

To Kill a Mocking Tongue

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Al-Ma'roor ibn Suwayd narrates that he once saw Abu Dharr – radi Allaahu ‘anhu – wearing a beautiful shawl. His slave standing next to him was wearing a shawl exactly like it, warm and beautiful.

Ma'roor said to Abu Dharr, ***“Perhaps you could take the shawl of your servant and give him another (less expensive) one.”***

“Never,” said Abu Dharr, ***“for I once had a servant whose mother was not Arab and I cursed him and his mother. That servant went to the Messenger of Allah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – complaining of the words I had said.”***

“When Rasul Allaah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – saw me he commented, ‘O Abu Dharr, you are a man who still has Jahilliyyah (Pre-Islamic Ignorance) in him.’”

Because of these painful words, Abu Dharr – may Allah be pleased with him - would always dress his servants in the exact same garments that he would wear.

Dear brothers and sisters, Allah is disobeyed most with our tongues. There is a sin that sweeps amongst us, a sin that many take lightly, a sin that is laughed at, a sin that could very well pull someone to Hellfire: It is the sin of insulting others.

Read carefully this following verse. It is a commandment of Allah that begins with a call to those who claim to have Eemaan. Allah ta'ala says in the Qur'an (49/11):

O you who believe let not one group of people make fun of another, perhaps the (one's being made fun of) are better than them. And let not women make fun of other women perhaps the (woman being made fun of) is better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by (offensive) nicknames. Wretched is the name (i.e. mention) of disobedience after (one's) faith. And whoever does not repent – then it is those who are the Dhaalimoon (the wrongdoers).

Perhaps the one that is being made fun of is more beloved to Allah. Subhaan Allah, let us remember this if we ever try to make fun of someone, perhaps Allah loves them and does not love us. Didn't the Mushrikeen make fun of Rasul Allah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – and we know Allah loved him and not them. Didn't the Munaafiqeen make fun of the Sahaabah – and we know Allah loved the Sahaabah and not them.

Rasul Allah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – said, ***“Verily a person will speak words from those that Allah hates, paying no heed to what he is saying, and with those words he will plummet in to hellfire.”*** – Bukhari

There are different reasons why a person would want to insult, make fun of and ridicule other community members:

Firstly: They have weak Eemaan and their fear of Allah is poor. This is one of the major reasons.

Secondly: They spend a lot of their time in gatherings that bring no benefit.

Thirdly: They themselves may want others to praise them. Sadly, when there is a student or a community member that insults others, often it is they that want to be the 'cool' one. How can they be 'cool' if they are doing something that Allah and His Messenger hate?

Fourthly: They forget the punishment for those that make fun of others. Imam Al-Bayhaqee narrates in Shu'ab al-Eemaan, that Rasul Allah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – said, ***“Verily those people that make fun of people – for them a gate of Jannah will be opened. It will be said to them: Come (and enter). That person will come with all their anguish and depression – but when he gets close, the gate will be closed in his face. Then another gate (to Jannah) will be opened and it will be said: Come (and enter). So that person***

comes with all his anguish and depression. But when he gets close, the gate will be closed in his face. This will keep happening to him until it gets to the point where it will be said: Come (and enter), and he will not come from the despair of ever entering paradise.”

Fifthly: Those that make fun of others may do so out of love for the Kuffaar and a love to imitate them. How many times do we see the comedians mocking people and everyone laughing? Indeed, mocking others and insulting them is a characteristic of Jaahiliyyah and kufr, and it is never a characteristic of a believer.

Allah ta'ala shows us in Surah Al-Mutaffifeen (83/29) how this characteristic of laughing at others is a characteristic of the Kuffaar:

Indeed, those who committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed.

The seriousness of this sin varies in accordance to the subject being insulted:

On the highest level of seriousness is to make fun of Allah or His Ayaat or His Messenger – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam.

A group of Munaafiqeen started joking one day about their Qurr'aa, i.e. the Companions of Allah's Messenger. They described in ridiculing terms that they were large in stomachs, having lying tongues and being cowardly. Allah ta'ala tells us in the Qur'an (9/65-66): ***And if you ask them, they will surely say, “We were only conversing and playing.” Say, “Is it Allah and His verses and His Messenger that you were mocking?” / Make no excuse; you have disbelieved (i.e. rejected faith) after your belief. If We pardon one faction of you – We will punish another faction because they were criminals.***

To ridicule and make fun of the Sahaabah

In the incident just mentioned, the comment that the Munaafiqeen was actually directed at the Sahaabah. The Qur'aan shows us that this was a direct ridicule of Allah, His verses, and His Messenger.

Shaykh Al-Uthaymeen – rahi mahullaah – said: Thus it is understood that someone who curses and ridicules the Companions is a Kaafir. This is because cutting their honor is in reality an attempt at ridiculing Allah and His Messenger and His Sharee'ah.

To ridicule the pious believers

For example, if someone were to ridicule a pious believer because of his practice of the Deen, such as ridiculing a brother's beard or to mock a sisters Hijaab, etc. Doing this – i.e. mocking a Muslim because of his Islam – may very well expel someone from the fold of Islam.

Allah ta'ala says in Surah Al-Mutaffifeen (29-30):

Indeed, those that committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed

As reported in Tafseer At-Tabaree, the Munaafiqeen were once sitting back watching the charity that the believers were giving. To those that gave much, like AbdurRahmaan ibn 'Owf, they said, ***'he only gave it to show off'***. For those that gave little, they said, ***'Verily, Allah has no need for his petty offering.'***

And so Allah ta'ala revealed in Surat At-Tawbah (9/79):

Those who criticize the contributors among the believers concerning their charities and (criticize) the ones who find nothing (to spend) except their effort, so they ridicule them – Allah will ridicule them, and they will have a painful punishment.

To ridicule humans in general

This applies to the God-fearing and the Fussaaq, a believer should not humiliate people and or use derogatory nicknames for them, nor should they ridicule their creation.

Allah ta'ala says 49/11:

O you who believe let not one group of people make fun of another

And Rasul Allah – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam – said, ***“It is enough sin for a person that they would ridicule their Muslim brother.”***

Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood – radi Allaahu ‘anhu – used to say, as narrated by Ibn Abee ‘Aasim, ***“By Allah whom there is no god but He, there is nothing more worthy of a prolonged incarceration than one's tongue.”***

Part II

Abu Moosa – radi Allaahu ‘anhu – said: I asked Allah's Messenger, ***‘Who out of the Muslims is the best?’*** He replied, ***“Those whom the other Muslims are safe from his tongue and hands.”*** – Agreed Upon

The mockingbird, native to the western hemisphere, has a very interesting name. The mockingbird gets its name from its ability to mimic the sounds of other animals. It combines song notes of its own with sounds from other birds, doing so in almost a mocking way. It is an endangered species, and we hope - in sha Allah – that the mocking it got its name after will become endangered in our communities too.

Al-Hasan Al-Basree – rahimahullaah – said, ***“Whoever does not guard the slips of their tongue has not understood their Deen.”***

Dear brothers and sisters, one of the saddest things is to see the regulars of the masjid, or the leaders of the Muslim youth, being the ones who mock others. So many youth groups and Halaqahs around North America are built on this notion that in order to be cool you must ridicule and mock others.

In other places, I know personally people that abandoned the local Masjid because they did not want to be ridiculed by the Muslims. They felt more comfort and compassion in the character of the disbelievers. What will Allah ta'ala think of someone that does this to the Muslims, someone who is an obstacle for others to come closer to Allah?

If we find a gathering of Muslims to be like this, it is our duty to command the good and forbid the evil and demand that this ridiculing stop once and for all.

In conclusion, the questions that begs to be asked is: What is the cure for this disease of the tongue?

One: We should know that it is a major sin. In fact, a person may make a single statement – not paying any heed to it – by which he may slip in to Hellfire.

Two: We should follow what our tongues are saying and not allow ourselves to stoop to vain talk.

Three: We should distance ourselves from those long useless gatherings where nothing is done for hours except laughing and chatting. Instead, we should replace our gatherings with the remembrance of Allah and good speech.

Four: We must glorify this Deen and make enormous in our hearts the commandments of Allah ta'ala. If Allah says do not make fun of one another, our reply should be nothing more then: ***‘we hear and we obey’***.

Five: We should warn others of the sin of insulting other people and making fun of them. Let us not allow ourselves to be as a silent Shaytaan listening to others being insulted. Let us speak up and say it clearly that

this is not something loved by Allah and His Messenger. Say that if Allah and His Messenger hate it, then so do I.

Six: If you feel yourself that you just have to insult someone, ask Allah to protect you from the Shaytaan and this satanic act. As Allah ta'ala says (7/200): ***And if an evil suggestion comes to you from Satan, then seek refuge in Allah. Indeed, He is Hearing and Knowing.***

Seven: And of course, if anyone of us should fall into this sin, we should be swift in turning back to Allah in Towbah. Say Astaghfirullaah wa 'atoobo ilayh, O Allah I ask You to forgive me and I return to You.

Allah ta'ala says in the Qur'an (49/11): ***And whoever does not repent – then it is those who are the Dhaalimoon (the wrongdoers).***

Finally, if there is one thing that you remember from this khutbah let it be this following commandment of Allaah ta'ala, memorize it and teach it to at least one other person:

O you who believe let not one group of people make fun of another