



HE SAY, SHE SAY

JUNE 16, 2025

PROVERBS 20:19 NKJV – (19) He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore, do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

In the Bible, "**slander**" means making false statements about someone to ruin their reputation. It can also refer to things like gossip—which is often unsubstantiated rumor or scandal—or undue criticism. In most modern legal contexts, *slander* and *libel* refer to untrue spoken or written comments which harm someone's standing, and which the offender should have known were false. The term used here is *rākil*, which plays on the similarity of terms for merchants and those for liars and deceivers.

The "**gossip monger**" or "**tale bearer**" should be avoided. This person not only cannot keep legitimate secrets (**Proverbs 2:11; 19:11**), but they prefer controversy and scandal (**Proverbs 16:28; 17:9; 18:8**). They "deal in" such things as if it were a business. ***Associating with such a person means eventually being caught up in the consequences of their sins.***

History's most notorious slanderer is the Devil. **Revelation 12:10** calls him "the accuser of our brothers...who accuses them day and night before our God." The Devil still has access to God's throne, but he does not live in heaven. His realm is Earth and its atmosphere. He is "the prince of the power of the air" (**Ephesians 2:2**). All who engage in slander resemble him and are censured by Solomon as "**babblers**." The Hebrew phrasing here connects the idea of being "simple," or uninformed, with the lips. This is a simple definition of gossip: spreading rumors about issues when one lacks full understanding.

The gossip will reveal those secrets to others and likely embellish them with lies. According to Solomon the way to deal with a slanderer is to avoid him. In his instructions to Timothy, the apostle Paul warned about those who depart from faithful pursuits and occupy their time as slanderers: gossips and busybodies (**1 Timothy 5:11–13**).

SCRIPTURE READING: **ROMANS 1:28-32**

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Gossip is what no one claims to like, but everybody enjoys.