

CHAPTER 11

CONDEMNATION OR JUDGING OTHERS

"The devils push us to sin. However, if we do not obey them, they will push us to judge whoever sins."

(St. John-El-Daragy)

- A) Dangers of the sin of judging others**
- B) Causes of judging others**
- C) Why should we not condemn others**
- D) The consequences of judging others**
- E) How do we get rid of judging others?**

What are your feelings toward some people? Do you criticize their behavior and condemn their actions, as you see them apparent? Do you keep these feelings and thoughts inside you and do you reveal them under the name of defending the truth and virtue? If you do this or that, know that this is the sin of judging others, which the Lord Jesus has warned us saying, "**Judge not, that you be not judged.**" (Matthew 7: 1)

A) DANGERS OF THE SIN OF JUDGING OTHERS

The sin of judging others is dangerous for the following reasons:

- 1. Many do not feel that they are committing that sin,** hence they do not exert any effort to overcome it. The youth may feel very sorry for falling in the lust of the flesh, may try to avoid its causes, and consider overcoming it an accomplishment of virtue. But they never think of purifying themselves from judging others.
- 2. This sin is related with apparent matters, which one may see or hear:** This sin is sensed by the physical senses. The difficulty lies here in how to rid one's self from factual things one has seen with his senses and convince him with opposite of what he has seen and heard.
- 3. Robbing one of God's rights, which** He did not grant to any human being or even any of the angels. One may wonder how can one be so easy regarding this sin! If one is careful in not committing this sin, one is guaranteed eternal inheritance. **Since the ultimate goal of our spiritual struggle is not to be condemned in the Day of Judgment, therefore keeping ourselves from not committing this sin will help us in attaining our goal.** The Lord Jesus said, "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." (Luke 6:37)

Story: This story was written in the book of "The Paradise of the Monks", told by St. Anastasios El-Sinaey. One of the monks who lived in the monastery was lazy. At his departure, he seemed to be not afraid of death at all, on the contrary he felt very joyful. The monks surrounding him during his last moments of life asked him, "Our brother, we know that you have spent your life in laziness, why are you so joyful at your last hour? We do not know the secret. By God's power, sit and tell us about this strange matter so we may know the wonders of God." The brother sat down and said, "Yes, my honorable fathers, I have spent all my life in laziness and sleep. But now at this hour, the angels have brought me the book of my deeds and since I became a monk, I have not judged anyone, nor hated anyone, nor became angry with anyone. **I hope that the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "Judge not, that you be not judged," be fulfilled in me.**" When I said these words, the handwriting of my sins was torn because I obeyed this small commandment." After he finished these words, he departed, and all the other monks benefited and praised God.

I want to mention that the word "Laziness", which was mentioned several times in his story, does not mean the life of sin or drifting away from God, or else the story would not have ended like that. But what we mean is that this monk did not have any significant virtues, as the ascetic fathers used to have.

Do you know, my brother that keeping this commandment, "**Judge not**" is capable of saving you from eternal judgment through the mercy of our God? Open your heart now to know its causes and how to overcome it.

B) CAUSES OF JUDGING OTHERS

1. Pride: The sin of judging others is one of the faithful daughters of the sin of pride, which nourishes it and makes it grow. This sin also strengthens the sin of pride. Love of self and the proud opinion create in us the spirit of judging others. Every time we judge others, our pride goes one step further, accompanied by the feeling of self-importance and satisfaction for one's self. Had I not felt that I am better than that person and I would have never done that action, I would have never judged him.

This is pride itself. However, the humble person never opens his eyes for other's mistakes, but looks at his own and finds many. St. Pachomios said, "**Do not despise nor judge anyone, even if you see him committing sin, for judging others comes from pride. But the humble person considers everyone better than him.**"

2. The evil heart: The fathers say that if someone judges his brother for an evil act, he has the same sin, even a very small part or a root of it which involuntarily drives him to judge others. Our Lord says, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things." (Matthew 12:35) The pure heart, with no lust, looks at others' deeds with no evil. "You are of purer eyes than to behold evil." (Habakkuk 1: 13)

"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness." (Matthew 6:22,23)

Hence, the source of thoughts of condemnation is not others' sinful deeds, but one's evil heart. The rays of the sun penetrates the glass and is formed by its color. If the rays fall on a blue glass, it penetrates from the other side with a blue color and so on. The defect here is not the sun and its light, but it appeared through the other side with the color of the glass through which it penetrates. In the same manner, man regards the sin of condemnation. If his heart were pure, he would not see other people's actions in a mistaken way. The same manner, the straight track seems broken in water. This is what is known in physics as the theory of refraction. Certainly the track is straight, but it seems broken. Likewise, when the sick person is offered delicious food, he tastes it and finds it bitter. The defect here is not in the kind of food but in the sick person.

3. Lack of Love: St. Paul said that love "does not behave rudely, thinks no evil, endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13: 5, 7) The wise Solomon also said, "Love covers all sins." (Proverbs 10: 12) With this forgiving love, which covers all our sins, God has loved us and visited us from above and ignored the time of our ignorance. Still the eyes of His love watch us, care for us, and cover our sins. Hence, we say in the "Thanksgiving Prayer", "Let us give thanks ... for He has covered us." Love is the spectacle, which shows the reality of all matters, even if they are far or not clear. But if our love toward one another is decreased, then we will start judging others like the rocks, which obstruct the flow of the river, and threatens our life. **Hatred obliges me and**

convinces me that I wish to see my brother in the worst condition, hence, I see him full of mistakes. But love endures all things and gives excuses for mistakes.

4. Lack of Knowledge: How little are what one knows, and how many are the things he ignores! What little are what one knows from the apparent things, and how many are the hidden things that one ignores! In spite of that, one pretends knowledge in all things. **One of the things that one pretends to know is what is hidden in the hearts, thoughts, and souls!** If St. Paul himself says, "For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him?" (1 Corinthians 2:11) How dare, then, if one condemns his brother not for an action that was committed but for an inner thought that one thinks he might have discovered?

Often one hastens and passes judgment on a specific matter, in one's mind, according to its outward appearance, without even investigating the details. Hence, his judgments become contradicting and away from the truth. Our Lord Jesus has warned us by saying, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." (John 7:24) Hence, when we pass judgment, the words of St. James "become judges with evil thoughts," (St. James 2:4) are fulfilled in us.

Since man sometimes stands perplexed, between himself, as to what the intentions are that pushed him for a specific behavior, so how can one easily judges the behavior of another just from seeing or hearing, without even asking him? Since the Apostle says about the day of judgment, "In the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel" (Romans 2:16), and since no one knows these secrets except God, (Deuteronomy 29:29), how can I dare to pass wrong judgments on others?

5. Forgetting our sins: One of the reasons, which make us easily condemn others, is forgetting our sins, whether the present or past, and not realizing our weaknesses. Looking at our sins create in us humility, holy shyness, and the fear of God. A person, who feels his weaknesses and remembers his sins, who prays with a broken heart, "My sin is ever before me," cannot be occupied with others' sins. One of the Fathers said, "Who will forsake his dead and weeps for the dead of his neighbor?" Man's sin is his dead soul. Many of the Fathers have elaborated that this is an exercise to cure the sin of judging others.

St. Isaiah said, "If you are not occupied with your sins, then you will fall in judging others' sins." One monk asked an elderly monk, "Why do I always condemn others?" The elderly monk answered, "Because you do not know yourself yet. Whoever knows himself, does not look at others' shortcomings, lest you hear what was said to the hypocrite, "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3) When we judge others, we judge ourselves, because we do the same mistakes. St. Paul said, "In whatever you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?" (Romans 2:13)

It was mentioned that St. Moses the Black, who was a murderer and a robber before his conversion, one day was invited to attend a meeting to judge one monk who had sinned. He declined from attending and refused completely to go. The priest came to him saying, "The Fathers are all waiting for you." He rose and took a bag full of holes, filled it with sand, carried it on his back, and went to the meeting. When the Fathers saw him doing that, they asked him, "What are you doing Father?" He answered saying, "These are my sins running behind my back, and I am coming today to condemn my brother's sins?" When they heard this, they forgave the monk who had sinned.

6. Lack of wisdom: A wise person's work is inside him, He is occupied with the Kingdom of God which is - inside, him (Luke 17: 21), and the hidden treasure in his heart (Matthew 13: 44) and the pilgrimage he is walking through lest he goes astray, and the commandment to the holy city which has foundations and whose builder and maker is God. (Hebrews 11: 10). He is occupied with the love of God and the love of others for God. He is occupied with keeping his heart quiet so he may hear the voice of the One Who is knocking at his heart, so he may open to Him and prepare supper. "I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:20) He does not have the time nor the effort to spend in judging others and thinking of their mistakes, for his mind and heart are occupied with much more important and beneficial matters.

The wisdom of a student before his examination is to be wholly concentrating on his studies. Whatever he encounters before his examination, cannot make him forget his studies. In the same manner reacts a wise person in his spiritual life toward the road of virtue. However, an ignorant man reacts contrary to that, for his ignorance darkens his heart and thought. St. John El-Daragy said, "**A wise person contemplates the virtues of others to obtain them for himself, while the ignorant contemplates the vices of others to condemn him for them.**"

7. The Deceit of the Devil: When we speak about the causes for judging others, we have to mention the role of Satan to tempt us to commit this sin. How abundant his tricks are! He puts all his traps so we may fall in that sin. All God's creation is good, but the devil mars the image of your brother in front of you, this image that is according to God's image and likeness. Satan gives you wrong thoughts about your brother. If the devil stumbles you about your brother, do not be sad at your brother, but rather, pour all your wrath on his enemy and yours, who hates love. For where love is, God is there. Ruin the devil's plans and reveal his conspiracies, then he will flee from you, for he cannot find a place in you.

C) WHY SHOULD WE NOT

CONDEMN OTHERS?

1. We are not perfect: A judge has to be perfect. Definitely, this is not one of our qualities, for while my brother is committing one sin, I commit a different kind of sin. In spite of the

difference between my sin and his sin, yet both of them lead to destruction. as two students failing in the same class, but in different subjects. Can one student brag over the other, even if the subject of his failure was easier and less important than the other? One of the Fathers said, **"Do not condemn the sinner, O you weak, lest you become like him a transgressor of the law, for He who said, "Do not commit adultery", said also, "Do not judge others."** St. James said, "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law." (St. James 2: 10, 11)

Even if we do not commit such sins, yet we are all human beings under sin, susceptible to fall in sin like those whom we judge. Even the saints are subject to that, for St. James said about Elijah, who ascended alive to heaven, that he was a man with a nature like ours. (St. James 5:17) It was mentioned that one of the Fathers, when seeing one of his brothers committing sin, used to weep and say, "Since my brother sinned today, that means that the devil is very active, and I am afraid lest I fall tomorrow."

It is worthy to mention that a judge who is perfect in virtue, has to be perfect in knowing the secrets of matters, so that his judgment is correct. Naturally, this is not one of our qualities as human beings, therefore, the Apostle forbids us to judge others. Often, the things we judge are under doubt and hidden from us, and no one knows the truth except God. Whoever dares to judge others, robs God's authority

2. We do not know the end of their lives: We do not know the end of those people who sinned before us and whom we have judged. Maybe, that person whom you judged, have sinned unknowingly, and due to good intentions, God will forgive his sins. Maybe that person whom you judged have repented and God accepted him, yet I die in my sins.

Suppose, you were present during the time of stoning St. Stephen, and have seen St. Paul guarding the clothes of St. Stephen and consenting to his death, what would have been your judgment of St. Paul? Wouldn't you have hastened and said that he was a murderer? But what has happened? A miracle has happened and he became the Great St. Paul. He even said about himself, "Although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and insolent man, but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Timothy 1:13) Has anyone who has seen the first scene, would have thought that he would be changed and became so enthusiastic to spreading Christianity to the extent that he rejoiced in tribulations, chains, and even death for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Suppose you were present when St. Peter took his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the chief priest (Matthew 27:51), what would have been your judgement? Wouldn't you have said that he was a criminal? **How would you have judged him when he denied his Master, cursing and swearing in front of the servants?** Do not hasten in judging him, for after a few moments, after the rooster crowed, he wept bitterly. (Matthew 26:69, 75) The Lord has accepted his repentance and delivered to him the shepherding of his flock, making him equal to the other disciples who have not sinned like him. (John 21:15-17) **Suppose you were present during the time that our Lord Jesus was on earth and have heard about the**

right thief and, his crimes, would you have expected this great fate for him? He was one of the first ones to enter the Paradise after it had been closed for several generations.

St. Efram El-Syriany said, "If you see someone sinning and see him the next day, do not look at him as a sinner, for you do not know whether he has repented and supplicated God with tears." **It was mentioned that St. John the Short**, whenever seeing someone sinning, he would weep bitterly and say, "This man has sinned today, but probably he will repent. However, I may sin tomorrow, and may do not have a chance to repent."

Judging others is God's jurisdiction only. **"Therefore, judge nothing before the time**, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveals the counsels of the hearts, and then each one's praise will come from God." (1 Corinthians 4:5)

3. God commanded us to love one another: The first and greatest commandment is love. What does love do? **Besides the qualities of love that were mentioned, love enlarges the heart, so it may become more enduring. On the contrary, hatred narrows the heart.** St. Paul said, "We, then, who are strong, ought to bear with the scruples of the weak." (Romans 15: 1) "Love endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13:7) This is the power that multiplies our endurance and patience, the fire that burns what the devil plants, and the water that waters the holy branches and makes them grow. **Love, in our spiritual life, is like the digestive system. If it is strong, it can digest very easily everything, which is offered to it even if it was hard to digest. However, if it is weak, it cannot tolerate even the easiest kinds to digest. Love is the tasting sense, whereby we can taste the food and pass a judgment. If this sense is sick, it tastes even the delicious food as bitter.**

Love gives and sacrifices, endures and is patient. It does not think evil nor judges others, but is compassionate toward others and gives excuses. It bandages the wounded. Love is God Himself Who said to the adulterous woman, "Neither do I condemn you." (John 8: 11).

James and John wanted that fire come down from heaven to consume the village of Samaria because it rejected to accept the Lord Jesus. Jesus rebuked them saying, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." (Luke 9:55, 56).

St. Peter denied his Master three times, but Jesus did not rebuke him for his denial when He appeared to him by the sea of Tiberias, but rather delivered to him the shepherding of His flock. Is the reward of the denial shepherding of the flock? But this is love, which covers multitudes of sins.

4. God commanded us to be merciful: God commanded us to be merciful when He said, "Blessed are the merciful for they obtain mercy." (Matthew 5:7) "Therefore, be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not and you shall not be condemned." (Luke 6:36, 37) Have you noticed the chronological analysis in the previous verse: "Be merciful and do not condemn," for the two are related to each other. Definitely, not judging others is related to being merciful.

We do not speak here about mercy, with its specific meaning, which is alms giving, but with its general meaning, which requires a merciful heart toward all God's creation, even to the animals. In the incident of the disciples plucking the ears of the corn on the Sabbath, Jesus said to those who opposed Him, **"If you had known what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless."** (Matthew 12:7) St. James said, "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment." (James 2:13)

A merciful heart does not judge others nor condemn, but heals the wounded and covers the weaknesses of others.

5. Judgment is for God only: A person who judges his brother robs God of one of His rights, which He had not given to anyone. Hence, here comes the seriousness of the sin of judging and how God is extremely annoyed from those who commit it. St. James wrote, "He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of 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 Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?" (James 4:11, 12) St. Paul also said, "Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him (Romans 14:4)

It was mentioned that **St. Isaac El-Tebaysi** judged his brother for a sin that he had committed. When he went outside in the wilderness, an angel appeared to him telling him, "The Lord is telling you where do you want me to throw the soul of your brother you have judged?" Immediately St. Isaac realized his mistake and said, "I have sinned, please forgive me." The angel told him, the Lord has forgiven you, but you have to keep yourself from judging others, for God judges them."

6. To Follow the Example of Jesus Christ Himself: Jesus Christ, who is the Perfect Judge, who has all the judgment and His judgment is just (John 5:22, 30), gave us His life as an example to follow. He did not judge anyone. Even the adulterous woman who was caught in adultery, and the scribes brought her to Jesus to be stoned as Moses commanded them in the Law, Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." (John 8:11) His words were a good practical lesson, which he gave to those who accused her. He said, "He, who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." (John 8:7) He stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger. It was said that He was writing the sins of each one of them. Those who read their sins on the ground, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one. Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (John 8:3-11) The Lord Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, commenting on this incident, "You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. And yet, if I do judge, My judgment is true." (John 8:15,16)

7. To Follow the Example of the Saints: We read in the history books that our Fathers were very cautious from falling into that sin. They lived following the footsteps of the Lord Jesus and commanded their disciples to do the same. Moreover, the Lord Himself, through visions, used to purify them from this sin.

This story about St. John El-Senai was mentioned in the book of "The paradise of the Monks:"

While I was sitting in the wilderness, one of the monks came to me from the monastery. I asked him, "How are the brothers?" He answered, "Through your prayers, everyone is fine." I asked him, "How is that particular brother, who had a bad reputation?" He answered, "Believe me, my Father, he has not repented yet." Hearing this, I said, with criticism, "Too bad." Then I fell asleep and I saw a vision, as if I am standing in front of the Golgotha and Jesus crucified between two robbers.

I approached to worship the Lord Jesus, but Jesus ordered the angels standing by to put me away saying, "This man has robbed the judgment from Me, and has judged his brother before Me judging him." I tried to escape, but my robe was hooked to the door and the door was closed. I left my robe there. When I woke up, I told my brother, "How bad this day on me!" He asked me, "Why, my Father?" I told him what I have seen saying, "I have lost the robe, which is God's cover to me." Since that day, the Father stayed seven years in the wilderness repenting, fasting and praying. Finally, he saw in a dream the Lord giving him another robe. He rejoiced greatly. Three days after this incident, he departed.

D) CONSEQUENCES OF JUDGING OTHERS

1. Eternal Judgment: The Lord Jesus said, "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you." (Matthew 7:2) St. Paul said, "Do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that will escape the judgment of God?" (Romans 2:3)

2. Falling in the Same Sin: Sometimes, God allows the person, who judges others, to fall in the same sin of the person whom he has judged. St. John El-Daragy said, "**You will fall in whatever you judge your brother.**" He also said, "Whoever looks at his brother's sins and judges him, will fall in the same sins." St. Dorotheos said, "Nothing is worse than judging your brother, for evil will dwell in the person who judges. God's grace will forsake the person who condemns his brother, and he will fall in the same sins."

Story: St. John Casian related this story, which proves this point. He said: It happened that one of the brothers who were tempted, went to one of the elders and revealed his thoughts to him. The elder, who was inexperienced, rebuked him saying, "On what do you trust, since your senses are dirty with all these thoughts? Upon hearing this, the brother became so depressed, lost hope in his salvation, left his cell, and went to the world. It happened that he met another elder called St. Apollo. St. Apollo, seeing the brother very troubled, encouraged him saying, "Do not be in despair, for in spite of my old age, I am still tempted with these thoughts. God's

grace will help you. Go back to your cell." The brother obeyed the elder's advice and went back to his cell.

The wise St. Apollo went to the former elder who discouraged the brother and drove him to despair. St. Apollo stood outside the elder's cell and prayed very fervently to God saying, "Please God, do not lead the young brother into temptation anymore, but let this elder fall into the same temptation to learn a lesson, to feel what the strugglers are going through." Finishing his prayer, he saw the devils tempting the elder. The elder could not stand the temptation and left his cell to go to the world.

St. Apollo met him on the way and asked him about his intention. He was so ashamed to answer. St. Apollo told him, "Go back to your cell. From now on, realize your weakness and know that you have not been tempted yet, for you were not able to struggle for one day. What happened to you today is the result of your behavior with the young brother who was tempted." He then prayed that God might deliver him from that temptation.

3. God's Grace Forsakes us: Since judging others is a result of pride, God often allows to chastise us by forsaking us so we may repent.

It was mentioned that two monks were living in fellowship, and each one was able to see God's grace on the other. On a Friday, one of them saw one of the brothers eating in the morning. He criticized him saying, "Do you eat that early on Friday morning?" The following day, his brother did not see God's grace on his face. He was sad and asked him about what had happened. He answered, "I have not done anything wrong nor thought any bad thoughts." He asked him the second time. Finally he mentioned the story of him criticizing the brother who eats on Friday morning. Immediately, he realized his mistake and repented, then God's grace appeared on his face once more.

4. Falling In Other Kinds of Sins: Along with judging others comes pride, evil thinking, getting mad at others, despising them, unholy jealousy and many other sins which defile the heart.

E) GETTING RID OF THE

SIN OF JUDGING

1. Give Excuses to others: Always give excuse to others' actions, which may appear mistaken instead of judging them. When Joseph's brothers tried to apologize to him, he told

them, "Do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life." (Genesis 45:5)

When you see a person sitting during the Divine Liturgy in the church, do not hurry to judge him that he does not respect the house of God, for maybe he is sick with a hidden disease, although outwardly he may appear healthy and strong.

If one time, a friend answers you rudely, say to yourself, 'Maybe my friend is tired or annoyed. How many are the troubles of life!'

If for the first time you met someone and he talked with you in a loud voice, do not hasten to judge that he is a proud person, but maybe this is his nature.

2. Think of other's virtues: Try to find something good in that person whom you judge. There is no such person who is perfect in all his behavior and the details of his life, and no such person who is evil in all his behavior and deeds. For each person have his good qualities. **If the devil tempts you to judge a person for a specific matter, remember his good qualities, then this temptation will be lessened.**

3. Do not think evil: There are three stages:

(a) If this thought to judge others is due to something you have seen or heard: do not think evil, rather think good. An example about this:

A monk, entering another monk's cell and finding it clean and organized, says to himself, "My brother's heart must be clean and organized." If he enters another monk's cell and finds it not organized, he may say to himself, "My brother must be busy in worship that he does not have time to organize his room."

One of the fathers, seeing his brother wearing poor clothes, praises him. When he sees another one wearing good clothes, he may say, "This person is better than me because he wants to hide his virtues, for he is wearing Christ inwardly."

(b) If this thought to judge others is due to an apparent sin committed by one and you cannot justify it, try to know the causes, not to judge him but have a different feeling. Maybe that person has many virtues and God does not want him to fall in vain glory, therefore, God allowed that he falls in that sin so he may feel his weakness and become more acceptable in the sight of God. Do not forget to pray for that person, realizing that you are a person under sin, "considering yourself lest you also be tempted." (Galatians 6: 1)

(c) If this thought to judge others is due to an apparent sin resulting from a non-penitent heart, raise your heart to God by praying and remember that some who attained high degree of holiness and spirituality, have started very differently. On the other hand, some who started good and attained high degrees in their spiritual lives, have fallen in the middle of the road, but then repented and attained high degrees of repentance. Mix that feeling with being cautious, lest you fall.

4. Avoid listening to talks about judging others: Do not give an opportunity to listen to words of judgment from one person against another if the person judging others is your age and level, rebuke him gently telling him that you have more mistakes and that you do not want to hear. If the speaker is older than you and you cannot rebuke him, then be quiet and do not participate in his judgmental talks. Probably he will feel that you are not agreeable with his talk, then he might quit. Anyway, after these kinds of gatherings, clean your ears from judgmental talks.

5. Remember God is covering your sins: ' When we pray the prayer of thanksgiving and say 'For He has covered us," look at yourself and remember how much God has done for you and has compassion on you and has covered your sins. He did not show all your defects and mistakes to others. St. Mar Isaac said, **“Cover the mistakes of the sinner, without rejecting him, so God's mercy may carry you. Help the weak, encourage the young so that His hand which carries all, may carry you.”**

6. Beware of the sin of generalizing: Sometimes we have a tendency to generalize. If we find a good quality in a person, we may hurry and judge that this person is good. Moreover, we may say that he is very good and that no one is better than him. This is the danger when we consider all the behavior of that person, even the ones that are not related to this quality, must be very good also. The reason is that we cannot imagine that any person whom we admire has a deficiency or even one mistake. The contrary is true. If we see a bad quality in a person, we may hurry and judge that this person is evil. Moreover, we may say that he must be very evil and we cannot imagine that this person has other good qualities.

These are judgments by people who have lost good judgment and they judge others on some behavior, which may be good. They may encounter emotional instability and social ills, which lead them to be introvert, or losing their friends. They may deprive themselves from benefiting from the mistakes of the virtuous people or the virtues of the weak. They may even lose confidence in themselves and their personalities and do not know if they are good or bad, for they feel that there are mistakes inside them beside the virtues. They do not realize that this is the nature of a normal person. The discrimination between a good and a bad person lies in the exceeding of the good over the bad, and the tendency of a person to prefer one over the other, and his continuous struggle to progress and reach toward perfection. The goal is not attaining perfection itself. For this reason, the Holy Bible has mentioned the mistakes of the prophets and the saints.