

Sura 49, Al-Hujurat (The Private Apartments), Medina 106, 9H

The Quranic Text and Ali's Translation:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا... ^{up}

6. O ye who believe!

if a wicked person comes to you with any news,
ascertain the truth,

...أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٦﴾

lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become
full of repentance for what ye have done.

Asad's Translation:

49:6 O YOU who have attained to faith! If any iniquitous person comes **to you with a [slandorous) tale, use your discernment,** 5
lest you hurt people unwittingly and afterwards be filled with
remorse for what you have done. 6

Ali's Comments:

4924. All tittle-tattle or reports-especially if emanating from persons you do not know-are to be tested, and the truth ascertained. If they were believed and passed on, much harm may be done, of which you may have cause afterwards to repent heartily. Scandal or slander of all kinds is here condemned. That about women is specially denounced: 24: 11-20; 23-26

Asad's comments:

5 I.e., verify the truth before giving credence to any such report or rumour. **The tale-bearer is characterized as "iniquitous" because the very act of spreading unsubstantiated rumours affecting the reputation of other persons constitutes a spiritual offence.**

6 Thus, after laying stress in the preceding verses on the reverence due to God's message-bearer and, by implication, to every righteous leader of the community - the discourse turns to **the moral imperative of safeguarding the honour and reputation of every member of the community**, man and woman alike. This principle is taken up, more explicitly, in verse 12.