

The Fifth Woman

1) The fifth woman whose head was that of a pig and whose body was that of a donkey, being tormented in many different ways; used to carry around slanderous tales.

Allah (The Exalted) says, “Do not spy”.ⁱ

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “Whoever listens to people who are averse to his listening shall have molten lead poured into his ears on the Day of Judgement.”ⁱⁱ

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “He who stirs up enmity among people by quoting their words to each other will not enter paradise.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Hurting someone

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: “Do you know what backbiting means?” It was submitted to him: ‘Allah and his Messenger know best! He warned: “(Backbiting is) that you refer to your brother in such a way as would hurt him.” At this a companion asked: ‘But if the fault I mention is actually present in my brother, (what then?)’ The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) answered: “If you mention the fault of your brother he actually possesses you have backbitten him. But if you attributed some fault to him which he does not possess, you have slandered him.”^{iv}

Respected brother/sister! This Hadith shows that backbiting means to refer to a person in such a way as would hurt him. This also points at, even if what you say about the person is correct and there is no doubt in it, they have still committed an offence. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) observed that backbiting is that you should attribute to a person a fault which is actually present, but if the fault is not present it would be slander which is more serious than backbiting. Some ignorant people say that ‘*I shall tell him to his face, and saying something directly to a person is not backbiting*’. This argument has been suggested by Shaytan and does not justify backbiting. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) observed that backbiting means to refer to someone in such a manner that would hurt them. This shows that the basis of offence is causing heartache and hurting the feelings of a person. It does not make a difference if it is done directly or indirectly. One should talk good of a person or stay silent.

Ignorance

People nowadays say ‘I am not backbiting’, ‘I will say it to his face’, or ‘it is the truth’, or ‘I am just making you aware, but don’t tell anyone’, hence in Bahare-Shariat, Part 12, Page 151 it states; Faqih Abul Layth said; “There are four types of backbiting of which one of them is:

1) *Disbelief*: This is when a person is backbiting he is told don’t back-bite, he says: “This is not backbiting, this is the truth.” He shows something which is forbidden as lawful hence it brings the person out of Islam.

Types of backbiting

1) With the tongue 2) By sign 3) Written 4) By smiling (If a person was praising someone and you smiled as sarcasm which can be seen as “I know who he really is.”) 5) With the hand, feet, head, nose, lips, tongues, eyes, eye brows, forehead, the fact of the matter is to do it in such a way that another person understands his faults is all included in backbiting. 6) To backbite in the heart, for instance, to think of someone as bad without evidence, even if a person smells of alcohol you can’t call him a drinker because he may have put it in his mouth and spat it out and rinsed his mouth out.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “When I was taken up in the Ascent (Mi’raj), I passed by people with fingernails of copper who were raking their faces and chests with them. I asked, ‘Who are they, Gabriel?’ and he said, ‘They are those who slandered others and attacked their reputations.’”^v

Hudhayfa (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “The person who goes about with slander will never enter paradise.”^{vi}

ⁱ Surah , Surah No:49. Verse: 12

ⁱⁱ Bukhari

ⁱⁱⁱ Bukhari

^{iv} Mishkaat ul Masabih

^v Abu Dawud

^{vi} Bukhari and Muslim