

# Gossip, Slander and False Accusations

Everyone has experienced the harm of Gossip, Slander and False Accusations before. Whether the people talking didn't mean direct harm, the result is always broken trust and hurt feelings.

Gossip can be defined as information about the behavior or personal life of other people, often without the full truth revealed or known. Gossip can be defined as idle talk or writing about another person or situation, regardless of fact. It can also be defined as, malicious or slanderous talk or writing about another person or situation with desire or intention to hurt them. It can also be defined as talk or writing about another person or situation in order to turn others opinion against that person or situation.

Scripture uses the word slander, which means making a false spoken statement that is damaging to a person's reputation. Slander can destroy someone's marriage, job, wealth, and family. The tongue has power and we must be careful with how we use our words. **אִשָּׁרָא** (Yahuah)'s Word warns us to stay away from people who slander and bear false witness, and to guard our words when we speak about others!

The words of a talebearer, (a slanderer, whisperer) wound, and they go down into the innermost parts of the body. **Proverbs 18:8**

Tale-bearing can be defined as a negative story, a false report, or gossip. It can be defined as one who spitefully informs against another.

The harm done by speech is even worse than the harm done by stealing or by cheating someone financially: money lost can be repaid, but the harm done by our words can never be repaired. This illustrates the seriousness of improper speech.

**Rakyl (7400): Slander, Carry tales, Talebearer**

**יָשַׁרְנָה**

**נ** (Resh) Head, Person, First, Top, Beginning, **ש** (Kaph) Palm of Hand, Bend, To Open, Allow, Tame. **י** (Yod/Yad) Work, Throw, Worship, Work, Deed. **ר** (Lamed) Staff, Goad, Control, Teach, Yoke, Toward, Bind.

Meaning: First, Person Beginning. to Open, Allow. Throw, a Deed. to Control, Bind, Yoke.

**Leviticus 19:16** You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am **אִשָּׁרָא** (Yahuah).

**Proverbs 11:13** Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in ruch (spirit) keeps a thing covered.

**Proverbs 20:19** Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with a simple babblers (Gossiper).

Let me give you an example that illustrates the dangers of slanderous speech: A man went about the community telling malicious lies about a leader of a local Assembly. Later, he realized the wrong he had done, and began to feel remorse. He went to the Assembly leader and begged his forgiveness, saying he would do anything he could to make amends. The Assembly

leader told the man, "Take a feather pillow, cut it open, and scatter the feathers to the winds." The man thought this was a strange request, but it was a simple task, and he gladly did it. When he returned to tell the Assembly leader that he had done what he had asked, the Assembly leader said, "Now, go and gather all the feathers you scattered."

Now, because you can no more make amends for the damages your words have caused, than you can recollect all the feathers that have been scattered by the winds." This illustrates the importance scripture places on guarding our words and how we speak about others.

Our words are like an arrow: once the words are released, like an arrow, they cannot be recalled, the harm they do cannot be stopped, and the harm they do cannot always be predicted, for words like arrows often go astray.

And at the same time also, going about house to house, they learn to be idle; and not only idle, but also Gossips (Phluaros 5397: Babbling, Prater, Tattler) and Meddlesome, speaking things not being proper. **1 Timothy 5:13**

Exactly what constitutes improper speech about others? Understanding this is the most difficult part of the subject for most. Lets take a look at the meaning of things we should avoid being:

**"Gossip"** – "Spreading a Rumor or talking of a personal, sensational, or intimate nature."

**"Rumor"** - "Unverified information of uncertain origin usually spread by word of mouth; hearsay."

**"Slander"** - "The utterance of defamatory statements injurious to the reputation or well-being of a person. ... A malicious statement or report."

**"Backbite"** - "To speak spitefully or slanderously about (a person)."

**"Talebearer"** - "A person who spreads malicious stories or gossip."

**"Rail"** - "To condemn or attack in bitter, harsh, or abusive language..."

**"Reville"** - "To denounce with abusive language."

**"lashan"** (3960): to use the tongue to accuse, slander. From the root: Lashon (3956) tongue, babbler, evil speaker, language, talker, tongue, wedge).

Lashon hara (the evil tongue) [is] scandal-mongering and is considered to be prohibited by Scripture on the basis of **Leviticus 19:16**, "You shall not go up and down as a slanderer [in some translations: talebearer] among your people," and is frequently condemned in the Book of Proverbs.

Any means of communicating derogatory or damaging information falls under the definition of Lashon Hara.

### **Listening to or Believing Lashon Hara**

Listening to Lashon Hara is generally prohibited for two (2) reasons:

(1) It is forbidden to accept or believe Lashon Hara, and by listening to it one might cause himself to believe it.

(2) By participating in a session of Lashon Hara, the listener would be assisting the other participants to commit the sins of speaking and believing the Lashon Hara.

Believing Lashon Hara is forbidden regardless of the subject (family, friend, enemy, etc.), and regardless of the speaker (teacher, parent, spouse, etc.). Only if the subject is known to commit certain sins or have other problems, it might be permissible to believe it. In any case, someone can suspect that the Lashon Hara might be true, such that the listener should take precautions to protect himself from harm.

If information against someone might be of benefit to another (e.g. a potential business partner, roommate, etc.), it is permissible for that person to listen to it. (The listener should state why he is listening to the information so that the speaker realizes that the intentions of the listener are constructive, and also so that the speaker doesn't intend to speak for non-constructive reasons.) However, the listener is forbidden from:

- (1) accepting the information as true (he may only suspect and investigate), or
- (2) taking action against the subject based on the information.

If caught in a group of people who are speaking Lashon Hara, one should try and leave the group or change the topic. If stuck there:

- (1) decide in one's heart/mind not to accept the Lashon Hara as true.
- (2) do not enjoy the Lashon Hara (because the subject is being shamed, its a funny story, etc.).

If someone starts speaking Lashon Hara, try to privately and respectfully tell them that speaking Lashon Hara is forbidden.

A Malakym (angel) told the women to tell the apostles about **OWYAZL** (Yahusha)'s resurrection. They were to speak to the apostles about someone who was not present. **Matthew 28:7,8**

**OWYAZL** (Yahusha) told people how great Yahukanan (John) the Baptist was. **Matthew 11:7-19**

Peter told believers in Yarusalym (Jerusalem) about the conversion of Cornelius. **Acts 11:1-18**

In all these cases, someone spoke about people who were not present. We often do similar things and we know it is not wrong.

\* We may tell good news about someone: they had a baby, got a job promotion, bought a new car.

\* We may tell an interesting or humorous story about people not present, but the person involved would not object at all if he knew it was told.

\* We sometimes make announcements in our assemblies and even pray to **AYAZL** (Yahuah) about people who are not present: someone who is out of town, sick, etc. These are people who are not present, so is it wrong to make announcements about them and pray about them?

Such speech is not wrong, because the person about whom we are speaking is not in any way harmed or injured. **Acts 9:39; Galatians 1:18-2:10; Luke 1:13-17; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-9**

Even telling unfavorable or uncomplimentary things about people not present is not necessarily sinful. Again, inspired men often did this. Were they wrong?

After **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) had finished rebuking the Pharisees, His disciples told Him that He had offended them. Though the Pharisees obviously were no longer present, **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) proceeded to warn His disciples about the errors of the Pharisees. **Matthew 15:12-14**

**OWYAZL** (Yahusha) took His disciples aside and told them that the chief priests and scribes would kill Him (obviously these men were not present). **Matthew 20:17-19**

Shaul (Paul) told believers in Galatia about a sin Kepha (Peter) had committed in Antioch. **Galatians 2:11-14**

In fact, Scripture writers often record events in which various people committed sins, even naming names and groups involved. We read about these sins even today, even though the people who committed the sins are obviously not present. Did these inspired men sin? Obviously not. [**1 Timothy 1:19,20; 2 Timothy 1:15; 2:16-18; 3:8; 4:10,14; Acts 4:27; Matthew 6:7; etc.**]

There are situations in which Scripture commands us to tell people about bad things other people have done.

If a believer sins and will not repent, we are commanded to tell the Assembly. So under certain circumstances we must tell other people about a person's sin. **Matthew 18:17**

Just as **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) and His apostles and prophets often spoke about the sins of people, so we are required to oppose error and false teaching. In doing so, we may mention sins or false teaching people have committed, in order to warn other people to avoid those errors. This may not be wrong, and in some cases may be required.

Sometimes when people hear that this has happened, they claim wrong was done. They say we "gossiped" about those people. It is possible, of course, to speak wrongfully in such cases; but scripture examples show it is not necessarily sinful, and in many cases **AYAZL** (Yahuah) requires us to do it. So just because we have spoken about someone who is not present - even saying bad things about them - does not necessarily mean we have sinned. So what is sinful slander?

### **SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SINFUL SLANDER**

It is possible to slander someone when they are not present or even when they are present! Slander involves saying unfavorable things about a person in the following ways:

1. Some people accuse others of doing wrong when they do not know it to be true.

It is not necessarily wrong to sincerely ask someone about what they did, but it is slander to accuse someone without substantial evidence they are guilty.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. **Exodus 20:16**

Shaul (Paul) lists a number of sins that characterize perilous times. The list of sins includes "Slanderers", "False Accusers" **2 Timothy 3:3**

Aged women should be taught not to be "Slanderers", "false accusers" **Titus 2:3**

The Greek definitions of the words "Slander," "Backbiting," "Evil Speaking," etc., show these include spreading False reports. **Romans 1:30; 2 Corinthians 12:20**

They have become filled with every kind of Wickedness, Evil, Greed, and Depravity. They are full of Envy, Murder, Strife, Deceit, and Malice. They are Gossips, 31. Slanderers, hateful to Alhym, Insolent, Arrogant, Boastful; Inventors of Evil things, Disobedient to parents; 32. Although they know Alhym's righteous decree that those who do such things are worthy of

death, they not only continue to do these things, but also approve of those who practice them.

**Romans 1:30-32**

For I fear lest perhaps having come, I may not find you such as I wish, and I might be found by you such as you do not wish; lest perhaps there may be Quarreling, Jealousy, Anger, Contentions, Slander, Gossip, Conceit, Disorder; **2 Corinthians 12:20,**

What if we circulate a false report that someone else started? Can we blame them and remain free from guilt if it is false? People often circulate rumors saying, "I don't know this is true, but I heard..."

You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. **Exodus 23:1**

No matter who originates the accusation, we should not repeat and spread it unless we have substantial evidence it is true. The fact that someone simply made an accusation is not enough. Anybody can make accusations. Lots of innocent people, in scripture and since, have been falsely accused. We need to see the evidence.

**What if I suspect a thing, but cannot really prove it?**

Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two (2) or three (3) witnesses. We must have evidence before we make accusations. If we do not have proof, maybe we need to ask questions and seek witnesses. But don't affirm guilt till the proof is in. This is jumping to conclusions without adequate proof about what a person did or why he did it. Often in a time of conflict, people circulate all kinds of rumors and motives for which they have no evidence. "I think he did it because..." **1 Timothy 5:19**

He is puffed up, knowing nothing, but unhealthy about Controversies and Disputes about Words, out of which come Envy, Strife, Slander, Evil suspicions. **1 Timothy 6:4**

It is not always wrong to speak against someone, but there must be adequate cause first. Do not testify against your neighbor without cause, and do not deceive with your lips. **Proverbs 24:28**

By the mouth of two (2) or three (3) witnesses every word may be established. The testimony of personal witnesses constitutes evidence to be evaluated. **Matthew 18:16**

When it comes to knowing what other people have said or done, sometimes even reliable sources may be sincerely mistaken. But a sincere mistake is significantly different from negligence, indifference, jumping to conclusions, or circulating unsubstantiated rumors. Before we definitely accuse others, we must put forth a reasonable effort to get the facts, not just suspicions. If we don't have the facts, investigate first (1st). Ask questions, gather testimony. But don't make charges till we have reasonable evidence.

Some make derogatory statements from malicious motives. We must sincerely seek to be sure our accusations are true. But even when we have the truth, that does not mean we are right in spreading the information. Some people think they can say anything about anyone as long as they feel sure it is true. But there is also the question of motive: there must be good reasons for telling bad things about others. Sometimes people spread stories because they want to hurt people's reputation.

Evil speaking is associated with malice. **1 Peter 2:1**

Malice or improper motives can take various forms as described in: **Ephesians 4:31; Romans 1:29, 30; Colossians 3:8; 2 Corinthians 12:20; Psalm 31:13; 15:3.**

Therefore having put aside all malice, and all deceit, and hypocrisy, and envies, and all evil speakings **1 Peter 2:1**

### **VENGANCE, ANGER, HATRED, AND GRUDGES**

For I have heard the whispering of many: "Terror is on every side! Report him; let us report him!" All my trusted friends watch for my fall: "Perhaps he will be deceived so that we may prevail against him and take our vengeance upon him." **Jeremiah 20:10** - Jeremiah's enemies denounced and defamed him to take revenge.

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with Barakah (Blessing), because to this you were called so that you may inherit a Barakah (Blessing). **1 Peter 3:9**

Who being reviled did not retaliate; suffering did not threaten, but He gave Himself over to Him judging justly. **1 Peter 2:23**

We should not return evil for evil or reviling for reviling. **וַיִּשְׁמַר** (Yahuah) set the example in this. When He was reviled, He did not in turn revile others.

Vengeance is not just physical actions we take against others. One of the most common ways to take vengeance is by saying things to hurt others. Others harm us (or we imagine so), so we say defamatory things to "get even." Someone accuses us of something, so we respond, "Well, what about the time when you..."

Sin must be rebuked. But when we do so, we must be sure that we are motivated by concern for the sinner and others who may be involved, not by a desire for vengeance. and we toil, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being slandered, we entreat. We have become as the residue of the world, the refuse of all, until now. **1**

**Corinthians 4:12,13;**

Let all bitterness, and rage, and anger, and clamor, and slander, be removed from you, along with all malice. **Ephesians 4:31**

He is puffed up, knowing nothing, but unhealthy about controversies and disputes about words, out of which come envy, strife, slander, evil suspicions, **1 Timothy 6:4**

All are hardened rebels, walking around as slanderers. They are bronze and iron; all of them are corrupt. **Jeremiah 6:28**

Speaking evil against others so we can win a confrontation and get our way is a form of sinful slander. Yet it frequently happens in time of conflict.

Baruak (Blessed) are you when they shall insult you and shall persecute you, and lying shall say all kinds of evil against you on account of Me. **Matthew 5:11**

Some people enjoy meddling in the personal affairs of others, spreading dirt about others. Some people just get a thrill from spreading derogatory stories about others. They feel important because they know some intimate personal affairs that other people do not know about someone, and especially if they know some "dirt" about somebody.

Tabloid magazines, newspapers columns, and TV shows sell their product and make a living

this way. They delight in digging up dirt, and become rich by spreading the dirt to people who delight in reading it.

If our brother sins against us, we are to go tell him his fault between the two (2) of us. If he repents (hears us) we have gained our brother. The matter is resolved. **Matthew 18:15-17; Luke 17:3**

Note that "hearing" us in **Matthew 18** is defined in **Luke 17** to mean "repenting." Until the person repents and starts doing right, he has not "heard" us.

The sin is made known to others only if the brother refuses to correct his error when he has been personally confronted. To spread a personal matter before confronting the sinner may cause unnecessary harm to a brother's reputation, and it drags other people into a controversy unnecessarily. When the brother has been confronted and has refused to correct the wrong, however, then we must get others involved.

Sometimes such matters are handled improperly because of ignorance of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s plan. But often people report private sins to other people, before the sinner has been adequately confronted, because of improper motivations. The issue to be remembered is: Are we acting according to Scripture for the sincere purpose of helping others, or are we acting to hurt others?

Consider the words of your mouth; it is wrong to use your tongue for gossip or slander. Rather, use your words for good: talk with **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), pray for others, and speak the Word.

As David, a man after **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah)'s own heart, prayed: **Psalms 19:14**-Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), my rock and my redeemer. (our words reflect the meditation of our heart).

## **THE TONGUE IS A LITTLE MEMBER**

Scripture tells us, So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! **6**And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by Hades. **James 3:5-6**

## **TRAVELLING COMPANIONS OF GOSSIP**

Scripture lists whisperers and backbiters (or those who gossip) along with those who are as **Romans 1:29-31** says, they have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, They are senseless, faithless, heartless, merciless.

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah), 5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these. (turn away from false accusers or malicious gossips). **2 Timothy 3:1-5**

It is written, **Proverbs 6:16-20**- There are six (6) things which **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) hates, Yes, seven (7) which are an abomination to Him:17. Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that

shed innocent blood, 18. A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, 19. A false witness who utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers. 20. My son, observe the Commandment of your father.

The one who gossips reveals the true nature of their heart. As it is written: **Matthew 12:34**-You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart—revealing that sin is in control).

It is written, **Proverbs 19:9**-A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will perish.

There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. **Proverbs 12:18**

Lying lips are an abomination to אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah), but those who act faithfully are his delight. **Proverbs 12:22**

### **THREE (3) CAUTIONS:**

1) Do not associate with a person who is a gossip/slanderer. As it is written, **Proverbs 20:19**-Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with a simple babler.

2) Conceal the matter; keep it to yourself. As it is written, **Proverbs 11:13**-Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in ruach (spirit) keeps a thing covered.

3) Let no unwholesome words proceed out of your mouth. As it is written, **Ephesians 4:29**-Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Our words should promote healing and build up and edify the hearers. Words such as, "I love you, I am praying for you, I will stand by you."

Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. **Psalms 34:13**

Set a guard, O אֱלֹהִים (Yahuah), over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips. **Psalms 141:3**

A perverse man spreads strife, And a slanderer separates intimate friends. **Proverbs 16:28**

Malign (speak about (someone) in a spitefully critical manner) no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. **Titus 3:2**

Do not speak against one another, brethren He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the Torah and judges the Torah; but if you judge the Torah, you are not a doer of the Torah but a judge of it. **James 4:11**

For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down. **Proverbs 26:20**

If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. **James 1:26**

Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure. **Psalm 101:5**

"You sit and speak against your brother; You slander your own mother's son. **Psalm 50:20**

When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise. **Proverbs 10:19**

A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows. A fool's mouth is his ruin, And his lips are the snare of his soul. **Proverbs 18:6-7**

He who guards his mouth and his tongue, Guards his soul from troubles. **Proverbs 21:23**

He who conceals a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends. **Proverbs 17:9**

Argue your case with your neighbor, And do not reveal the secret of another, 10. Or he who hears it will reproach you, And the evil report about you will not pass away. **Proverbs 25:9-10**

He who conceals hatred has lying lips, And he who spreads slander is a fool. **Proverbs 10:18**

Slander is a serious sin. Like its cousin gossip, slander is incredibly destructive. Gossip spreads the fire, but slander sparks it. In the end, gossip and slander will not lead to a desirable ending. If you have a problem with someone, man up. Take your problem directly to that person. Confront the conflict.

## **GROWING IN LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER**

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) in Mashiach forgave you. **Ephesians 4:32**.

First (1st) and foremost, to be free from gossip, slander and backbiting, we need to grow in love. Are our words building up bonds of love, or are they tearing down?

It is written in **Matthew 12:34**: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." If our mouth is quick to speak evil of the others, what does this tell about your heart? How much love do we have, really, if we are so eager to talk about the others behind their backs?

When we have a genuine love for the others, it simply isn't possible to backbite them. All grievances and complaints against them disappear. Love is written about in **1 Corinthians 13:4-8**: Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant **5** or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; **6** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. **7** Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **8** Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, Love is not puffed up; Love does not behave rudely, Love does not seek its own, Love is not provoked, Love thinks no evil; Love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."If this is the kind of love we have for the ones around us, the mere thought of speaking against them in secret should be terrible!

We need to pray to **אֱלֹהִים** (Yahuah) for help so we can grow in love and show goodness and

kindness towards the others. If we think someone is doing something wrong, we can pray for that person and **יהוה** (Yahuah) will show us how we can help. Perhaps we can go to the person in a spirit of love and ask them for clarification, rather than muddy the waters with backbiting. It's nearly impossible to harbor evil thoughts or to backbite against someone we are praying for. We need to focus on the positive and be active in praying for others. By sharing this love, we can help to bring Shalum (Peace) and rest.

Have you heard a rumor or story about someone else? Just let it die with you! "Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases." **Proverbs 26:20**. If we accept everything we hear about the others as fact right away, it shows how close the sin of gossip and backbiting is to us. Even letting the idea run around in our minds is the first (1st) step on the path towards division and strife. Lies spread like wildfire.

What should we do if others around us begin to backbite, Gossip or Slander someone? Maybe we have been invited into a conversation where people are speaking badly about someone else. "Hey, did you hear about what he did?"

If we allow this to continue, we are just as guilty as the ones who brought it up. We cannot take part in gossip and backbiting in order to be "friendly," or to "go along with the crowd." Do we have a willingness to fight against this? Do we want to be finished with backbiting? We cannot allow these thoughts and actions to live when we know that they need to die.

People will often defend themselves by saying that the backbiting they do is true. This is not a defense! "Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things."

**Romans 2:1**. Even if every single word was true, we need to remember that Gossip, Slander and backbiting in itself is wickedness! If we listen to and tolerate it, we share the blame for it. We need to flatly deny a backbiter the opportunity to say another word!

## **COMFORT AND EDIFY ONE ANOTHER**

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers." **Ephesians 4:29**.

Our mouths can be used to do great goodness, in Barakah (Blessing) and uplifting others, or great wickedness, in speaking evil and slandering others. "Out of the same mouth proceed Barakah (Blessing) and Cursing." **James 3:10**.

When we take up a battle against Gossip, Slander, False Accusations and Backbiting, we can become an example for others. We can radiate a spirit so strong against gossiping and murmuring that people will know that it simply isn't acceptable.

We need to be on watch at all times so that we can be one who builds unity with our words, instead of being one who tears it down. "He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him." **1 John 2:10**.