

بَيْتُ الْمُحَرَّمِ

# AN-NAMIMAH

A SUNNAH OF THE DISBELIEVERS OF OLD

PROJECT GUIDING LIGHT

The Messenger ﷺ was granted brevity in speech. His words were the most concise and eloquent, direct to the point and free from falsehood. His conduct exemplifies the ideal form of speech we should strive for – consequently admonishing us to avoid the contrary.

Speech is a tool. It is either utilized to convey the truth – or spread falsehood and corruption amongst people. Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) gives us many examples in the Qur'an regarding those who not only opposed their Messengers (عليهم الصلاة والسلام) – but incited others to do the same, by way of their speech:

وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا

*And already they have misled many...*

Surat Nuh Ayah 24



فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ مَا نَرَكَ إِلَّا بَشَرًا مِثْلَنَا وَمَا نَرَكَ أَتَّبَعَكَ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَرَادُوا بِادِي الرَّأْيِ وَمَا نَرَى لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ فَضْلٍ بَلْ نَظُنُّكُمْ كَاذِبِينَ

*The chiefs of the disbelievers among his people said: “We see you but a man like ourselves, nor do we see any follow you but the lowest (class of people) of us, and they (too) followed you without thinking. And we do not see in you any merit above us, in fact we think you are liars.”*

Surat Hud Ayah 27

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرَ

*The people of Noah denied before them, and they denied Our servant and said, “A madman,” and he was repelled.* Surat Al-Qamar Ayah 9

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ وَأَتْرَفْنَاهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُمْ بَشَرًا مِثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَخَسِرُونَ

*And the eminent among his people who disbelieved and denied the meeting of the Hereafter while We had given them luxury in the worldly life said, “This is not but a man like yourselves. He eats of that from which you eat and drinks of what you drink. And if you should obey a man like yourselves, indeed, you would then be losers...”* Surat Al-Mu'minin Ayahs 33-34

إِنْ نَقُولُ إِلَّا اعْتَرَاكَ بَعْضُ ءَاهْتِنَا بِسُوءٍ ۗ قَالَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُوا أَنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ

*“... We only say that some of our gods have possessed you with evil [i.e., insanity].” He said, “Indeed, I call Allah to witness, and witness [yourselves] that I am free from whatever you associate with Allah...”*

Surat Hud Ayah 54

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ إِنَّ لَكَ فِي سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَنظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

*The leaders of those who disbelieved among his people said: “Verily, we see you in foolishness, and verily, we think you are one of the liars.”* Surat Al-A'raf Ayah 66



قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بِآيَةٍ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ  
الصَّادِقِينَ

*They said, “You are only of those affected by magic. You are but a man like ourselves, so bring a sign, if you should be of the truthful.”*

Surat Ash-Shu'ara' Ayahs 153-154

فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا مِثَّنَا وَحِدًا نَتَّبِعُهُ إِنَّا إِذَا لَفِيَ ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ أَلْقَى الذِّكْرَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا  
بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرُّ

*And said, “Is it one human being among us that we should follow? Indeed, we would then be in error and madness. Has the message been sent down upon him from among us? Rather, he is an insolent liar.”*

Surat Al-Qamar Ayahs 24-25



قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِن نَّظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

*They said, "You are only of those affected by magic. You are but a man like ourselves, and indeed, we think you are among the liars."* Surat Ash-Shu'ara' Ayahs 185-186

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لَئِن آتَبَعْتُمْ شُعَيْبًا إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَخٰسِرُونَ

*The chiefs of those who disbelieved among his people said (to their people): "If you follow Shu'aib, be sure then you will be the losers!"* Surat Al-A'raf Ayah 90



وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا وَسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَقَارُونَ فَقَالُوا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ

*And indeed We sent Musa with Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), and a manifest authority. To Fir'aun, Haman, and Qarun, but they called (him) "A Sorcerer, a liar!"* Surat Ghafir Ayahs 23-24

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُونِي أَقْتُلْ مُوسَىٰ وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهُ ۗ وَإِنِّي أَخَافُ أَن يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ أَوْ أَنْ

يُظْهِرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْفَسَادَ

*And Pharaoh said, "Let me kill Moses and let him call upon his Lord. Indeed, I fear that he will change your religion or that he will cause corruption in the land."* Surat Ghafir Ayah 26

قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ مَا أُرِيكُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَرَىٰ وَمَا أَهْدِيكُمْ إِلَّا سَبِيلَ الرَّشَادِ

*Fir'aun (Pharaoh) said: "I show you only that which I see (correct), and I guide you only to the path of right policy!"* Surat Ghafir Ayah 29

قَالَ لِلْمَلَإِ حَوْلَهُ إِنَّ هَذَا لَسَاحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِ فَمَاذَا

تَأْمُرُونَ

*[Pharaoh] said to the eminent ones around him, "Indeed, this is a learned magician. He wants to drive you out of your land by his magic, so what do you advise?"* Surat Ash-Shu'ara' Ayahs 34-35

قَالُوا إِنَّ هَٰذَيْنِ لَسَاحِرُونَ يُرِيدَانِ أَنْ يُخْرِجَاكَ مِنْ أَرْضِكَ بِسِحْرِهِمَا وَيَذْهَبَا بِطَرِيقَتِكَ

الْمُثَلَّى

*They said, “Indeed, these are two magicians who want to drive you out of your land with their magic and do away with your most exemplary way [i.e., religion or tradition]...”* Surat Taha Ayah 63

الْبَيْتُ  
‘ISA  
الْحَرَبِيُّ

وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ

هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

*...And when I restrained the Children of Israel from [killing] you when you came to them with clear proofs and those who disbelieved among them said, “This is not but obvious magic.”*

Surat Al-Ma'idah Ayah 110

وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ

*And they say, "O you upon whom the message has been sent down, indeed you are mad..."*

Surat Al-Hijr Ayah 6

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَسْتَمِعُونَ بِهِ إِذْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذْ هُمْ نَجْوَىٰ إِذْ يَقُولُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن  
تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا

*We are most knowing of how they listen to it when they listen to you and [of] when they are in private conversation, when the wrongdoers say, "You follow not but a man affected by magic."*

Surat Al-Israa' Ayah 47

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ  
يَعْبُدُ ءَابَاؤَكُمْ وَقَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ مُّفْتَرَىٰ ۚ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا  
جَاءَهُمْ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

*And when our verses are recited to them as clear evidences, they say, "This is not but a man who wishes to avert you from that which your fathers were worshipping." And they say, "This is not except a lie invented." And those who disbelieve say of the truth when it has come to them, "This is not but obvious magic." Surat Saba' Ayah 43*

وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَا آيَةً مَّكَانَ آيَةٍ ۚ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*And when We substitute a verse in place of a verse – and Allah is most knowing of what He sends down – they say, “You, [O Muhammad], are but an inventor [of lies].” But most of them do not know.* Surat An-Nahl Ayah 101

And we have evidence from Allah that people are indeed led astray by the speech of such people. On the Day of Judgement, they will say:

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَاءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا السَّبِيلًا

*And they will say: “Our Lord! Verily we obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they misled us from the (right) Way.”* Surat Al-Ahzab Ayah 67

Indeed, **this is the way of the world**, since the time of Nuh (عليه السلام), until the Messenger ﷺ – they were all met with such slander and defamation, even though nothing of what they came with was falsehood. **For their message was, and is, pure goodness with no evil in it, righteousness with no corruption in it, wisdom with no faults in it, and mercy with no injustice in it.** And how many similarities can we draw from the past and present regarding the manner Islam and its followers are being attacked and defamed?

In *Kitaab At-Tawheed*, Imam Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahab رحمه الله said: And from Ibn Mas’ud: That the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *“Shall I tell you what ‘Al-‘Adhu’ (falsehood and slandering) is? It is An-Namimah (calumny) which is committed among the people.”*

The Definition of calumny or *An-Namimah* is: “the making of false and defamatory statements about someone in order to damage their reputation; slander.”

We can get more background of the word ‘Al-’Adhu that is mentioned in the hadith, by looking at this Ayah from the Qur’an:

الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْآنَ عِضِينَ

*Who have made the Qur’an into parts.*

Surat Al-Hijr Ayah 91

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported from Ibn Abbas that;

Al-Walid bin Al-Mughirah – holding a noble position among the people – rallied a group of Quraysh behind him when *Al-Mawsim* (the time for pilgrims to meet in Makkah for Hajj) had come. He said to them,

*"O people of Quraysh! The time of Al-Mawsim has come, and delegations of Arabs will come to you during this time. They will have heard some things about this companion of yours (meaning the Prophet ﷺ), so agree on one opinion, let there be no contradicting or denials of each other's sayings."*

*They said, "And you, O Abu Abd Shams, give us an opinion and we will say that."*

*He said, "No, you make the suggestions and I will listen."*

*They said, "We say he is a soothsayer."*

*He said, "He is not a soothsayer."*

*They said, "We say he is crazy."*

*He said, "He is not crazy."*

*They said, "We say he is a poet."*

*He said, "He is not a poet."*

*They said, "We say he is a sorcerer."*



He said, "He is not a sorcerer."

They said, "So what should we say?"

He said,

"By Allah, what he says is as palatable (to the average person) as something sweet, so you cannot say anything against it without it being obviously false. Therefore, the most appropriate thing you can say is that he is a sorcerer."

So, they left having agreed upon that, and Allah revealed concerning them:

الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْآنَ عِضِينَ

*Who have made the Qur'an into parts.*

Surat Al-Hijr Ayah 91

Al-Qurtubi mentioned: He ﷺ called it '*Al-'Adhu*'— because generally it is no different from lying and slandering (*An-Namimah*).

The apparent inclination of the Imam رحمه الله towards including this hadith in *Kitaab At-Tawheed* attests to the meaning of '*Al-'Adhu*' that he has here – and it is *Sihr*.

- And it is indicated by this hadith: "*It's as if An-Namimah can be likened to Sihr.*" Narrated by Ibn Lal in *Makarim Al-Akhlaq*, with a weak chain.
- Ibn 'Abdul Barr from Yahya ibn Abi Kathir said: "*The Namam (The one who commits Namimah) and the liar spread more corruption in one hour than the Sahir (i.e., one who deals with black magic) spreads in one year.*"

And Abu Al-Khattab said in '*Uyoon Al-Masa'il*': "*And from Al-Sihr is persisting in An-Namimah and corruption between the people.*"



*An-Namimah* is likened to *Sihir* because of the harm it brings through the speech and action (of those committing it) by way of plotting and scheming. It is for this reason it is recognized as resembling *Sihir* – as it affects and results in the same outcome of *Sihir* – sometimes more. And [the *Namam*] is judged with that which is between being similar to it (*Sihir*), or that being near to it i.e.,

- The *Sahir* has committed *Kufr* because of his *Sihir*, and he is judged by the evidence of him being a *Sahir*. And he (the *Namam*) is not a *Sahir*, rather he is judged by the result of his actions, except that which is proven to be *kufr* [from his actions], and his refusal to make *Tawbah* (repentance).

And from this – the application of the hadith becomes apparent – and the hadith is evidence for the forbiddance of *Al-Gheebah* and *An-Namimah* – and it is so by ‘*Ijma*’ (consensus of the scholars). And Abu Muhammad Ibn Hazm said: “*They agreed upon the forbiddance of Al-Gheebah and Al-Namimah*” – **not including the necessary advice [against people who must be warned about]**, and there is evidence that it is from the *Kaba'ir* (major sins).

And what is the difference between the *Namam* and a sinful liar?

هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَنْ تَنَزَّلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ  
تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ

*Shall I inform you (O people!) upon whom the devils descend? They descend on every lying, sinful person.* Surat Ash Shu'araa' Ayahs 221–222

In Tafsir Ibn Kathir, these Ayat are a refutation of the fabrications of the idolaters at the time of the Prophet ﷺ. Here, Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) addresses those idolaters who claimed that what was brought by the Messenger ﷺ was not the truth – but was merely something that he had made up by himself, or that it came to him in visions from the Jinn. Allah stated that His Messenger ﷺ was above their claims and fabrications, and that what he had brought did indeed come from Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), and that it was a revelation and inspiration, brought down by a noble, trustworthy and mighty angel. It did not come from the *Shayatin*, because they have no desire for anything like this Noble Qur'an – they descend upon those who are like them, the lying fortune-tellers. And the *Shayatin* descend on every lying, sinful person (*Aathim*), **meaning, one whose speech is lies and fabrication.**

This is a reminder for all Muslims. *An-Namimah* is the tool of the disbelievers and *mushrikeen* of the past and present. Instead of striving to spread corruption between brothers and sisters, let us strive to avoid this major sin that enables corruption worse than that of *Sihr*. Let us not scheme and contrive against each other. The *Salaf* all feared excessive speech, for they were the most pious and pure in their understanding of the religion.

‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab once entered upon Abu Bakr – Allah be pleased with them both – and found him pulling at his tongue. He said, “Oh, what are you doing?” Abu Bakr replied, ***‘It is this (i.e., my speech) that has brought me so much trouble.’*** Al-Muwatta 2:988

It is important to reflect upon how effortless it is to fall into this major sin, in comparison to that which it is likened to, *Sihr*. How common is it to come across a *Namam* in comparison to a *Sahir*?

One can fall into *Namimah* by simply rolling the tongue, or nowadays – a few clicks on the cellphone or computer. And excessive speech often leads to *Namimah* due to the lack of thought or consideration of what is being said. We can look to the story of our beloved mother, ‘Aishah (رضي الله عنها). Some of those who contributed in spreading the accusation against her were Muslim!

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ

*Indeed, those who came with falsehood are a group among you...* Surat An-Nur Ayah 11

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِنَفْسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ

*Why, when you heard it, did not the believing men and believing women think good of themselves [i.e., one another] and say, “This is an obvious falsehood”?* Surat An-Nur Ayah 12



They probably did not realize the gravity of what they did until they received the punishment. Would they have partaken in it if they realized the harm it brought with it?

إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ  
اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ وَلَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُمْ مَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَتَكَلَّمَ بِهَذَا سُبْحَانَكَ هَذَا  
بُحْتِنٌ عَظِيمٌ

*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.* Surat An-Nur Ayah 15

And what was the harm? They harmed the Messenger ﷺ, they harmed our beloved mother ‘Aishah (رضي الله عنها), who wept until she felt her insides would burst. They harmed the beloved companion Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) and his family.

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) proceeds to Warn the believers of engaging in such conduct:

يَعِظُكُمُ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَعُودُوا لِمِثْلِهِ أَبَدًا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

*Allah warns you against returning to the likes of this [conduct], ever, if you should be believers.*

Surat An-Nur Ayah 17

Imam Ahmad recorded from Thawban that the Messenger ﷺ said: *Do not annoy the servant of Allah, nor abuse them, nor seek their hidden shortcomings. Whoever seeks out the faults of his Muslim brother, Allah will expose his faults and degrade him, even if he is hiding in his house.*

Throughout the Qur’an, lying is associated with *fasad* (corruption). And is not lying an element of *Namimah*? And we see from examples of the past and present, that the action of partaking in this *fasad* is not exclusive to the *mushrikeen* who denied their Messengers (عليهم الصلاة والسلام). We do not feel safe from this major sin just because we believe and speak the *Shahadah* (i.e., testimony of faith). Rather we should fear it more than anyone else, because we know the reality of its harm.

**And this is because part of striving for righteous conduct is knowing the result of having the contrary.** When we see how effortlessly reputations are destroyed, private affairs exposed and used as entertainment, or accusations and lies upon others are thrown left and right, what does that tell us about the conduct Muslims have nowadays?

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

*Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you do not know.* Surat An-Nur Ayah 19

Meaning, those who like to see evil talk about the believers appear will have a painful torment in this world and the Hereafter. Return to Allah in matters you do not know of, for Allah knows and you do not – *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”* Surat An-Nur Ayah 16

Brothers and sisters, fear this major sin that has been likened to *Sihir*. Fear this major sin that was used by the *mushrikeen* of the past to deter others from the call of their Messengers (عليهم الصلاة والسلام). Fear this major sin that invites *Shayatin* to descend upon the ones who partake in it! Fear this major sin whose effects are oftentimes worse than that of *Sihir*. If we truly fear this condemnable act that would take anyone who partook in it out of the folds of Islam (i.e., *Sihir*), would we dare partake in something likened to it? If slandering others and spreading falsehood amongst people becomes habitual, then how easy will it be for the *Shaytan* to open the door for the *Namam* to speak falsehood against Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) and His religion?

Assuring safety to oneself from the dangers of falling into sins breeds carefreeness and heedlessness. And we have the best examples to remedy that mindset – the Companions (رضي الله عنهم).

**Know**, *Namimah* can be facilitated with the most subtle words, so I ask – how many of us have fallen into this grave sin without realizing it? A *nafs* requires constant reform – constant rehabilitation. We never feel that we are free from the dangers of sinning, we never think that we have reached a level where we are beyond committing certain things. We seek refuge in Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) from the evil of *Shaytan*, and the evil of ourselves.

إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

*If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins and admit you to a noble entrance [into Paradise].*

Surat An-Nisa' Ayah 31

*O Allah, separate me from my sins as You have separated the East from the West. O Allah, cleanse me of my transgressions as the white garment is cleaned of stains. O Allah, wash away my sins with ice and water and frost.*

*I have wronged my own soul and confess my sin. Forgive all of my sins, surely none forgives sins but You. Guide me to the perfection of my character, for none guides to its perfection but You. Protect me from the evils of my character, for none may protect me from its evils but You.*

*I ask you for the word of truth in times of contentment and anger.*

*Allahumma Ameen.*

And may the peace and blessings be upon Muhammad, his family, and whoever follows him till the Day of Judgement.