

# The Satanic Path of the Slanderhouse Forums

By Abū al-Ḥasan Mālik Ādam al-Akhḍar

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After becoming aware of the evil of the internet slanderers and tale-carriers in the West, a group of our scholars gave very cogent advice to their Muslim sons and daughters. This advice was disseminated on a number of websites and received with a great outpouring of support and acceptance—that is from those who honor words of wisdom supported by evidences and proofs found in the two Revelations. As for the purveyors of slander, a people manic in their pursuit of spreading *al-fahishah* among those who believe, these advices were like a guiding lamp shone in a village of the blind.

Allāh ﷻ says:

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ  
اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

“Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allāh took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see.

صُمُّ بُكْمٌ عُمَى فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

Deaf, dumb and blind - so they will not return [to the right path].” [al-Baqarah 2:17-18]

So there is little to be done with the person who is crazed by the touch of *Shaytān*. He is like the example of the madman throwing stones at the moon. So what of the one who in this deranged state believes that his heinous acts are somehow a reformation of the lands and the worshippers?

Allāh ﷻ says:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ  
مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾

“And when it is said to them, ‘Do not cause corruption on the earth,’ they say, ‘We are but reformers.’

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not.” [al-Baqarah 2:11-12]

And who is worse in behavior than the one who claims to enjoin piety and prohibit evil while at the same time treading a Satanic path? Allāh ﷻ addresses their kind in His Noble Book:

﴿ أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَتَلُونَ الْكِتَابَ  
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾ [44]

“Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason?” [al-Baqarah 2:44]

Allāh ﷻ also states:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴾ [2]

“O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do?”

﴿ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴾ [3]

Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do.” [al-Saff 61:2-3]

These verses are overwhelming proofs against those who claim, in the name of protecting the Muslims, that they are waging *holy battle* against so-called sinners. All the while, their only weapon has been a payload of baseless and unfounded allegations and rumors. However, the irony here is astounding; for in reality it is these *Shayātīn*<sup>1</sup> who have fallen into a host of open, major sins, from them the sin of spreading *al-fāḥishah* among those who believe. No Muslim should doubt that this act is a grave offense and the handiwork of the party of *Shaytān*. Merely looking at what defines a major sin brings this into clear focus. The scholars, past and present, have defined a major sin as that which has a legislated punishment in this life or the promise of punishment in the next. The leader of the people of ḥadīth, Ibn Ḥajr al-‘Asqalānī (رحمه الله) states, “From the best definitions [of a major sin] is what al-Qurtubī mentions in *al-Mufhim*: ‘Every sin that is designated as major by a text in the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah* or there is consensus [regarding it] or the mention of severe chastisement [in relation to it] or has a legislated punishment connected to it or is severely rebuked, then it falls under the category of a major sin.’”<sup>2</sup>

After citing the definition of al-Qurtubī (رحمه الله), let us examine the Statement of Allāh ﷻ:

<sup>1</sup> This is based on Shaykh Luhaydan’s description of these individuals resembling like *Shayātīn*, as we will benefit in the Shaykh’s response.

<sup>2</sup> *Fatḥ al-Bārī*

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ  
أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

**“Indeed those who love those illicit acts be circulated amongst those who believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the next.” [al-Nūr 24:19]**

In this verse, Allāh ﷻ mentions a painful punishment in this life as well as the next for the circulation of *al-fahishah*. Thus, according to the definition of al-Qurtubī, it most certainly falls under the category of the major sins. This point is not lost on the person of discernment, for not only have these *Shayātīn* of Slanderhouse fallen into spreading vague accusations, they have also descended into drafting crudely written, explicit narratives of illicit acts; detailed narratives that mirror stories spun by the most wicked writers of adult literature. How could one not recognize that the narratives of these *Shayātīn* are tantamount to circulating pornographic material? Indeed, the very purpose of the disbelievers publishing such illicit stories in their magazines and books is to titillate and excite the base desires of the masses. So how can copycatting them word for word bring about anything but the same results? The noble scholar Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Uthaymīn (رحمه الله) says regarding this: “Love of *al-fāḥishah* (sexual illicitness) being spread among the believers has two meanings: The first: Love of spreading *al-fāḥishah* in the Muslim society; and included in this are those who circulate depraved films and despicable, obscene magazines. There is no doubt that they love that *al-fāḥishah* is spread among those who believe. They desire to be a trial upon the Muslims in their religion due to what they circulate in these wicked, filthy magazines and what resembles them. Also, enabling them to do this, for those who have the ability to prevent it, is love of *al-fāḥishah* spreading among those who believe. So whoever has the ability to stop these magazines and allows them to be spread is from those who love that *al-fāḥishah* is spread among those who believe. **“For them is a painful punishment in this life and the next.”** Meaning, they will receive a severe torment in the worldly life as well as the Hereafter.

The second: Loving that *al-fāḥishah* is spread to a particular individual, not the Muslim society at large; this one, too, will receive a painful punishment. Thus, whoever loves to spread *al-fāḥishah* to Zayd (i.e. so and so) from the people will also receive a severe chastisement in this life and the next.”<sup>3</sup>

What is abundantly clear, for the person of insight and understanding, is that the types of stories and images that are published in these magazines and films (websites most certainly fall into this category

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<sup>3</sup> *Sharḥ Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*

as well) are the industry of those who love that *al-fāhishah* is circulated among those who believe. Thus, if one narrates erotic tales in graphic detail, they have in turn done the very work of the publishers and producers of these distributions—wittingly or unwittingly. So, while the onlooker is appalled at the notion of any Muslim committing such acts, as they should be, they must also be appalled at the person who circulated such *fahishah* among them because this is in clear violation of Allāh’s ﷻ Book. There is also much that could—and should—be said regarding the obsession these *Shayātīn* have with illicit acts, delving deep into the lexicon to unearth the most perverse language imaginable to describe them. This fixation on sexual behavior says more about the pathologies of these *Shayātīn* than it does about those they slander. Ibn Taymiyyah mentions, “His statement: **‘Verily, those who love that the crime of illicit acts should be circulated amongst those who believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the Hereafter.’** This is a censure for those who love this, and it could be [manifested] in the heart only, or, with the tongue and limbs. It is also a censure for those who speak or inform about illicit acts, loving that they befall the believers, either from envy and hatred or love of illicit acts; and both of these emanate [from] love of illicit acts and hatred for the believers; for everyone who loves the act, mentions it. Thus, every exploit that includes the love of illicit acts circulating amongst the believers falls under this [exhortation].

Rather, this person’s punishment is worse, for indeed Allāh has promised the painful punishment in this life and the next for simply loving that illicit acts be spread; and this punishment may not be coupled with a statement or action, so how much more if it is combined with a statement? Instead, it is upon a person to hate what Allāh hates from illicit acts, their accusations, and their circulation amongst those who believe; and whoever is pleased with the act of a people will be gathered up with them, just like the wife of Lūt was gathered with the people of Lūt ﷻ even though she did not commit their evil act; however, since she was pleased with it, she was punished along with them.”<sup>4</sup> So how are we to understand Ibn Taymiyyah’s statement “For everyone who loves the act, mentions it” in relation to those on forums and blogs who obsessively post about alleged sexual exploits and fetishes?

Moreover, it is sheer absurdity for anyone to claim that they are doing these deeds in a noble cause, for as ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas’ud ﷻ said to the people in the *Dhikr* circle, “How many people intend

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<sup>4</sup> See *Majmū’ al-Fatāwa* (15/332)

good but do not achieve it?”<sup>5</sup> This is because the good intention does not make the evil deed good. This, of course, if one is naïve enough to believe the argument that these slanderous acts are done with good intention. For, in reality, it is inconceivable that craft of such depravity could emanate from one who fears Allāh ﷻ. Rather, as we benefit from the story of those who slandered ‘Āishah, these actions are from the attributes of the hypocrites. This point has been elucidated in saying of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, “Indeed in every body, there is a morsel of flesh, if it is good, the whole body will be good, and if it is corrupt, the whole body will be corrupt. Verily, it is the heart.”<sup>6</sup> So how can such delirium come from anything but a diseased heart and mind? In either case, it is as the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has stated, “Whoever does an action that is not in accordance with this affair of ours, it is rejected.”<sup>7</sup> This includes the deed which is coupled with a pure intention, but is,

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<sup>5</sup> This refers to what is related by ‘Amr ibn Salamah (رحمه الله) who said: “We used to sit at the door of ‘Abd Allah ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ before the *Fajr* prayer, so that when he came out, we could walk with him to the *masjid*, then Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī ﷺ came to us and said: ‘Has Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān come out to you yet? We said: ‘No.’ So he sat with us until he came out, and when he came out we all stood up. Abū Mūsā said to him: ‘O Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, just now I saw something in the *masjid* that I have never seen before, and I did not see except [that which is] good.’

Ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ said: ‘What was it?’

Abū Mūsā ﷺ said: ‘If you live, you will see it. In the *masjid*, I saw some people sitting in circles waiting for the prayer. In every circle there was a man, and in their hands they had pebbles. That man would say: ‘Say *Allāhu Akbar* one hundred times, and they would say *Allāhu Akbar* one hundred times. The man would say: Say *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* (there is no deity deserving worship besides Allāh) one hundred times, and they would say *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* one hundred times. The man would say: Say *Subhanallah* (Glory be to Allah) one hundred times, and they would say *Subhanallah* one hundred times.

Ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ said: ‘What did you say to them?’

Abū Mūsā ﷺ said: ‘I did not say anything to them. I was waiting for your thoughts and command.’

Ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ said: ‘Why did you not tell them to count their bad deeds and guarantee them that their good deeds would not be wasted?’

Then Ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ moved on, and we moved on with him until he came to one of those circles, and he stood over them and said: ‘What is this that I see you doing?’

They said: ‘O Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, these are stones with which we count the *takbīr*, *tahlīl* and *tasbīḥ*.’

Ibn Mas’ūd said: ‘Count your bad deeds, for I guarantee to you that none of your good deeds will be lost. Woe to you, O *Ummah* of Muḥammad! How quickly you have become doomed! There are the Companions of your Prophet still alive in numbers, and his cloak has not worn out, and his vessel is not yet broken. By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, you are either following a way that is more guided than the way of Muḥammad or you are opening a door to misguidance.’

They said: ‘By Allāh, O Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, we only intended good.’

Ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ said: ‘How many of those who intend good never achieve it. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ told us that some people would recite the Qur’ān and it would not go below their collarbones. By Allāh, I do not know, perhaps most of them are from among you.’

Then Ibn Mas’ūd ﷺ turned away from them [and left].

‘Amr ibn Salamah said: ‘We saw most of those [people in those] circles on the side of the *Khawārij* fighting us on the day of *al-Nahravān*. Collected by al-Dārimī (no. 204) and *Silsilah Ṣaḥīḥah* of al-Albānī (no. 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 50) and Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority on al-Nu’mān ibn Bashīr

<sup>7</sup> Collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of ‘Āishah

however, in opposition to the Islamic legislation. So what of the deed accompanied by corrupt intent?

What is also ironical is that these deluded persons claim to be *exposing* the callers for sins they have purportedly committed in their private lives; therefore, according to their allegations, these callers have hidden their sins. Whereas, these *Shayātīn* openly sin spreading *al-fāḥishah* among the believers on the internet. Thus, they are, in truth, the ones deserving of the treatment of open sinners (even if they hide behind computer names and screens). Those who commit such acts have also been labeled *fāsiqs* by the testimony of the Book of Allāh.

Allāh ﷻ says:

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً  
وَلَا يَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةٌ أَبَدًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤﴾

**“And those who accuse chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses – lash them with eighty lashes and do not accept from them testimony ever after. And those are the defiantly disobedient.”** [*al-Nūr* 24:4]

‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Nāṣir al-Sa’dī (رحمه الله) says in his commentary of these verses, “(And those are the *fāsiqūn*) i.e., disobedient to Allāh, the person whose evil is abundant, and this is due to violation of what Allāh has prohibited and violation of his brother’s honor, influencing people with his speech, destroying the brotherhood that Allāh has placed between the people of *Imān* and love of *al-fāḥishah* being spread among those who believe; and this is a proof that *al-Qadhf* (accusing the believers of fornication without proof) is from the major sins.”<sup>8</sup>

Also, there is agreement among the scholars that this verse includes men who have been accused as well. Thus, Allāh ﷻ has labeled the people of such behavior *fāsiqs*. So while these *Shayātīn* label others *fāsiqs* for alleged crimes; they are most deserving of the title for their actual crimes, and Allāh is sufficient as a Witness.

So in spite of their claims to righteous indignation, the truth of the matter is that they are liars. Allāh ﷻ says:

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<sup>8</sup> *Taysīr al-Karīm al-Raḥmān* (p. 504-505)

لَوْلَا جَاءَ وَعَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةٍ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ فَأُولَئِكَ  
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

“Why did they [who slandered] not produce four witnesses for it? And when they do not produce the witnesses, then it is they, in the sight of Allah , who are the liars.” [al-Nūr 24:13]

In addition to being liars, they are also the people of major sin as stated earlier in the *tafsīr* of the verse of spreading *al-fāhishah*. This is also due to them being people of *Namīmah*. The Prophet ﷺ stated, “The *Nammām* (tale carrier) will not enter Paradise.”<sup>9</sup>

We therefore advise such individuals to fear Allāh ﷻ and to repent to Him before the day when no wealth or children will avail, except those who come to Allāh ﷻ with a pure heart. This advice is founded in the very same verses of *Surah al-Nūr*:

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً  
وَلَا يَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةٌ أَبَدًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤﴾

“And those who accuse chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses - lash them with eighty lashes and do not accept from them testimony ever after. And those are the defiantly disobedient,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

Except for those who repent thereafter and reform, for indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. [al-Nūr 24:4-5]

al-Sa’dī (رحمه الله) says, “Repentance in this circumstance is that the slanderer must declare himself a liar and must affirm that he is a liar in his statement, and this is obligatory upon him to declare himself a liar even if he is certain [that the act] occurred; since he did not bring four witnesses. However, if the slanderer repents, rectifies his actions and exchanges evil behavior for good, [the name of] *fisq* will be removed from him and his [future] testimony will be accepted, according to the correct position. Verily, Allāh is All Forgiving, Most Merciful; Who forgives all the sins of those who repent and return to obedience. If he doesn’t bring four witnesses, the slanderer is lashed...”<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Collected by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 143) on the authority of Hudhayfah

<sup>10</sup> *Tafsīr al-Karīm al-Raḥmān* (p. 505)



So let them turn in repentance to Allāh ﷻ and declare themselves liars in accordance with the Book of Allāh ﷻ and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger ﷺ. As for those who persist, then for them is the Day of Reckoning.

To further elaborate on the issue of four witnesses, let us examine a couple of events that occurred during the time of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and his companions. First, the narration found in the *Sunan* of Imām Abū Dāwud under the chapter “If a Man Confesses to Fornication and the Woman Denies it,” related by the noble companion Sa’d ibn Sahl ؓ that a man came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and confessed to fornicating with a woman and then named her. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ sent someone to ask her concerning this, and she denied fornicating with him, so the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ gave him the legislated lashing and left her alone.”<sup>11</sup>

In his explanation of the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwud, al-Muḥaddith ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-‘Abbād (حفظه الله) says, “His statement (**Chapter: If a Man Confesses to Fornication but the Woman Does Not.**) i.e., what is the ruling concerning this? What is known is that if a man confesses to fornicating, he is held accountable for that confession. As for the woman he has alleged to have fornicating with, then she is not held accountable for his confession, because this is an accusation he has leveled against her, and she is not held responsible for this accusation unless she [herself] confesses or there are present four witnesses who witnessed the act. With this, the proof is established against her. Abū Dawud has collected the narration of Sahl ibn Sa’d al-Sa’idī ؓ (**that a man came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and confessed to fornicating with a woman and then named her. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent someone to ask her concerning this, and she denied committing fornication with him, so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave him the legislated lashing and left her alone.**) So this man came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and confessed to fornicating with a woman, so the Prophet ﷺ sent someone to ask her concerning this, and she denied it; so the Prophet ﷺ lashed him and left her alone. This is because it was neither proven by four witnesses nor a confession that she committed fornication. As for him, then it was established against him by his own admission, and he was therefore punished accordingly.<sup>12</sup>

And the likes of this has already preceded in what occurred in the story of *al-‘Asīf*, because he said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, ‘Verily my son was an *‘Asīf* (worker) for so and so and fornicated with his wife.’ So the Prophet ﷺ ruled that he be lashed one-hundred times and expelled from the land for one year. As for the woman, then the accusation against her was not accepted, and Unays al-Aslamī

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<sup>11</sup> *al-Sunan* (no. 3855) It is authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abū Dawud* (no. 4465)

<sup>12</sup> Thus, the person who admits to a crime is held accountable for what he or she confessed to, not the person they have accused, and with Allāh ﷻ is all success.

ﷺ was only sent to her to ask her concerning what was attributed to her. So if she confessed, she would receive the legislated punishment. So, he went to her, and she confessed, and he (i.e. Unays) stoned her to death. This from his ﷺ statement, “Go to her, if she confesses, stone her.” Therefore, the mere presence of an accusation from a man against a woman does not establish her guilt except with the testimony of four witnesses<sup>13</sup> or a confession.”<sup>14</sup>

Regarding Shaykh ‘Abd al-Muhsin’s statement, “and Unays al-Aslami ﷺ was only sent to her to ask her concerning what was attributed to her,” then this is the understanding mentioned by the people of ḥadīth. Imām al-Nawawī stated, “Know that our companions from the scholars and others have understood that the purpose of dispatching of Unays was to notify her that this man had accused her of fornicating with his son and to inform her that she had the right to seek the *Hadd* (legislated punishment) of *al-Qadhf* (slander) or to pardon him, unless she confessed to fornication. Then, the punishment for slander would not be imposed, rather, the punishment for *Zina*, which is stoning to death, would be imposed upon her due to her being married. She confessed, so the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ had her stoned. This explanation is necessary because its apparent [meaning] is that he (i.e. Unays) was sent to impose the *Hadd* (legislated punishment) for adultery, however, this is not what is intended, because the *Hadd* for *Zina* is not attained by spying and investigating the matter; rather, it is recommended to instruct the person who confessed to retract<sup>15</sup> his confession.”<sup>16</sup>

In another narration collected by Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan*, Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ relates that a man from the tribe of Banū Bakr ibn Layth came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and confessed four times to fornicating with a woman, so the Prophet ﷺ lashed him one-hundred times, as he was a virgin, then he asked him to produce his proof against the woman. She said, ‘By Allāh, he has lied, O Messenger of Allah! The Prophet ﷺ then punished him with the eighty lashes for slander.’<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> As for those who claim that individuals are *hiding* behind such legislations, it would be better for them to say that such legislations are a protection for the people; and that is because the Prophet ﷺ stated, “If people were given according to their claims, they would claim the lives and property of other people.”

<sup>14</sup> Taken from the recordings of the Shaykh’s explanation of *Sunan Abū Dawud* in the Book of *Hudūd*.

<sup>15</sup> This can be found in the narration of the repentance of Ma’iz ibn Malik ﷺ. Ibn Abbas ﷺ said, “When Ma’iz ibn Malik came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ [to confess], he (i.e. the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ) said to him, ‘Perhaps you only kissed her or touched her or gazed upon her.’” See the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām al-Bukhārī (no. 6445)

<sup>16</sup> See *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (11/207)

<sup>17</sup> *al-Sunan* (no. 3856) This narration has been graded *Munkar* by al-Albānī in *Da’if Sunan Abū Dawud* (no. 4466). We mention this narration, first, to clarify its weakness, and second, due to the benefits found in Shaykh ‘Abd al-Muhsin’s explanation.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-‘Abbād says in explanation of this ḥadīth, “As for his statement (as he was a virgin), his punishment is one-hundred lashes, as the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ stated, ‘The virgin is lashed one-hundred times and expelled from the land for one year.’ As for his statement (then he asked him to produce his proof against the woman. She said, ‘By Allah, he has lied, O Messenger of Allāh! The Prophet then punished him with the eighty lashes for slander), this chain is weak; this is because the narrator al-Qāsim ibn Fayyād is *majhūl* (an unknown narrator);<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr says in *al-Nukhbah* (pg 135): “The narration of the anonymous (*mubham*) is not accepted if he is not named; because the condition of a report’s acceptance is the trustworthiness of the narrator, and whoever’s name is left anonymous, his identity is not known, so how could this be trustworthiness?”

al-Suyūṭī mentioned in *Tadrīb al-Rāwī* (1/365): “If he says a trustworthy person narrated to me, or like this, it is not sufficient for *Ta’dīl* (attestation of trustworthiness) until he identifies him, because even if he is trustworthy with him, perhaps, if he named him, he would be from those that others had mentioned with dispraise; rather, his avoiding identifying him is something that places suspicion in the heart.”

al-Sakhāwī said in *Fath al-Mughūth* (2/34-35): “...because it doesn’t necessitate from his *Ta’dīl* that he is like this with others and, perhaps, if he identified him he would be known for other than it, and perhaps he is alone in his *Tawthīq* (attestation of trustworthiness) as happened with al-Shāfi‘ī concerning Ibrāhīm ibn Abū Yaḥyā. al-Nawawī said: ‘No one besides him (i.e. al-Shāfi‘ī) attested to his trustworthiness, and he (i.e. Ibrāhīm ibn Abū Yaḥyā) is considered weak by the consensus of the scholars; rather, his avoiding identifying him is something that places suspicion in the heart.’ Ibn Abū al-Dam said: ‘And this is taken from the eye witness if he testifies to a second party, then he (i.e. the second party) must name him (the eye witness) to the judge by the agreement of al-Shāfi‘ī and his companions, so if the second party says: ‘The eye witness related it to me, and I testify to his truthfulness of his testimony,’ it is not to be listened to on the strength of that until he identifies him to the judge; then, if the judge knows of the eye witnesses’ trustworthiness, then he can rule according to his testimony, and if he doesn’t know of it, he looks [further] into it.”

al-Alāmmah Hāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī states in *al-Su‘āl wa al-Jawāb fī Mustalaḥ al-Ḥadīth* (pg. 136-137): “Third: To clarify the name of the one he is reporting on, like his statement: ‘So and so related to me, or a person, or someone, or the son of so and so...the report of the anonymous is not accepted if he is not named, because the condition of the acceptance of the report is the trustworthiness of the narrator, and whoever’s name is left anonymous his identity is not known so how could his trustworthiness be? And like this his reports are not accepted even if he is called with a word of praise, in what is correct, like his saying about the one who narrated to him: ‘A trustworthy person reported to me,’ because he may be trustworthy with him, untrustworthy with others.”

The reason for the consensus of the scholars upon this issue can be easily seen, and that is if one doesn’t know the identity of the narrator of a report there is the possibility that he is trustworthy, while at the same time, there is the possibility that he is a liar, fabricator, Zindīq (heretic), a Christian or a Jew. Therefore, to ward of this potential evil, Islām has legislated that the identity and condition of the witness and the narrator be known.

Allāh ﷻ states: “O you who believe! If a *fāsiq* comes to you with news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done.”

al-Imām al-Qurtubī mentions in his commentary of this verse (16/265): “Sixth: In this verse is a proof of the futility of the statement of those who say that all of the Muslims are trustworthy until their untrustworthiness is established, because Allāh ﷻ commands with verification [of reports] before their acceptance, and verification is meaningless after giving a ruling, so if a judge ruled upon the accused before verification [of a report], then he has harmed him out of ignorance.”

therefore it is not authentic. Also, the legislated punishment for *al-Qadhf* (accusation of fornication without the proof of four witnesses or a confession) is the right of the accused woman, so if she seeks it, and he is not able to produce the legislated proof, then the punishment of *al-Qadhf* is established upon him. If she does not seek the *Hadd*, then there he is not punished, and that is because this is the right of the other person, if they seek it, it is established, if not, then it is not established. The same applies for the woman who confesses that she fornicated with a certain man, and he denies [the accusation], then the *Hadd* (legislated punishment) is established upon her by virtue of her admission. If the man seeks the *Hadd* for slander, then she is punished the same as a man.”<sup>19</sup>

As we learn in first narration collected by Abū Dawud, the accuser, who failed to produce legislated proof, was punished. As for the accused, she was left alone. This is a clear refutation upon the one who ignorantly states that the *Ptirāf* (confession) of a person suffices in proving the guilt of the accused. The one who utters such falsehood is either ignorant of the true Islamic ruling in this matter or is ignoring the facts due to fanatical hatred of a people, and the sweeter of the two is bitter.

Further, we ask, how can the Muslim look at the rulings and actions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and remain resolute in opposing them?

Allāh ﷻ says:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ  
الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

**“It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error.” [al-Ahzab 33:36]**

What we intend here is what is found in the current culture of slander and circulation of *al-fahishah* among those who believe. In this backward culture, the accused is viewed with suspicion and contempt, the slanderer, never questioned. Yet, if we truly implement the best of guidance, the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ, we would establish the punishment upon the slanderer, and in this is remedy for such disease.

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<sup>19</sup> Taken from the recordings of the Shaykh’s explanation of *Sunan* Abū Dawud in the Book of *Hudūd*.

The second proof for the obligation of producing four witnesses comes in the event that took place during the succession of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ. After the noble companion al-Mughīrah ibn Shu’bah ؓ was accused of committing adultery with a woman, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ called him and those who witnessed the act before him. Ibn Abū Shaybah relates the story narrated by Abū ‘Uthmān who said, “When Abū Bakrah ؓ and his two companions bore witness against al-Mughīrah, Ziyād (the fourth witness) came, and Umar said to him, ‘This man, *inshallah*, will not speak except with the truth.’ He (i.e. Ziyād) said, ‘I saw something shocking, something bad.’ ‘Umar said, ‘Did you see the liner enter the *Kuḥl* container?’<sup>20</sup> He said, ‘No.’ So ‘Umar commanded that the other three be lashed.<sup>21</sup> Though there are numerous evidences and statements we could bring to further support this ruling, these two will suffice at this time. As it was said of old, “One proof is sufficient for the seeker of truth, and a thousand are not enough for the obstinate.”

Before citing the responses of the scholars to such websites, we want to conclude by reminding the believers that it is incumbent upon them to change an evil when they witness it. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ states, “Whoever from you sees an evil, then let him change it with his hands, if he is unable, then with his tongue, and if he is unable, then let him hate it in his heart, and this is the weakest of faith.”<sup>22</sup> Thus, for those who have the ability to destroy these websites and disrupt them, as we will see in the advice *al-’Allāmah* Luhaydan (حفظه الله), then they should remove the evil with their hands. Also, for those who know the names and identities of those who participate in *al-Qadhf*, then they should command them to fear Allāh ﷻ, cease and desist from disobeying Him and repent to Him immediately. As for those who post in their real names and whose identities are known, we should deal with them in accordance with the Islamic Legislation. If they reside in lands where the *Hadd* would be imposed upon them, their affair and websites should be raised to the proper authorities. Otherwise, it is legislated that these individuals be labeled liars and *fasiqs* and that their reports are forever rejected, unless and until they repent.

As for those who don’t have the ability to change it with their hand, let them warn their Muslim brothers and sisters against witnessing such evil and transgression, slander and spreading *al-fahishah*,

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<sup>20</sup> An expression meaning how clear the witnessing of an act of intercourse must be before it is accepted. In another wording, Ziyād said, “I saw a man on top of a woman and heard heavy breathing.” Because he did not actually witness the liner enter the *Kuḥl* container, the testimonies of the other three witnesses were rejected and they were lashed. We hope to bring the different wordings of this narration and its benefits in a separate treatise in the near future if Allāh ﷻ wills.

<sup>21</sup> *al-Muṣannaf* (1/85/11). There are a number of different wordings for this narration. Concerning the origin of the story, al-Albānī says in *Irwā al-Ghalīl* (8/28), “The narration that when Abū Bakrah, Nāfi’, and Shibl ibn Ma’bad testified al-Mughīrah ibn Shu’bah committed Zina and the fourth [witness], Ziyād, differed, ‘Umar ؓ lashed them for *al-Qadhf*. [This report is] authentic.”

<sup>22</sup> Collected by Muslim in his *Sahih* on the authority of Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī

at the same time, hating it in their own hearts and not informing anyone what has been circulated. As for those whom *Shaytān* has beautified such repugnant behavior, we remind them of the command of Allāh ﷻ to fight against their desires:

﴿٤٠﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ

“But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination,

﴿٤١﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

Then indeed, Paradise will be [his] refuge.” [al-Nazī’āt 79:40-41]

And also Allāh’s ﷻ statement regarding the true worshippers of al-Raḥmān:

﴿٧٢﴾ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا

“And [they are] those who do not testify to falsehood, and when they pass near ill speech, they pass by with dignity.” [al-Furqān 25:72]



Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,  
Shaykh ‘Abd Azīz ibn ‘Abd Allāh Ālī al-Shaykh (حفظه الله)  
Regarding the Spread of Slander and Rumors in Society<sup>23</sup>

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Azīz stated, “Some people circulate rumors about individuals from the people with the goal of destroying and humiliating that person...and to diminish his position, harm his reputation and to concoct stories about him that he is innocent of; taking a story from this one and a story from that one [until] becoming tales and lies told for the purpose of seeking vengeance against that person. However, the Islamic Legislation is in opposition to all of this. The Muslim is the one who the other Muslims are safe from his hand and his tongue as stated by our Prophet ﷺ.<sup>24</sup> So if you want to be a Muslim in truth, then make the Muslims safe from the evil of your tongue. Do not concoct accusations against them and attribute to them that which they are innocent of or say of them that which is not found in them. Allāh ﷻ says:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا كَسَبُوا  
فَقَدْ أَحْتَمَلُوا بِهِتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا

“And those who harm believing men and believing women for [something] other than what they have earned have certainly born upon themselves a slander and manifest sin.” [al-Aḥzāb 33:58]

The Shaykh also said, “Islām has eradicated [spreading] rumors about an individual. Take for example a person’s honor. If you spread a rumor about someone that they committed a moral sin which requires a *Hadd* (legislated punishment), then know that by doing so you have erred and fallen into that which is prohibited, and nothing will save you from this except clear legislated evidence that proves the truthfulness of your statement, and if not, then you will have a legislated punishment imposed upon you. Allāh ﷻ says:

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً  
وَلَا يَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةٌ أَبَدًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

<sup>23</sup> This is taken from the abridged version of the Shaykh’s lecture entitled “*Manhaj al-Ta’amil ma’a Shai’āt.*” This lecture was circulated in a number of newspapers and on numerous websites. See <http://www.sahab.net/forums/index.php?showtopic=300310>

<sup>24</sup> From the ḥadīth collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 9 and 6124) on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ؓ who stated, “The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘The Muslim is the one from whom the Muslims are safe from his hand and tongue, the *Muhājir* (emigrant) is the one who emigrates from what Allāh has prohibited.’”

**“And those who accuse chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses - lash them with eighty lashes and do not accept from them testimony ever after. And those are the *Fasiqun* defiantly disobedient.” [al-Nūr 24:4]**

During the time of our Prophet ﷺ, the hypocrites rose up against the Mother of the Believers, ‘Āishah, and said about her what Allāh knows she is innocent of when they saw that Muslim delivering her after the army unknowingly left without her. He came walking ahead of her at midday, and the hypocrites said what they said and circulated what they circulated. The Prophet was stricken with great worry and sadness, and sadness came over the house of *al-Siddiq* ؓ; and forty days passed and the Prophet ﷺ, *al-Ṣiddīq* ؓ and the Muslims felt the greatest worry and grief. The hypocrites spread rumors and narrations and everyday they painted a new picture. However, Allāh ﷻ is Ever Watching, and the verses of the Qur’ān were revealed clarifying the innocence of the Mother of the Believers, the innocence of the Prophetic household and that all of these allegations were lies and fabrications. Allāh ﷻ says to the believers:

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا  
إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٢﴾

**“Why, when you heard it, did not the believing men and believing women think good of one another and say, "This is an obvious falsehood?” [al-Nūr 24:12]**

And He ﷻ says:

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا  
أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

**“And if it had not been for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy in this world and the Hereafter, you would have been touched for that [lie] in which you were involved by a great punishment**

إِذْ تَلَقَوْنَهُ بِالسِّنَّتِمْ وَتَقُولُونَ يَا فَوَهِهْ كُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ  
وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

**“When you received it with your tongues and said with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge and thought it was insignificant while it was, in the sight of Allah , tremendous.**



وَلَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُمْ مَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَتَكَلَّمَ بِهَذَا سُبْحَانَكَ هَذَا  
بِهْتِنٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٦﴾

And why, when you heard it, did you not say, "It is not for us to speak of this. Exalted are You, [O Allah ]; this is a great slander?"

يَعِظُكُمْ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَعُودُوا لِمِثْلِهِ أَبَدًا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

Allah warns you against returning to the likes of this [conduct], ever, if you should be believers.” [al-Nūr 24:14-17]

And He has made the penalty for these rumors eighty lashes, the rejection of [the slanderer’s] testimony and the ruling of *Fisq*, as this is the required legislated judgement.”



## The Response of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Najmī (رحمه الله)

**Questioner:** O Shaykh! There is a website on the internet where there is an unknown person posting in an anonymous name, he claims to be purifying the *Da'wah Salafiyyah* in the West, i.e., America and England, by exposing the so called sins of many of the well-known and clear Salafī students of knowledge and organizations. He accuses them of sins like intermingling with women, going to the movies, accusations of theft, and even accusing some of them of fornication and that some of them are people of lusts and desires because they marry and divorce women and therefore unfit to lead the *Da'wah*. However, he has never brought forward any witness for his claims against these Salafī callers and organizations, and he himself remains unknown to the people. When it is said to him that mentioning and exposing the sins of the Muslims is not permissible he replies with the speech of al-Nawawī in *Riyād al-Sāliḥīn* concerning the permissibility of backbiting the callers and narrators and mentioning and exposing their sins for the general good; and the intent of diminishing the position of these callers and organizations, so the people will not return to them, saying that it is not permissible to take from them, as he claims that they are *fāsiqs*. What do you advise the Salafīs with regards to this unknown person?”

**He answered:** “*Wallāhi* (by Allāh), the likes of this one, if it is possible to find out who he is, then it should be sought from him to produce his evidence for that which he claims. If it is not possible to find out who he is, then his speech is rejected, and he should be prevented from speaking. If it is possible to banish him from the website, then this is good. Allāh ﷻ says:

لَوْلَا جَاءَ وَعَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةٍ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ فَأُولَئِكَ  
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

“Since they have not produced witnesses! Then with Allāh they are the liars.” [*al-Nūr* 24:13]

Is that not so?

**Questioner:** “Of course, O Shaykh!

**The Shaykh continued:** Therefore, the one who makes accusations in the honor of the people like this without any proof, simply by what he desires, in most cases, this is done by the *Hizbiyyūn* (party-partisans), and we ask Allāh ﷻ for His Pardon.”

**Questioner:** “O Shaykh! In relation to his using the speech of al-Nawawī as a proof, is this correct, O Shaykh?”

**He answered:** “No! This is speech is falsehood. How...? This [permissible] *Ghībah* (backbiting) [mentioned by al-Nawawi] is not for accusations of fornication and illicit acts. It is mentioned that it is permissible for a general benefit for the *Da’wah*, a benefit for the *Dīn* (Religion), so if this one wants to use—to take advantage of this speech for reasons besides this, which are in opposition to that (specified purpose), then this is not permissible.”

**Questioner:** O Shaykh! If some of the brothers actually fell into some of these things—”

**Shaykh [interjecting]:** “It is not permissible to reveal the likes of these things:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ  
 أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

‘Indeed those who love those illicit acts be circulated amongst those who believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the next.’ [al-Nur 24:19]

Like this, if it happens, he can be brought to those who are accountable for them (i.e., the *qādīs* etc.), if it is established [proven], it can be brought to those who are accountable for them only. Like this.”

**Questioner:** “O Shaykh! The last question, when is it ruled upon a caller that he is a *fāsiq*, because many in the West believe if a person falls into something of sins, then the name *fāsiq* is applied to him, and his *adālah* (trustworthiness) is nullified, and it is impermissible for him to invite to Allāh?”

**He answered:** At any rate, if *fisq* is established upon him, if it is proven. However, as for everyone claiming something, ‘That’s it!’ without proof, without evidence, no, this is not correct, Allāh ﷻ has protected the honor of the people.”



## The Response of Shaykh ‘Ubayd al-Jābirī (حفظه الله)

**Questioner:** “There is a website on the internet where there is an unknown person posting under an anonymous name, he claims to be purifying the *Da’wah Salafiyyah* in the West with accusations against many of the well-known Salafī callers and their centers. He accuses them of sins like intermingling with women, going to the movies, accusations of theft, and even accusing some of them of fornication—”

**Shaykh [interjecting]:** “*A ‘udhu billah* (I seek refuge with Allāh). First of all, he is unknown, and second he has merely made accusations, so his reports are rejected. So abandon him at once. Leave him. This one is unknown and has nothing with him but accusations, and if he was a person of the *Sunnah* he would spread the *Sunnah*. If he was a person of the *Sunnah* he would spread *Sunnah*.”

**Questioner:** “Like this Shaykh he uses the speech of al-Nawawī stating that it is permissible to backbite the callers because this is for the common good.”

**The Shaykh:** “This one does not understand anything, this one is a *La’āb* (a prankster), I say that this one is a *Shaytān* (a devil). al-Nawawī mentioned six instances where *ghībah* is permitted, from them an innovator, refuting him and warning against him, and there is no *ghībah* with [regards to] him. Also from them is testifying. For example, if someone lays a claim against another person, and you are a witness to it, then you testify to that, this is it. *Bārakallāhu fīk*. Go to *Riyad al-Sālihīn* and look at it. This one does not understand anything; this one is a *La’āb* (prankster), *La’āb* (prankster). Don’t concern yourselves with him. Seek refuge with Allāh, cling to the *Sunnah* and don’t concern yourselves with him.”



## The Response of Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān (حفظه الله)

**Questioner:** “A simple question, there is a website on the internet on which there is someone writing things with an anonymous name. Rather, he says, ‘I am unlisted,’ and he speaks ill of some of the Salafī callers and accuses them of sins and says that it is impermissible to take knowledge from them—”

**The Shaykh [interjecting]:** “Leave him off. The sin is upon him. The sin is upon him.”

**Questioner:** “We wanted of you, Shaykh, to clarify to the common people that his word is not accepted—”

**The Shaykh [interjecting]:** “Never!”

**Questioner:** “Sheikh we don’t even know his name...”

The Shaykh said: “...Never! Abandon him.”



## The Response of Shaykh Muḥammad bin Hādī (حفظه الله)

**Questioner:** There is a website on the internet where there is an unknown person posting in an anonymous name, he claims to be purifying the *Da'wah Salafiyyah* in the West with accusations against many of the well known *Salafi* callers and their centers—”

**Shaykh interjects:** “Accuses them of what?”

**Questioner:** He accuses them of sins like intermingling with women, going to the movies, accusations of theft, and even accusing some of them of fornication, and that some of them are people of lusts and desires because they marry and divorce women and therefore unfit to lead the da'wah but he has never brought forward any witness for his claims against these Salafi callers and organizations and he himself remains unknown to the people. When it is said to him that mentioning and exposing the sins of the Muslims is not permissible he replies with the speech of al-Nawawī in *Riyāḍ al-Sālihīn* of the permissibility to backbite the callers and narrators and to mention and expose their sins for the general good—”

**Shaykh interjects:** “This is not accepted. This is not accepted; because this one is unknown,<sup>25</sup> and his reports are rejected, and that's it. *Bārakallāhu fīkum.*”



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<sup>25</sup> The Carrier of the Banner of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* in this era, Rabī' ibn Hādī al-Madkhalī (حفظه الله) stated, “I direct this advice to our Salafi brothers everywhere, and I hope that all our brothers will aid it from Ahl al-Madīnah and other than them, that no one writes (posts) on these web sites except an 'alim, and writes that which will benefit the people, clarifying for them their creed, and [the affairs of] their worship, that which cautions them from *mukhālafāt* (contradictions) in creed, and *manhaj*, and not to speak or write (post) except one who has knowledge of what he is writing (posting). May Allāh bless you. And with true names, many of the people hide behind these screen names and spread whatever they please, and say whatever they desire. And by Allāh, this has harmed the *Da'wah al-Salafiyyah* tremendously...and no one should speak in these affairs except the scholars, and not everyone who comes and goes, [posting] under unknown names of which, in most cases, the intent—by Allāh no one hides his [real] name except a person of evil. *Astaghfirullah! Astaghfirullah!* Why are you hiding your [real] name? If you have the truth with you, then announce your name. If you have falsehood with you, then fear Allah! Don't speak! There is no reason to hide your [real] name, no reason whatsoever, this is something unknown with the Salaf...” See: <http://www.salafitalk.net/st/printthread.cfm?Forum=6&Topic=3249>

## The Response of Shaykh al-Luḥaydān (حفظه الله)

**Questioner:** O Shaykh! There is a website on the internet where there is an unknown person posting in an anonymous name, he claims to be purifying the *Da'wah Salafiyyah* in the West, i.e., America and England, by exposing the so called sins of many of the well-known and clear *Salafī* students of knowledge and organizations. He accuses them of sins like intermingling with women, going to the movies, accusations of theft, and even accusing some of them of fornication and that some of them are people of lusts and desires because they marry and divorce women and therefore unfit to lead the *Da'wah*. However, he has never brought forward any witness for his claims against these *Salafī* callers and organizations, and he himself remains unknown to the people. When it is said to him that mentioning and exposing the sins of the Muslims is not permissible he replies with the speech of al-Nawawī in *Riyād al-Sāliḥīn* concerning the permissibility of backbiting the callers and narrators and mentioning and exposing their sins for the general good; and the intent of diminishing the position of these callers and organizations, so the people will not return to them, saying that it is not permissible to take from them, as he claims that they are *fāsiqs*. What do you advise the *Salafīs* with regards to this unknown person?”

**The Shaykh responded:** “To proceed: Verily, from the affair of a Muslim is that he is to be a sincere advisor, fearing Allāh ﷻ in that which he says and that which he leaves off and to stay away from slandering people and speaking ill of them and following up their shortcomings. The Prophet ﷺ has informed that whoever follows up the shortcomings of the Muslims, Allāh ﷻ will follow up his shortcomings,<sup>26</sup> and that whoever covers a Muslim, Allāh ﷻ will cover him, and Allāh ﷻ is at the aid of a servant as long as he is at the aid of his brother.<sup>27</sup> Allāh ﷻ has rebuked those who love that illicit

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<sup>26</sup> This refers to the ḥadīth collected by al-Tirmidhī in his *Jāmi'* (no. 907) on the authority of Ibn Umar ؓ who said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ ascended the minbar and called out with a raised voice saying, ‘O you who have pronounced Islam with his tongue, but Imān has not yet come his heart, do not harm the Muslims or revile them or follow up their shortcomings. For whoever follows up the faults of his Muslim brother, Allāh will follow up their shortcomings, and whoever Allāh follows up their faults, he will expose him even in the inner room of his house.’” This narration has been authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* (no. 2031)

<sup>27</sup> This refers to the ḥadīth collected by Muslim (no. 4845) on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ who said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘He who alleviates the suffering of a Muslim out of the sufferings of the world, Allāh would alleviate his suffering from the sufferings of the Day of Resurrection, and he who finds relief for one who is hard pressed, Allāh would make things easy for him in the Hereafter, and he who conceals (the faults) of a Muslim, Allāh would conceal his faults in the world and in the Hereafter. Allāh is at the aid of a servant so long as the servant is at the aid of his brother, and he who treads the path in search of knowledge, Allāh would make that path easy, leading to Paradise for him and those persons who assemble in the house among the houses of Allāh and recite the Book of Allāh, and they learn and teach the Qur'ān (among themselves) there would descend upon them the tranquillity and mercy would cover them and the angels would surround them and Allāh makes a mention of them in the presence of those near Him, and he who is slow in doing good deeds, his lineage will not speed him up.’”

acts be circulated about those who believe, belittling the honor of the people and accusing them of fornication, this is from *al-Qadhf* (accusing the believers of fornication) concerning which it is known that when a person (making the claim) cannot establish absolute proof<sup>28</sup> [for the accusation] necessitating the *Hadd*, then the legal punishment of *al-Qadhf* is imposed upon him, and his testimony is null and void, and his testimony is never accepted again, unless he repents and returns and admits that he has lied, and says that he was a liar about that which he ascribed to the accused. Furthermore, calling to Allāh ﷻ is incumbent upon everyone according their ability.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “For Allāh to guide someone by way of you is better for you than the *Humur al-Na’am* (The red she-camel).”<sup>29</sup>

Allāh ﷻ said about the Islāmic nation:

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ  
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ  
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ  
الْفٰسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

**“You are the best nation that has been raised up for mankind, commanding the good and forbidding the evil and believing in Allāh. [Āli ‘Imrān 3:110]**

And surely from evil is for a person to spread what he knows about the deficiencies of the people, so he spreads it amongst the people; whereas, if he himself makes it up, lying, than he is the worst of the people in actions and the ugliest of them in deed.

Concerning that which he mentioned from al-Nawawī, then the knowledge of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* is a science unto itself. al-Imām al-Nawawī is of those who have transmitted this science, so if a person narrated a ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ, and he was trustworthy, the scholars of *al-Jarḥ* would say that so and so is trustworthy; if he was trustworthy and extremely good in his memory and precision, it would be said, he is a trustworthy, precise memorizer. However, as for one just warning, especially if his identity is unknown, and he remains invisible, then this person resembles the devils that see the people, but the people don’t see them. So caution should be taken, and whoever, seeking the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ, is able to disrupt his website in order to disable the place where he is speaking, then let him do so. I mean, to disrupt his website on the internet and to bring about the hatred of this website or to do other actions in order to destroy his acts. This is from doing good for the worshippers [of Allāh].

<sup>28</sup> Absolute proof being four witnesses or the person confessing to the sin as seen in the quote from al-Sa’dī in the introduction of this article.

<sup>29</sup> Collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 3701) on the authority of Sahl ibn Sa’d ؓ



As for the callers in the West, then my sincere advice to them is to fear Allāh ﷻ in that which they say and to give concern to the transmission of the knowledge from its sources: from the books of the *Salaf* and to clarify that Islām is a religion of mercy, compassion and a religion of reparation. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Be easy, and do not be harsh,<sup>30</sup> and indeed you have been sent to be easy on the people.”<sup>31</sup> The Prophet ﷺ described the religion that is middle course between extreme and lenient. The extreme one is the one who is obstinate and harsh, and he is zealous in making things difficult upon himself and others; and the unconcerned one is heedless and neglectful of the duties of Islām. The Muslim should be diligent in guiding the people, but he should adhere in his way of calling to what Allāh ﷻ directed the seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad ﷺ, and the final message that is directed to all of mankind.

Allāh ﷻ says to him:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِّ لَهُمْ  
بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ  
أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good exhortation, and invite them in a way that is better. Indeed your Lord is most knowledgeable of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowledgeable of who is [rightly] guided.” [al-Nahl 16:125]

And He ﷻ says:

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ  
اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

“Say! This is my Way, I call to it upon clarity, I and those who are with me. And exalted is Allah ; and I am not of those who associate others with Him.” [Yusuf 12:108]

<sup>30</sup> From the ḥadīth collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 67 and 5781) and Muslim (no. 3256) on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Be easy, and do not be harsh. Give glad tidings, and do not chase people away.”

<sup>31</sup> From the narration collected by al-Bukhārī (no. 213) on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ who said, “A Bedouin stood up and started urinating in the maṣjid. The people grabbed him, but the Prophet ﷺ ordered them to leave him and to pour a pitcher or a tumbler of water over the place where he had urinated. The Prophet ﷺ then said, ‘You have been sent to make things easy and not to make them difficult.’”

So the caller to Allāh must be diligent in following the Prophet ﷺ by using good speech, and gentleness in word, and ease with the person he is talking to, and showing compassion upon the person he is addressing, and that he is not calling him to gain a benefit from him, rather, to save him, and it is from the affairs of the Muslim that he revere all of the Prophets of Allāh, and a Muslim's *Imān* is not complete unless he believes in all of the Prophets. As for speaking about the shortcomings in people, this is the foundation of backbiting. The Prophet ﷺ was asked: "What is backbiting?" And he said: "For you to mention about your brother that which he dislikes." Then the questioner said: "Even if it is true of him?" He answered: "If it is true than you have backbitten him, and if it's not than you have slandered him."<sup>32</sup> So you have done something graver than that.

So this unknown person, his statements are not considered, and the scholars have said about a person [like this] that he is not taken as a *hujjah* (an authority), and it is not befitting that he be of those that are narrated from. For example when a person is unknown, and this is from the categories of *al-Jarh* with the people of ḥadīth, if it is said that so and so is unknown, then nothing is known about him, he is not deserving that knowledge be taken from him. If he's a liar, then they call him a liar or a fabricator, and he narrates from the trustworthy that which they haven't said. We ask Allāh for guidance."

**Questioner:** "What is the ruling of this act of his using the speech of al-Nawawī as a proof."

**The Shaykh:** "First of all this man is unknown, anonymous, so neither his statement nor is his narration is considered. Also, this act of his is impermissible because it is from backbiting. And that which the scholars have permitted is mentioning a shortcoming out of fear that his statement would be relied upon, mentioning ḥadīths of which rulings are not established except by them. As for *Da'wah*, the books of knowledge, if someone was to say something about them that was unfounded, then the students of knowledge would discover this, not to mention the scholars. So who is this person who is defaming the callers? Is he establishing the *Da'wah* or is he hiding, not moving except in the darkness? We should be aware of this person, and as I said, it is upon the person who knows him to warn him to repent to Allāh ﷻ.

And as for those whom he talks about, whoever of them possesses something of these shortcomings, then repentance erases its traces, and the Prophet ﷺ has said: "The one who repents from sin is like

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<sup>32</sup> This refers to the ḥadīth collected by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 4668) on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, 'Do you know what backbiting is? The people said, 'Allāh and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'It is mentioning about your brother what he dislikes.' Someone said, 'What if what I say is found in him?' He said, 'If it is found in him, you have backbitten him. If it is not found in him, you have maligned him.'"

the one who never sinned at all.”<sup>33</sup> And he said: “Repentance wipes away that which came before it.”<sup>34</sup> When ‘Amr ibn ‘Āas came to accept Islām before the year of the conquering of *Makkah*, he took the Prophet’s ﷺ hand so that he could pledge allegiance, he said: “I want to make a condition.” The Prophet said: “Make what condition?” He said: “That Allah expiates my past sins.” The Prophet ﷺ said: “Don’t you know that Islām does away that which came before it?”<sup>35</sup> Meaning it cancels it, all of the sins. If the Christian or a Jew or an idol worshipper accepts Islām, and he has various evil deeds, then his accepting Islām wipes it away. So those whom this person is defaming, who have one of these shortcomings, then if they have repented, then Allāh ﷻ is All-Forgiving, Merciful.

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<sup>33</sup> This narration is collected by Ibn Mājah in his *al-Sunan* (no. 4232) in the book of *al-Zuhd* on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ who said: “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: ‘The one who repents from a sin is like the one who has not committed the wrong.’” This narration is graded *hasan* by al-Shaykh al-Albāni in his *Salīh Ibn Mājah* (no. 3446)

<sup>34</sup> Al-Muḥaddith, al-Shaykh, Muḥammad Nāṣir al-dīn al-Albāni says in *Silsilah al-Ḍa‘īfah* (no. 3446) concerning this narration: “**I do not know an origin for it:** In opposition to what is perceived by the statement by al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr* (3/129) regarding Allāh’s Statement: ‘**Those will enter Paradise, and they will not be wronged whatsoever.**’ [Maryam 19:60] He says: ‘That is because repentance wipes away what came before it, and in another ḥadīth, ‘The one who repents is like the one who never sinned.’ So his statement, ‘another ḥadīth’ gives the impression that the first [wording] preceding it is also a ḥadīth. So according to his phrasing, it is the first ḥadīth. And thus al-Shaykh al-Rafā‘ī became entangled in this speech of his (i.e. Ibn Kathīr’s) and collected it in his index *al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf* from his *Mukhtasir* (2/619), and not only this, rather, he placed beside it the statement: ‘Authentic!’ He did similar to this with the second narration, however this one is easy, for indeed it is found in some of the books of *Sunnah*, and I have graded it *hasan* in *Salīh al-Jāmi’ al-Saglīr* (no. 3005), in opposition to the former, for indeed I do not know an origin for it [in the books of ḥadīth] whatsoever, and in spite of that, the aforementioned (al-Rafā‘ī) graded it authentic, may Allāh grant him guidance.

And it is my opinion that Ibn Kathīr, in his *Tafsīr* and *Mukhtasir*, mixed up the narration with the authentic ḥadīth: ‘Verily, Islām wipes away what came before it; and *al-Hijrah* (emigration) erases what preceded it,’ and in another wording, ‘And indeed *al-Hajj* wipes out what came before it. And it is collected in *al-Irwā* (no. 1280).

<sup>35</sup> Collected by Imām Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 165) on the authority of Ibn Shamasa Mahrī who said: We went to ‘Amr ibn al-‘As and he was about to die. He wept for a long time and turned his face towards the wall. His son said: ‘Did the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ not give you tidings of this?’ He (the narrator) said: He turned his face and said: ‘The best thing which we can count upon is the testimony that there is none worthy of worship (in truth) but Allāh and that Muḥammad ﷺ is the Prophet of Allāh. Verily I have passed through three phases. (The first one) in which I found myself averse to none else more than I was averse to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and there was no other desire stronger in me than the one that I should overpower him and kill him. Had I died in this state, I would have certainly been one of the inhabitants of Hellfire. When Allāh instilled the love of Islam in my heart, I came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: Stretch out your right hand so that may pledge my allegiance to you. He stretched out his right hand, I withdrew my hand, He (i.e. the Prophet) said: ‘What has happened to you, O ‘Amr?’ I replied: I intend to lay down a condition. He asked: ‘What condition do you intend to put forward?’ I said: That I be granted pardon. He (the Prophet) observed: ‘Are you not aware of the fact that Islam wipes out all the previous [misdeeds]? Verily, *Hijrah* (emigration) wipes out all the previous [misdeeds], and verily the *al-Hajj* (pilgrimage) wipes out all the [previous] misdeeds...’”

Allāh ﷻ says:

وَأِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى ﴿٨٢﴾

“Verily, I am All-Forgiving to those who repent.” [Taha 20:72]

And the sincere worshipper enters Paradise. If he has sins, then he is under the will of Allāh ﷻ, if Allāh ﷻ wills he will forgive them, and if He ﷻ wills he will punish him for his sins. Allāh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٨﴾

“Allah does not forgive that partners be established with him in worship but He forgives what is less than that for whoever He pleases. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin.” [al-Nisā 4:48]

And the Prophet ﷺ said about the person who says *La Ilāhā Illallāh* sincerely in his heart, meaning he performs the deeds that this statement *La Ilāhā Illallāh* necessitates Paradise. Abū Dharr said: “Even if he commits adultery and steals?” He said: “Even if he commits adultery and steals.” Abū Dharr said again: “Even if he commits adultery and steals?” He answered: “Even if he commits adultery and steals.” Abū Dharr ﷺ said a third time: “Even if he commits adultery and steals?” He said: “Even if he commits adultery and steals in spite of Abū Dharr.”<sup>36</sup>

So if these ones have repented from their sins, the companions that before they accepted Islām had worshipped idols, from them were those who worshipped Uzza, Lāt, and other idols, and when they accepted Islām it wiped away all their previous deeds except the good ones. So whoever accepts Islām and he has good deeds, then they will not be lost, and Allah knows best.”

**Questioner:** “Last question, O Shaykh! When do we label a caller as a *Fāsiq*?”

**The Shaykh:** “The *fāsiq* is the one who commits the impermissible acts persistently, but if he repents, he is not labeled a *fāsiq*. Verily, when Allāh mentioned those who accused the chaste, innocent, he mentioned the accusers were of the *fāsiqs* except those who repent. If they sincerely repent, then it wipes away the *fisq*, and they return to the attribute of *Imān*.”



<sup>36</sup> Collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 5500) and Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no130) on the authority of Abū Dharr ﷺ