A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends. [Proverbs 16:28](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+16%3A28&version=ESV)

A person is born with an axe in his mouth. He whose speech is unwholesome cuts himself with his axe.

When a person praises someone who should be blamed, or attacks someone worthy of praise, then this man is accumulating evil with his mouth and this evil will not lead to happiness.

It is little harm if one loses money in gambling with dice, even losing everything, including oneself; but if one bears ill-will towards well-conducted ones it is greater harm indeed. Insulting men of real worth, bearing ill-will in thought and speech, leads to eons upon eons in the states of misery. Buddhism. Sutta Nipata 657-60

Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?  [James 4:11-12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A11-12&version=ESV)

## O you who believe! Avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful. Qur'an 49: 12

O Son of Man! Breathe not the sins of others so long as thou art thyself a sinner. Shouldst thou transgress this command, accursed wouldst thou be, and to this I bear witness. The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, #27

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| O beloved of the Lord! If any soul speak ill of an absent one, the only result will clearly be this: he will dampen the zeal of the friends and tend to make them indifferent. For backbiting is divisive, it is the leading cause among the friends of a disposition to withdraw. If any individual should speak ill of one who is absent, it is incumbent on his hearers, in a spiritual and friendly manner, to stop him, and say in effect: would this detraction serve any useful purpose? Would it please the Blessed Beauty, contribute to the lasting honor of the friends, promote the holy Faith, support the Covenant, or be of any possible benefit to any soul? No, never! On the contrary, it would make the dust to settle so thickly on the heart that the ears would hear no more, and the eyes would no longer behold the light of truth. |
| If, however, a person setteth about speaking well of another, opening his lips to praise another, he will touch an answering chord in his hearers and they will be stirred up by the breathings of God. Their hearts and souls will rejoice to know that, God be thanked, here is a soul in the Faith who is a focus of human perfections, a very embodiment of the bounties of the Lord, one whose tongue is eloquent, and whose face shineth, in whatever gathering he may be, one who hath victory upon his brow, and who is a being sustained by the sweet savors of God. | |

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp 230-231