

Slanderers

Purpose: to encourage the listeners, by defining slander, not to be surprised if it may happen to them, and to warn believers to avoid it.

It is true that we are living in difficult days and the scriptures have been clear about what to expect during these times. So far, we have considered 10 characteristics of people in the last days. Now we are going to consider number 11:

2 Timothy 3:2,3

For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, **slanderers**, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,

What is a slanderer?

Cambridge Dictionary - a false spoken statement about someone that damages their reputation, or the making of such a statement.

Webster - the utterance of false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another's reputation; a false and defamatory oral statement about a person

Greek: *diabolos*

Strong - specifically *Satan* - false accuser, devil, slanderer.

Thayer - prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely, metaphorically applied to a man who, by opposing the cause of God, may be said to act the part of the devil or to side with him.

The word literally means “devils”, as Satan is the accuser of the brethren, so people will be like him. Those who charge others falsely. They try to ruin the character or reputation of others. They aim to cause contentions and quarrels.

This is how this word has been translated:

Saying evil of others; their words will be cruel; they will talk about others to hurt them; false accusers; they will tell lies about people.

Psalm 31:13

For I hear the slander of many;
Fear *is* on every side;
While they take counsel together against me,
They scheme to take away my life.

Psalm 50:20

You sit *and* speak against your brother;
You slander your own mother's son.

Proverbs 10:18

Whoever hides hatred *has* lying lips,
And whoever spreads slander *is* a fool.

Slander poisonous

It is the custom in Africa for hunters, when they have killed a poisonous snake, to cut off its head and carefully bury it deep in the ground, a naked foot stepping on one of these fangs would be fatally wounded; the poison would spread in a very short time all through the system. This venom lasts a long time, and is as deadly after the snake is dead as before. The Red Indians used to dip the points of their arrows in this poison; so, if they made the least wound, their victim would be sure to die. The snake's poison is in its teeth; but there is something quite as dangerous, and much more common, in communities, which has its poison on its tongue. Indeed, your chances of escape from a serpent are greater. The worst snakes usually glide away in fear at the approach of man, unless disturbed or attacked. But this creature, whose poison lurks in its tongue, attacks without provocation, and follows up its victim with untiring perseverance. We will tell you his name, so you will always be able to shun him. He is called "Slanderer." He poisons worse than a serpent. Often his venom strikes to the life of a whole family or neighbourhood, destroying all peace and confidence. (*Dictionary of Illustrations.*)

Psalm 140:3

They sharpen their tongues like a serpent;
The poison of asps *is* under their lips. Selah

Romans 3:13

"THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN TOMB;
WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY HAVE PRACTICED DECEIT";
"THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";

Ecclesiastes 10:11

A serpent may bite when *it is* not charmed;
The babbler is no different.

The devil is called the accuser, and slander and lies are his main weapon:

Revelation 12:9,10

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

The LORD really hates slander:

Proverbs 6:16-19

These six *things* the LORD hates,
Yes, seven *are* an abomination to Him:

A proud look,
A lying tongue,
Hands that shed innocent blood,
A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that are swift in running to evil,
A false witness *who* speaks lies,
And one who sows discord among brethren.

Exodus 20:16

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Exodus 23:1

"You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

Leviticus 19:16

You shall not go about *as* a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I *am* the LORD.

Proverbs 20:19

He who goes about *as* a talebearer reveals secrets;
Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

The penalty:

Psalms 101:5

Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor,
Him I will destroy;
The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart,
Him I will not endure.

Some may slander you:

1 Peter 4:12-19

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now "IF THE RIGHTEOUS ONE IS SCARCELY SAVED, WHERE WILL THE UNGODLY AND THE SINNER APPEAR?" Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

Don't let it happen to you:

James 3:1-12

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. **2** - For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. **3** - Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. **4** - Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. **5** - Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! **6** - And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. **7** - For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. **8** - But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. **9** - With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. **10** - Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. **11** - Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? **12** - Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

Summary:

- Slander is when we say something incorrectly that will damage the character or reputation of another.
- Don't be surprised when some may bring a bad testimony and even slander you, simply because you are a believer. This is the world that we are living in.
- It is easy to allow our tongues to slip and eventually poison others. Don't let it happen to you!