

31 October 2008

## Backbiting

In the name of Allah most gracious most merciful

Dear brothers, today's topic is about negative or counteracting deeds. Those counteracting deeds are like a fatal disease. One may get sick by hundreds of sicknesses and diseases which would not threaten his or her life. But, some will cause death. The counteracting deeds are like the fatal diseases in the world of health.

There are many wrongful or counteracting deeds. The Imam's talk this Friday is about a social disease which is considered to be counteracting to the good deeds, and it destroys blessings gained. This disease is called "backbiting". Backbiting is talking of your brother behind his back with what he does not like". One Musli said: "Why would I backbite anyone? If I were to backbite anyone, then I would backbite my father and mother. They are more deserving to good points or merits (*hasanat*) than anyone else."

You must know for certain that a backbiter will loose the merits he/she gets for their good deeds to those he/she backbites. Some scholar said: "Except for that they would be disobeying Allah, I would have wished if

everyone in country would backbite me, because all their *hasant* would be mine". Another scholar said: "Since the time I realized that backbiting is forbidden, I never backbitten anybody at all".

Dear brothers and sisters in Islam, Allah has given His mercies to the Muslims when He permitted for them the good rightful mercies, and forbidden for them the harmful and evil acts. What is strange with Muslims is that they left that behind their backs. They fell into the forbidden flesh; they eat it as well as bad and harmful fruits, and they enjoy it. This meat they eat is decaying and stinky. And there is some type of fruit which is found abundantly amongst people in the markets and in their homes, with their men and women at all different levels and standards. They do not pay the cost of this fruit in money. It is a poisonous and a sinister fruit. This whoever feeds on it does not get enough of it. Its tune never gets boring or dull to the listener. Do you know what this forbidden fruit is? It is back biting. It is when one Muslim will talk about his brother Muslim with what the brother would hate. Thinking it is a simple and easy matter; when it is gigantic in Allah' view. The person may due to Allah's satisfaction with him/her, say a word to which he pays no attention, and because of that word Allah will elevate him/her many levels or grades. And a person may due to Allah's anger with

him/her, say a word to which he pays no attention, and because of that word Allah will drop him/her into hell.

One of the companions once said to his friends: "you do some acts and you think they are simple and think nothing of them, just like a fly landing on your face and you simply move your arm by your face just like that without a care. At the time of the messenger (PPBU) we used to consider it like mountain."

Dear Muslims, Islam has given each Muslim the rights of other Muslims upon him or her. A Muslim must not be lenient with the rights of others which he/she must respect. The messenger (PPBU) in his farewell Hajj said: {All your blood, money and honor is forbidden and sacred for you, just as sacred this day is; in this sacred month in this sacred land; and that when Allah gave man the powers of hearing, seeing and speech; Allah made it compulsory that they are used in good and in obedience of Allah}. Backbiting is a clear violation of the sanctity of a Muslim and the sanctity of his/her honor. Backbiting is falling into that sacred area, and indulging into the *Haram* or the forbidden. Backbiting is a deviation of purpose of use for the mercy of the tongue when it should only be used to say the good. The messenger (PPBU) advised Muaad (معاذ) saying pointing at

his tongue: {inhibit that or hold on to that.}. Muaad said: "messenger of Allah, and are we going to be responsible or accountable for what we say?". The messenger (PPBU) said: {how dare you Muaad, isn't that many people will get shoved into hell fire for nothing except as result of their tongues.}

The messenger (PPBU) said: {Do you know what backbiting is? They said: No, Allah and His messenger know best, he said: "When you talk of your brother with what he hates". He was then asked: "Even if what we say is a fact". He answered: "if it was a fact about the brother then you would have committed backbiting in his back. And if it was not a fact then you have committed a defamation or slander"}. Slander or defamation is the worst form of lying and falsity.

3aa-asha was talking to the messenger about another woman when she said: "do you know Saffiay, you know the short one" and he said: {you used a word which if put into the water of the sea, it would change it}, meaning it would change its taste or smell or colour due to the intensity of ugliness and stink of this word.

Dear Muslims, what do you think is the case with those who sit for hours talking of their brothers and sisters with the worst of descriptions, slashing them off with

their sharpened tongues, and severing them apart piece by piece. They spare no effort into being skillful in stripping their covers, and showing or announcing their faults, flaws and failings. They might even include their brothers' parents and ancestors; bringing them out of their graves and tombs to be part of the feast. They eat the flesh of the living and the dead. They are so unaware of the punishment awaiting them on the Day of Judgment. The messenger (PPBU) said about this punishment: {When I was taken up on my night journey to the heavens above, I passed by some people with fingernails of copper scratching and scarring their faces and chests. I asked Gabriel: who are these? He said: They are those who eat the flesh of people and talk of their honors.}

Jaber said: "we were once traveling with the messenger (PPBU) when we came across a strong foul smell which filled the air" The messenger (PPBU) said: (Do you what this smell is? This is the smell of those who backbite the faithful}. The messenger (PPBU) also said: {whoever says about a faithful person what is not true, Allah will place him in the mud of insanity until he clears himself of what he said}. Mud of insanity is the remains of the people of hellfire.

Dear Muslims, all souls always have a bit of good and faith left within them. Do not ignore that. Souls also have the potential to improve and upgrade their standing. And we ought to sponsor and stipulate that. We might just bring our selves to the level Allah has wanted for us; and up to the level and standard of this religion. The messenger (PPBU) when he was teaching and upbringing his companions he used three methods:

- 1) Evidence, proof and argument
- 2) Faith
- 3) Sense and feelings and emotions.

This class of people who put them selves as judges between them and others. They are happy with themselves, full of praise and complements to them selves. And to others they always give out, invective and hostile. Allah says: {Let those who have faith, let them not make fun of others, for the others may be better than they are, and no women should make fun of other women; for they may be better than they are }.

Those of you, who backbite, and make fun of others, incite and sting and belittle others; do you not realize the fact that what you do does not just taunt and defame your brothers, but in fact you revile, insult and offend Allah too. Most of what you insult people with is

based on colour, disabilities, lack of money, desperation, professions; they are of no fault of theirs. Did you not know that it is Allah who gave the form to everything and everyone He created? He put everyone into the image He selected for him or her. And it is Him who gives wealth or hold wealth from whom He wishes. He elevated some over others, and He provided some with unique features and mercies over others. If you belittle or incite then you are doing that to Allah; the most Gracious Himself; in His creation, or His wisdom. Be careful of becoming an unbeliever or an infidel after having faith. And be warned of the life of ignorance after the life in Islam. Allah says: **{And do not defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it to insult one's brother after having Faith. And whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed aggressors and wrong -doers.}**

If you want to know the essence and true nature of backbiting and backbiters then visualize this. Visualise a banquet with human prey or victim. And some people who have the skin of humans and have the hearts of monstrous beasts. And they attack the human victim's corpse, cutting the flesh with their teeth, and licking the blood with their tongues. Could you imagine that those who do this are humans? Or from some other type of creatures who feed on humans. And can you imagine if

the victim or prey is a powerless and defenseless in the face of such an attack. On top of that, imagine if the prey is a brother or a sister under the umbrella of religion or family and kin. That is the crime of backbiting as Allah pictured it eloquently in those ever lasting words when He says: **{And do not spy on one another, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate them. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the One who forgives and accepts repentance, the Most merciful.}**

We Ask Allah forgiveness.