

## Class 2

## ‘Obligations on the Tongue’

## The Obligations of the Tongue in Islam

Transforming Your Life Through Words that Please Allah

The tongue is a small organ, but its influence on a person’s faith, character, and hence his aakhira (afterlife) is immense. The Prophet ﷺ taught us that every word we speak is recorded and judged. Islam places special importance on guarding the tongue and using it in ways that lead to Allah’s pleasure and Paradise.

And just like any other important thing, we are not just given an order without directives, the Quran and Sunnah teacher us what are the obligations and prohibitions on our tongue.

In this class we will look into what are the obligations set on our tongues — each with reflections, supporting evidences, and real-life benefits.

## 1. SPEAKING THE TRUTH (Qawl al-Haqq)

In this world, there is truth and there is falsehood. One is from Allah; the other is from the Shaitaan.

Praise be to Allah who has ordered the believers to tell the truth and urged them to be among the truthful. Truth is the foundation of faith and the mark of a sincere believer. When you speak the truth, even in difficulty, you align your heart with sincerity and your words with the light of iman. Truth brings respect, peace, and clarity. Allah commands us:

*"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice." (33:70)*

*"O you who believe! Be afraid of Allaah, and be with those who are true (in word and deeds)." [al-Tawbah 9:119]*

And the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *'You must be truthful, for truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man will keep speaking the truth and striving to speak the truth until he will be recorded with Allaah as a siddeeq (speaker of the truth). Beware of telling lies, for lying leads to immorality and immorality leads to Hellfire. A man will keep telling lies and striving to tell lies until he is recorded with Allaah as a liar.'* (Sahih Muslim)

This hadeeth indicates that truthfulness leads to righteousness (al-birr), an all-embracing concept that includes all kinds of goodness and different kinds of righteous deeds. Immorality is basically an inclination towards deviation from the truth, and the immoral person (faajir) is one who is inclined to turn away from the path of guidance. Hence immorality and righteousness are diametrically opposed.

Truthfulness is not only noble—it is liberating. It saves you from guilt, lies, and the burdens that falsehood brings. Speaking the truth builds trust with people, and more importantly, with your Lord.

### Positive Impacts on Daily Life

- Earns Allah’s favor and reward that can be seen and felt in our daily lives.
- Builds trust and credibility in relationships.
- Stronger relationships.
- Enhances self-respect and emotional stability.
- Brings peace of mind and a clear conscience.
- Prevents complications from dishonesty.

Muslims should be the custodians of truth in this world. They should not easily abandon that lofty perch, no matter how severe the threat to their personal, physical, professional and economic wellbeing. Muslims must speak the truth.

## 2. JUSTICE

Allah says,

*“Allah loves those who are just.”* (Quran 60:8; 49:9)

*“Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded”.* (16:90)

*“...Do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just, for that is nearer to righteousness. Fear Allah, for verily, Allah is aware of what you do.”* (Quran 5:8)

*“O you who believe, be persistently standing firm in justice as witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor...”* (Quran 4:135)

*“So reconcile between them in justice and fairness. Verily, Allah loves those who are just.”* (Quran 49:9)

Allah instructs His servants to be just, by discharging Allah’s rights and the rights of fellow human beings and by not giving preference in judgement.

Justice in Islam is the divine command to uphold fairness, give others their due rights, and act with equity regardless of personal interest or relation. It is rooted in tawḥīd (oneness of Allah), recognizing God as the ultimate source of authority, and manifests through moral, social, and legal responsibility toward all creation.

Which hadith speaks against injustice?

The Prophet ﷺ quoted Allah as saying, *“O My servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another.”* (Sahih Muslim) This hadith

qudsi reveals that injustice is prohibited by Allah Himself and must be entirely avoided in all dealings with others.

Islam condemns all forms of oppression and mandates its removal through moral courage, truth-speaking, and institutional reform. Believers are encouraged to stand and speak against wrongdoing, even if committed by those close to them, and to support the oppressed through solidarity, advocacy, and action rooted in faith and compassion.

Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "It is said that Allah allows the just state to remain even if it is led by unbelievers, but Allah will not allow the oppressive state to remain even if it is led by Muslims. And it is said that the world will endure with justice and unbelief, but it will not endure with oppression and Islam." (al-Amr bil Ma'rūf 1/29)

#### Positive Impacts on Daily Life

- Upholding Social Harmony and Peace
- Protection of Human Rights
- People Welfare
- Amicable Resolution of Disputes
- Promotes Accountability

### 3. KEEPING PROMISES

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

*"And fulfil (every) covenant. Verily! the covenant, will be questioned about"* (al-Isra' 17:34)

*"and fulfill the Covenant of Allah"* (al-An 'am 6:152)

*"Yes, whoever fulfils his pledge and fears Allah much; verily, then Allah loves those who are Al-Muttaqûn (the pious)"* (Aal 'Imraan 3:76).

And the Prophet ﷺ said, "Accept six deeds from me and I assure your acceptance into Paradise. When one of you speaks, let him not lie. When one of you promises, let him not break it. When one of you is trusted, let him not betray it. Lower your gaze, restrain your hands from harming others, and guard your chastity." (Musnad Abī Ya'lá 4195, classed as Sahih by Albani)

#### Positive Impacts on Daily Life

- Allah's pleasure that brings tranquility
- Strengthened Relationships
- Positive Reputation
- Enhanced Self-Esteem
- Increased Happiness and Well-being
- Positive Role Modelling
- Healthy Family Dynamics

Please join our free online certificate course “THE LOST TRAITS”, to learn more about various traits that we should have as a Muslim and their respective virtues. <https://learn-islam.org/lost-traits> (available online now, register and learn).

Note these are not part of the ongoing course, it is an independent course that can be done at your own pace and at your own convenience.

#### 4. ENJOIN GOOD & FORBID EVIL

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

*“Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma’roof (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbidding Al-Munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful” (Aal ‘Imraan 3:104)*

*“The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ’ (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma’rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.” (Al-Tawbah: 71)*

The order of enjoining good and forbidding evil comes before the order to perform Salah, which is the main foundation of Islam and its greatest pillar second to the two Shahadahs (Testimonies of Faith). So, why was this obligation mentioned first? Indeed, this obligation was mentioned first to illustrate the dire need and necessity for it, because by observing this matter the affairs of the Ummah will be set aright. This also helps goodness prevail, virtues appear, and vices disappear in the Ummah. It encourages Muslims to cooperate on goodness, advise one another, fight in the Cause of Allah, do all good deeds and keep away from every evil one. When Muslims stop enjoining good and forbidding evil, there are devastating disasters, evil acts spread, the Ummah disunites, and hearts become hardened or even dead.

Enjoining what is good (al-ma’roof) and forbidding what is evil (al-munkar) is one of the most important Islamic duties, indeed it is the noblest and most sublime. This is the task of the Prophets and Messengers (peace be upon them all), as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): *“Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the (coming of) Messengers” [al-Nisaa’ 4:165]*

And we can understand its importance and obligation by reading the ayaahs, where it comes in the form of criticising those who neglect it and as a threat of curse and doom. As Allah (swt) says (which means):

*“They used not to forbid one another from Al-Munkar (wrong, evil-doing, sins, polytheism, disbelief) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do.” (Al-Maidah: 79)*

*“That was because they disobeyed (Allâh and the Messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from Al-Munkar (wrong, evil-doing, sins, polytheism, disbelief) which they committed.” (Al-Maidah: 78-79)*

Imam an-Nawawee said, "You should know that this issue, the enjoining good and forbidding evil, has mostly been neglected over a long period of time. What remains of it today is but a few traces, all despite the fact that it is an important issue which lies at the heart of all affairs."

O my Muslim brothers & Sisters! Enjoining good and forbidding evil is a very important topic worthy of attention, because the interest and salvation of the Ummah (nation based on one creed) lie in undertaking it, whereas, neglecting it causes great danger and corruption because of the disappearance of virtues and the spread of vice.

And the Prophet ﷺ also said,

*"Whoever sees an evil (being practiced) must change it with his hand. If he cannot do so, then with his tongue. If he (still) cannot do so, then with his heart, which is the weakest form of faith."* (Bukhari and Muslim)

*"A believer is the mirror of his brother. When he sees a fault in it, he should correct it."* (Abu Dawood & Bukhari in Adab Al Mufrad; classed as Hasan by Albani).

Imam an-Nawawee also said, "The Qur'an, the Sunnah and the consensus of the Ummah are in accord that enjoining good and forbidding evil is an [Islamic] obligation."

## Warning Against abandoning Enjoining Good & Forbidding Evil

We read above, the ayahs warning against abandoning this great act.

Muslims who neglect enjoining good and forbidding evil hold this corrupted saying as a pretext, "Leave the creation for Allah The Almighty to judge them; I am not responsible for all human beings", and the like.

The Prophet ﷺ said,

*"By Him in Whose Hand my life is, you either enjoin good and forbid evil, or Allah will certainly soon send His punishment to you. Then you will make supplication, and it will not be accepted".* [At-Tirmidhi].

*"When people see an oppressor but do not prevent him from (doing evil), it is likely that Allah will punish them all."* (Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi).

*"The parable of the one who observes the limits prescribed by Allah and the one who transgresses them is the likeness of people who board a ship after casting lots. Some of them are in its lower deck and others are in its upper deck. Those in the lower deck, when they need water, go to the upper deck and say: If we make a hole in the bottom of the ship, we will not harm you. If those in the upper deck*

*leave them to carry out their plan, they will all be drowned, but if they stop them, then all of them will be safe.”* (Bukhari)

*"There are no people in whose midst acts of disobedience are habitual, and who can change these habits but not change them, except that Allah visits them with a sweeping punishment."* (Abu Dawud, Ahmad and Ibn Majah)

Thus, Muslim should enjoin each other to do what is good and forbid one another from doing what is evil. Furthermore, they should leniently and politely advise one another.

This exchange of advice is the secret to success as Allah The Exalted explains in Soorat Al-‘Asr which reads (what means): *{“By time, Indeed, mankind is in loss, Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.”}* (Surah Al Asr)

Please join our free online certificate course “NASEEHA”, to learn more about various Dos & Donts of giving Naseeha as per the Sunnah and their respective virtues. <https://learn-islam.org/naseeha> (available online now, register and learn).

Note these are not part of the ongoing course, it is an independent course that can be done at your own pace and at your own convenience.

#### Positive Impacts on Daily Life

- Gives purpose and moral courage
- Builds stronger and supportive communities
- Protects society from moral decay
- Helps form bonds of genuine care and faith
- Increases self-accountability and integrity

## 5. TAWBAH

Allah Lofty and Sublime said:

*‘And turn to Allah all of you, Oh believers so that you may be successful.’* (An-Noor Verse 31)

*‘O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will remit from you your sins’* (At-Tahrim Verse 8)

*‘And whosoever does not repent then they are from the Dhalimoon (wrongdoers etc)’* (Al-Hujraat Verse 11)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, *‘Oh People! Repent to Allah, verily I repent more than seventy times a day’* (Bukhaari)

Therefore, it is obligatory for the Muslim to repent from his sins and from his evil deeds and it is obligatory that he does not continue upon them or commence upon them or that he is negligent with regards to sins, and he says; 'this is easy'

Do not be negligent with it for it is from the sins, rather hasten with repentance.

When death arrives the repentance is not accepted and if mankind continues to live then his repentance in the presence of death is (furthermore) not accepted, so upon him is to rush to make repentance and not to delay it. As soon as he commits a sin he repents to Allah immediately. Allah said: "And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: "Now I repent;" (An-Nisaa Verse 18)

#### Positive Impacts on Daily Life

- Forgiveness
- Increased Self-Awareness
- Renewed Sense of Purpose
- Emotional and Mental Well-being
- Inner Peace
- Reduced Stress
- Increased Hope
- Improved Choices
- Greater Accountability

Ample Provision (Rizq). Allah The Almighty Mentioned that Nooh said (what means): *"And said, 'Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers. And give you increase in wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers".* (Quran 71: 10-12)

Please join our free online certificate course "TAWBAH", to learn more about various Rulings & Sunnahs of Tawbah and their respective virtues. Read inspiring stories. <https://learn-islam.org/tawbah> (available online now, register and learn).

Note these are not part of the ongoing course, it is an independent course that can be done at your own pace and at your own convenience.

Tomorrow's class will be Highly Recommended acts by the tongue. That will be followed by Prohibitions in the upcoming classes.

#### TIPS FOR THE TEST

- Do not have to memorise the ayahs or hadeeths word for word and their references, but remember their meanings and the msg being given.
- Remember the obligations and warnings.