Khutbah 4: The Danger of Backbiting and Gossip

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First Khutbah — Arabic Opening

Innal hamda lillah,
nahmaduhu wa nasta‘eenuhu wa nastaghfiruhu,
wa na‘oodhu billahi min shuroori anfusina
wa min sayyi’aati a‘maalina.

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Man yah-dihi-llahu falaa mudilla lah,
wa man yud-lil falaa haadiya lah.

مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Wa ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illallahu wahdahu laa shareeka lah,
wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa rasooluh.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Yaa ay-yuhal-ladheena aamanut-taqul-laha haqqa tu-qaa-tihi
wa laa tamootunna illaa wa antum muslimoon.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Yaa ayyuhan-naasu-ttaqu rabbakumul-ladhee khalaqakum min nafsin waahidah,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ،

▶ Listen to pronunciation

wa khalaqa minhaa zawjahaa,
wa baththa minhumaa rijaalan katheeran wa nisaa’aa.

وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا، وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Wattaqullahal-ladhee tasaa’aloona bihi wal-arhaam.
Innallaha kaana ‘alaykum raqeebaa.

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Yaa ayyuhalladheena aamanu-ttaqullaha wa qooloo qawlan sadeedaa.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Yuslih lakum a‘maalakum wa yaghfir lakum dhunoobakum.

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Wa man yuti‘illaha wa rasoolahu faqad faaza fawzan ‘azeemaa.

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Ammaa ba‘d.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Fa inna asdaqal hadeethi kitaabullah,

فَإِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ،

▶ Listen to pronunciation

wa khayral hadyi hadyu Muhammadin sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam,

وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ،

▶ Listen to pronunciation

> **wa sharral umoori muh-dathaa-tuhaa,**
> **wa kulla muh-dathatin bid'ah,**
> **wa kulla bid'atin dalaalah,**
> **wa kulla dalaalatin fin-naar.**
>
> وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.
>
> ▶ Listen to pronunciation

First Khutbah

My dear brothers in Islam,

I advise myself first, and then all of you, to have taqwa of Allah. Remember that every word we speak is known to Him.

Today's khutbah is about something many of us fall into without even realising it: the danger of backbiting and gossip.

We know that lying and stealing are haram. But speaking badly about people when they are not present has become so common that we sometimes forget how serious it is.

It happens at work, in our homes and at family gatherings. And now, through WhatsApp and social media, a private story can reach hundreds of people in seconds.

Someone makes a mistake, and suddenly everyone is discussing it. Someone has a problem at home, and their private matters become the subject of conversation.

We may say, 'I'm only telling you what happened,' or, 'But it's true!' Yet being truthful does not always make the conversation right.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, explained what backbiting means in Sahih Muslim (Hadith 2589). He said:

'Backbiting implies your talking about your brother in a manner which he does not like.'

A companion asked what happens if the thing being said is true. The Prophet, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, explained in Sahih Muslim (Hadith 2589) that if it is true, it is backbiting. And if it is not true, it is slander, meaning that we have made a false accusation.

My dear brothers in Islam, just because a story is true does not mean we have the right to spread it. People have private struggles and mistakes, just as we do.

Ask yourself: would I be happy if someone spoke about my faults in the same way? Would I be comfortable if the person heard what I said?

Allah tells us in Surah Qaf, (verse 18):

'he does not utter a single word without an ever-present watcher'

Every word matters. That includes what we say when joking, when angry and when we think nobody important is listening. Allah knows it all.

In Surah Al-Hujurat, (verse 12), Allah tells us:

'do not spy on one another or speak ill of people behind their backs'

Allah then compares backbiting to eating the flesh of a dead brother. It is a terrible image, and it shows us how hateful this sin is.

Think about a family gathering. Someone mentions a relative who is not there. One person says something negative, then another adds to it. People laugh, and the conversation moves on. Yet the relative may later hear what was said and feel deeply hurt. What began as a few careless words can turn into years of tension between family members.

We would never want someone to destroy our good name. Yet one careless story can create hatred between relatives, ruin a friendship or leave a person ashamed for years.

My dear brothers in Islam, we must also be careful when someone else starts gossiping. Perhaps we did not begin the conversation, but we laugh, ask questions or add more details.

When that happens, try to change the subject. Say something good about the person, or politely leave the conversation. You do not have to take part.

And remember that forwarding a message is also a choice. A screenshot or an embarrassing video can spread quickly. Often we do not know the whole story, and the person being discussed cannot defend themselves.

We should also remember that not everything we read online is true. A message may be missing important details. A picture may give the wrong impression. And a story may be completely false. The safest choice is not to pass it on when we do not have a good reason. We cannot undo the harm simply by deleting the message afterwards.

Before sharing something, ask yourself: is it true? Is it necessary? Will it help anyone? Or am I simply spreading someone's private business?

Allah also warns us in Surah Al-Hujurat, (verse 11):

'do not speak ill of one another; do not use offensive nicknames for one another.'

Sometimes we laugh at someone's appearance, accent, clothing or financial situation. Then, if the person is hurt, we say it was only a joke.

But we do not know what that person is going through. A few hurtful words may stay in their heart long after we have forgotten them.

What if someone starts speaking about a person you dislike? This is when we must be especially careful. It is easy to join in when we already feel angry with someone. But their faults do not make our own wrong words acceptable. Our duty is to be fair even when we are upset.

There is an important difference between gossip and speaking to get genuine help. Someone who is being abused, cheated or treated unfairly can tell the truth to a person who can help them. We can also give honest, necessary advice when someone asks.

But our aim must be to prevent harm, not to embarrass or expose people. We should say only what is needed.

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallahu Alayhi wa Salam, gave us a simple rule in Sahih al-Bukhari (Hadith 6475):

'Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should talk what is good or keep quiet.'

Imagine how many arguments, broken friendships and family problems could be avoided if we followed that advice.

My dear brothers in Islam, our tongues are small, but the harm they can cause is great. A conversation may last a few minutes, but the damage can remain for years.

We should ask ourselves today: do I speak badly about people when they are absent? Do I enjoy listening to gossip? Do I pass on stories that I have not checked?

None of us is perfect. But Allah has given us the chance to change. We can begin today by protecting our tongues and the honour of others.

May Allah forgive the harm we have caused with our words. May Allah protect our tongues from backbiting, lies and gossip. And may Allah help us speak what is good, Ameen.

End of First Khutbah — Forgiveness

> **Aqoolu qawlee haadhaa,**
> **wa astaghfirullaha lee wa lakum,**
> **wa li saa'i-ril muslimeena min kulli dhanb.**
> **Fastaghfirooh, innahu huwal ghafoorur raheem.**
>
> أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.
>
> ▶ Listen to pronunciation

Sit briefly between the two khutbahs.

Second Khutbah — Arabic Opening

> **Alhamdulillahi rabbil 'aalameen, was-salaatu was-salaamu 'alaa ashrafil anbiyaa'i wal mursaleen, nabiyyinaa Muhammadin, wa 'alaa aalihi wa sahbihi ajma'een.**
>
> الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
>
> ▶ Listen to pronunciation

> **Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illallahu wahdahu laa shareeka lah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasooluh. Ammaa ba'd.**
>
> أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ.
>
> ▶ Listen to pronunciation

Second Khutbah

My dear brothers in Islam,

Again, I advise myself and all of you to have taqwa of Allah.

We have spoken about the danger of backbiting. But the important question now is: what are we going to do differently?

First, think before you speak. Not every story needs to be repeated, and not every message needs to be forwarded. Sometimes silence is the better choice.

Second, stop searching for the faults of others. Every one of us has mistakes and private struggles. We should spend more time correcting ourselves than discussing other people.

Third, set an example for our families. If children hear us insulting relatives or laughing at neighbours, they may think this behaviour is normal. Teach them to speak kindly and not to spread rumours.

My dear brothers in Islam, if we have already backbitten someone, we should make sincere tawbah. Ask Allah to forgive us, stop the sin and try not to repeat it.

If we spread something false, correct it. If we damaged someone's reputation, try to repair that harm. When appropriate, seek forgiveness from the person without causing further trouble.

If you find yourself in a group where gossip happens often, make a small change. Do not reply to messages that insult people. Do not ask for more private details. If you can, remind the group gently that the person being discussed is not there to speak for himself. These small decisions help us form better habits.

And remember, the same tongue that can hurt people can also earn reward. We can use it to remember Allah, speak the truth, comfort someone and make peace between people.

So let us make a promise to ourselves today: we will protect people's private matters, refuse to spread gossip and speak with kindness, even when others do not.

One day, we will stand before Allah and answer for the words we spoke. Let us make sure our words are a source of good deeds rather than regret.

May Allah forgive our mistakes, bring love and unity to our families and communities, and make us people who protect the honour of others, Ameen.

Closing Dua

> **In-nal-laaha wa ma-laaa-e-ka-ta-hoo yu-sal-loo-na 'alan-na-bee,**
> **yaaa ay-yu-hal-la-thee-na aa-ma-noo sal-loo 'a-lay-hi wa sal-li-moo tas-lee-maa.**
>
> إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا.
>
> ▶ Listen to pronunciation

Allah humma Sali wa salam wa barik ala Muhammadin wa ala alley Muhammad

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Allahummaghfir lil-muslimeena wal-muslimaat, wal-mu'mineena wal-mu'minaat, al-ahyaa'i minhum wal-amwaat.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Rabbanaa zalamnaa anfusanaa, wa illam taghfir lanaa wa tarhamnaa, lanakoonanna minal-khaasireen.

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Rabbanaa aatinaa fid-dunyaa hasanah, wa fil-aakhirati hasanah, wa qinaa 'adhaaban-naar.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Final Khutbah Closing

Ibaadallah,
innallaha ya’muru bil-‘adli
wal-ihsaani
wa eetaa’i dhil-qurbaa,
wa yanhaa ‘anil fahshaa’i wal-munkari wal-baghy.
Ya‘izukum la‘allakum tadhakkaroon.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ، وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation

Wa akhiroo da3wanal humdoolilahi rubul Alameen.
Wa Aqimis-salaah.

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ.

▶ Listen to pronunciation