

may refer to this point.

2- In most cases, slander causes provoking the fire of sedition and spread of enmity and spite among the individuals, because hidden faults of individuals may be correlated with others' rights, and or at least be a pretext for adventurers to revenge and damage reputation of each other, and this results in enmity, or intensifies it.

3- Slander lowers individuals' personality and respect and thereby their fear and avoidance of sin is decreased, because most people do not perform inadmissible deeds for maintaining their honour and prestige, and or otherwise perform them privately. When their faults and sins are revealed through slander, there is no reason any more for caring and fearing of it, and in this way, slander will be an effective factor for decrease of "social considerations" and spread of corruption.

4- Slander will be also accompanied with irrecoverable losses in economical view for the society, because credit of individuals and confidence of people on each other is more effective than social financial capitals in improvement of the society, and lacking them, activity of common capitals will be significantly reduced, and will become stagnant or semi-stagnant.

Ill-effects of slander in individual view

However, in individual aspect, slander is an explicit injustice and transgression to the rights of others, and the same moral and humanistic faults created in an individual due to injustice to another person are realized through slander. Moreover, since slander originates from a series of ill-favoured moral motives, its repetition strengthens and supports those condemned attributes in man.

In this way, slander both lowers the individual in view of humanistic values, and also weakens and destroys social foundations. So the previous traditions and holy verses clearly represent these realities.

Limits and types of slander

1- Types of slander

Although, at the beginning it seems that slander is the same mentioning hidden faults of others by tongue, but considering its main criterion, it is clarified that slander is an extensive and general concept in view of ethics, including expressing this sense by any means, such as saying, writing, referring and or imitation.

As it is narrated in a tradition: A woman came to visit Prophet (S) and when she went away, Ayesheh referred to her height by her hand. The Prophet (S) said: You slandered about her.[14]

And it is mentioned in another tradition that Ayesheh imitated a woman, and the Prophet (S) prohibited her.[15]

It is deduced hereby that when criticizing the thoughts of others in the writings, it should be discussed in such a way to avoid slander. When cavilling and criticizing the speech of someone, there are often interpretations which are clear senses of slander, disapprobation, mockery, insulting and or humiliation, for example when it is told that phrase is "null by necessity" or "funny" or "childish" or "unwisely", unless its owner is not clear and or humiliating and slandering about him is permitted.

On the other hand, sometimes a man says a speech figuratively, but there are some evidences that the other party understands. This too is among the senses of slander. For example, when some one mentions, today I was in a meeting, and someone told something, while the listener is aware about the meeting he has been.

2- Slanders mixed with another sin

Sometimes this indecent deed is mixed with other indecent deeds, and loses completely its shape, and or appears as a righteous deed.

For instance, sometimes for escaping slander, the people say "I fear to explain for being a slander" or even say "Regretfully, Divine Law has closed our tongue", or "Divine Law does not allow, otherwise I would say a lot of things".

Such people not only implicitly commit slander, but also for leaving the matter ambiguously, provoke the addressee's suspicion on everything in respect to the other person, and in fact they show the matter greater and more significant than what it really is. In addition, they have committed hypocrisy too, and so have mixed dangerously two ill favoured deeds.

Or when they utter as sympathy, "That poor person slipped and committed that sin, God may forgive him".

In this case too, hypocrisy and slander are mixed together.

Or when the one making display of himself says: "Thanks to God, I have not been affected to wine, drugs, like that person. Really, if God does not protect man, it will be very difficult. The trap is hard, unless God helps."

And thereby, he commits slander, hypocrisy and self admiration once and all together.

Or when he says: "I have told these to him too and or will say".

And in this way, he closes the way of correction, and makes his slander more emphasized and severe with this suppositious argument.

3- Slander has a "Right of People" aspect

If slander is interpreted as we referred at the beginning, its "Right of People" aspect will be obviously clear, because:

First, it lowers respect, personality and reputation of the said person, and surely these are not less valuable than properties in view of intellect and religion.

Second, it is inferred from similitude of slander to eating a faithful brother's flesh in the Chambers Sura that slander is a sense of "injustice".

Third, it is referred to in several traditions like the one already mentioned in respect to "annihilation of good deeds and transfer of evils", and the well known tradition:

«اِنَّ صاحِبَ الْغِيبَةِ لا يُغْفَرُ لَهُ حَتّى يَغْفِرَ لَهُ صاحِبُهُ».

The slanderer is not forgiven unless the slandered person forgives him.[16]

And the Prophetic tradition:

«كَفّارَةُ مَنِ اغْتَبْتَهُ اَنْ تَسْتَغْفِرَ لَهُ».

The atonement of slander is asking pardon of God for the slandered person.[17]

And there are traditions, which assume stopping slander as a believer's rights.

Anyway, slander is a clear sense of injustice and without consent of the other party; the slanderer will not be forgiven. And we conclude herein that undoubtedly atonement of slander is not merely asking pardon of God and repentance.

Indeed, there is no way for asking consent and forgiveness, and or no damage is practically made to the prestige and reputation of slandered person, then asking pardon of God may be sufficient.

Exceptions of slander

The jurists and ethics scholars agree that there are some cases in which slander is permitted, but they have some dissidence in specifying those cases. This dissidence is sometimes in mentioning the examples and senses, without any difference in the basis of matter, but sometimes it has a spiritual and real aspect.

However, it is concluded from different proofs and documents that slander is permitted in two cases:

a- When there is a more important interest, in which slander, while observing the subject – it is permitted and there are various senses for it:

1- In case of consultation, for example when someone wants to transact or participate or marry with the other, and is questioning us. Obviously, it is permitted to reveal hidden faults of the other party as far as they are concerned with the said affair, and relieve the one who seeks consult from the possible risks.

2- In case of forbidding of something wrong

3- In case of averting innovation of an innovator

4- In case of warning a Muslim about the risk and loss which is awaiting him (though without any consultation)

5- Petition and removal of injustice and restoring right

And in general all cases in which the interest of revealing one's hidden fault is more than its vice in view of religion.

The reason for exception of these subjects is clear, because it relies on a clear intellectual reason that is the "principle of important and more important". Moreover, some points are referred to in the verses and traditions in this respect (including petition, removal of injustice, and averting innovation of an innovator).

But the remarkable point in view of ethics is being careful that most often deviations and errors are caused through exceptions and misuse or mistake and negligence in determination of their limits and boundaries. Because no one agrees to violate regulations and commit sins explicitly and clearly, but most people achieve their purposes through pretence to using notes and exceptions, even in most cases, man deceives his conscience in this way, and for getting rid of punishment of conscience, and not hurting his inward and natural character, seeks refuge from these notes and exceptions.

And this is one of the contradictory cases of unaware and aware conscience and conquest of the former over the latter.

So, the advantage of slander should be carefully assessed in these cases while taking into account all features and aspects, and free from any love and hatred and other spites, and then one can deduce its excellence over vice of explicit slander, and do not stain himself to the dangerous slanders under the pretext of available permit.

b- The cases in which slander is permitted without any special advantage, and it is solely restricted to those notorious for debauchery, but although some have included petition in this part, as it was referred, it is one of the cases of existence of more important legal advantage, that is restoring right and preventing injustice of cruel person and supporting right of the oppressed. In addition to the reason of intellect, there are several traditions narrated by Shiite and Sunnite as the reason for exception of this issue, like:

«عَنْ جَعْفَر عَنْ اَبِيهِ قالَ: ثَلاثَةٌ لَيْسَتْ لَهُمْ حُرْمَةٌ: صاحِبُ هَوىً مُبتَدِعٌ، وَ الاِمامُ الْجائِرُ، وَ الْفاسِقُ الْمُعْلِنُ الْفِسْقَ».

There are three persons who do not have any respect: one who has innovatory desires, unjust governor, and one who commits sin publicly.[18]

And the same is mentioned in some narrations as follows:

«ثَلاثَةٌ لا غِيبَةَ لَهُمْ: صاحِبُ الْهَوى وَ الْفاسِقُ الْمُعْلِنُ بِفِسْقِهِ، وَ الاِمامُ الْجائِرُ»

2- And also it is narrated from Prophet (S) in a tradition:[19]

«لَيْسَ لِفاسِق غِيبَةٌ».

There is no slander for the sinner.[20]

3- And also it is narrated from Prophet (S) in another tradition:

«مَنْ اَلْقى جِلْبابَ الْحَياءِ عَنْ وَجْهِهِ فَلا غِيْبَةَ لَهُ»

One who lays aside the veil of modesty; there is no slander for him.[21]

4- There are several traditions in respect to Justice in Vassaelo Shiite. For example, it is narrated from Imam As-Sadiq (A.S.):

«مَنْ عامَلَ النّاسَ فَلَمْ يَظْلِمْهُمْ وَ حَدَّثَهُمْ فَلَمْ يَكْذِبْهُمْ وَ واعَدَهُمْ فَلَمْ يُخْلِفْهُمْ كانَ مِمَّنْ حَرُمَتْ غِيْبَتُهُ وَ كَمُلَتْ مُرُوَّتُهُ وَ ظَهَرَ عَدْلُهُ وَ وَجَبَتْ اُخُوَّتُهُ».

Whosoever is not unjust in transaction with people, and do not lie them in speech, and do not violate them in promise, is among those whose slander is forbidden, his personality is perfect, and his justice is manifest, and brotherhood with him is obligatory.[22]

Who is notorious for debauchery, and why slandering about him is permitted?

There are several subjects here, which should be explained:

a- Is exception of a notorious person a topical exclusion (that is one who affects a vice, naturally is not disturbed for mentioning it in his absence. Moreover, it is not a hidden and privacy affair being regarded as slander) or slandering about a notorious person is one of the slander types, and has been excluded as so called "appropriation"?

b- Is permit for slandering about notorious one restricted to the sins which he performs publicly, or it is permitted in all cases?

c- If someone is notorious in one place, and non-notorious and private in somewhere else, is slandering about him permitted in the second place too or not?

d- Is in the permit for slandering about notorious person, existence of conditions for bid to good and

forbid of wrong necessary?

The reply to all of these questions depends on understanding the main point and reason for exclusion of this issue from slander's forbiddance.

It is inferred from above traditions that a notorious individual basically does not have any respect (the respect which is the hindrance for slander's permit).

In other words, such people (and cruel and innovator people) are not respectable in view of social personality, and their desecration is not forbidden, and therefore, giving up slander and preserving their reputation is not necessary.

If we deduce so from above traditions, – as the phrase

«لا غِيبَةَ لَهُ و لا حُرْمَةَ لَهُ»,

proves, the reply to above questions is clarified, and it does not need more explanation, because based on rational and traditional proof, slander does not include such persons.

But it should be noted that apparently the notorious is one who has completely laid aside the veil of modesty, and is rude and fearless against all sins, and it does not include all of those who perform a sin publicly for any reason. Thus, it is possible to slander about such persons only in respect to the case for which they are notorious.

1. Feise Kashani, Mohajjatol Beisae, 251/5
2. Feise Kashani, Mohajjatol Beisae, 251/5
3. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 240/75
4. The same document, page 222
5. Mohaddes Nouri, Mostadrakol Vassael, 118/9
6. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 257/75
7. Feise Kashani, Mohajjatol Beisae, 273/5
8. Feise Kashani, Mohajjatol Beisae, 255/5
9. The same document, page 254
10. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 168/75
11. «2 ; «اللهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُماتِ اِلَى النُّورِ: verse 257
12. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 222/75
13. Feise kashani, Mohajjatol Beisae, page 254
14. Ghazali, Ehyaol Oloum, 145/3, Mohajjatol Beisae, 256/5
15. Ghazali, Ehyahol Oloum, 145/3
16. Feise Kashani, Mohajjatol Beisae, 251/5
17. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, volume 75, page 242 & Mohajjatol Beisae, volume 5, page 273
18. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 253/75
19. Ghazali, Ehyaol Oloum
20. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 236/75
21. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 233/75

22. Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, volume 5, page 393

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