

Listening to backbiting is a sin

Translated by Rasheed ibn Estes Barbee

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[<http://www.binbaz.org.sa/mat/147>]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: I am a young woman who hates backbiting and tale-carrying. And sometimes I will be in a group where they are speaking about the conditions of the people and they will begin to backbite and carry tales. I hate this in myself and I loathe it, but I am extremely shy so I am not able to prevent them from that. And likewise I am not able to find a place to distance myself from them. And Allaah knows I wish they would involve themselves in speech other than this. Is there a sin upon me for sitting with them? And what is incumbent upon me to do.

Shaykh ibn Baaz (May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him): You are sinning by doing this (sitting with them), unless you disapprove of the evil. If they accept it from you, then all praises belong to Allaah; and if not then it is obligatory upon you to separate from them and to not sit with them. This is based on the statement of Allaah the Exalted:

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ وَإِمَّا يُنْسِيَنَّكَ الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرِى مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

[And when you see those who engage in [offensive] discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them until they enter into another conversation. And if Satan should cause you to forget, then do not remain after the reminder with the wrongdoing people.]¹

And the statement of the Exalted:

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِثْلَهُمْ

[And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'aan) that when you hear the Verses of Allaah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them.]²

¹ سورة الأنعام - Soorah al-'An'aam [6:68]

² سورة النساء - Soorah an-Nisaa [4:140]

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And the statement of the Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him):

“Whoever from amongst you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand, and if he is not able then let him change it with his tongue, and if he is not able then let him hate it in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith.”³

And the verses and hadeeth containing this meaning are numerous.

And with Allaah lies all success.

³ Collected by Muslim