

ANSWER

وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ

And do not find fault with one another [49:11]

COMMENTARY

[P]rohibited in the verse is lamz which connotes to find fault with someone or to upbraid him. The verse says, وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ, literally it means, "Do not find fault with your selves." But the intention is: **"Do not find fault with one another" [49:11]** as is seen in the translation above. This expression is similar to the expression: **'...And do not kill yourselves' - [4:29]**. Although the verse commands "do not kill yourselves", it purports to say "do not kill one another". This expression indicates that, from one point of view, killing another person amounts to killing oneself. Often it happens that if one person kills another person, the victim's supporters kill the murderer. Even if this does not happen, a Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. Killing one's brother is like killing oneself and rendering oneself crippled, helpless and powerless. Similarly, the expression 'and not find fault with yourselves' means when you find fault with others and upbraid them, others will find fault with you and upbraid you, because no man is normally free from any fault. Scholars have formulated the maxim: "You have faults and people have eyes" with which they see them. Thus if someone seeks out the imperfections of some other person and broadcasts them, the latter will do the same in return. If, however, he exercises patience and evades retaliation to his verbal attacks, it comes down to the same thing: If one considers carefully, he will find that defaming and despising one's Muslim brother is actually casting aspersions on oneself.

Scholars have suggested that the satisfaction, well-being and happiness of man lies in examining his own faults and finding ways of mending them. This approach to life will give him no time to find fault with others and broadcast it. How well the last king of India Bahādur Shāh Zafar has versified it!

نہ تھی حال کی جب ہمیں اپنی خبر، رہے دیکھتے لوگوں کے عیب و ہنر
پڑی اپنی برائیوں پر جو نظر، تو جہاں میں کوئی برا نہ رہا

As long as we were unaware of our own faults, we looked into the faults and failings of others;

But when we looked at our own faults, there remained no one faulty in the world

TAFSĪR IBN KATHĪR

(**Nor defame yourselves**) forbids defaming each other. He among men who is a slanderer, and a backbiter, is cursed and condemned as Allah states (**Woe to every Humazah, Lumazah**)(104:1) *Hamz* is defamation by action, while *Lamz* is by words.

Allah the Exalted and Most Honored said, (**Hammaz (defaming), going about with slander.**)

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(68:11) meaning, he belittles and defames people, transgressing and spreading slander among them, which is the Lamz that uses words as its tool.

Allah's statement here, **(Nor defame yourselves)** just as He said in another Ayah, **(Nor kill yourselves)** (4:29), meaning, nor kill one another. `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Qatadah and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that the Ayah, **(Nor defame yourselves)** means, none of you should defame each other.'

End.

