

ANSWER

فَقُولَا لَهُ، قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَى

So speak to him in soft words. May be, he takes to the advice or fears (Allah) [20:44]

COMMENTARY

A vital principle of Prophetic Mission

When ordering Sayyidnā Mūsā *‘alayhis salām* and Sayyidnā Hārūn *‘alayhis salām* to go to Egypt and invite the Pharaoh to the path of righteousness, Allah also enjoined upon them to adopt a soft attitude toward him. **(So speak to him in soft words. May be, he takes to the advice or fears [Allah] - 20:44).** Here an important principle has been enunciated that those who wish to reform people and lead them to a life of virtue should always be gentle and amiable towards their opponents however obstinate and perverse they may be. By such methods alone can they be persuaded to give heed to the message brought to them by the prophets.

The Pharaoh, who claimed to be a god, was also absolutely guilty of the massacre of thousands of Isrā'īlī children just to safeguard his life and his Kingdom. But when Allah sent the two messengers to him, He gave them a guideline, namely that they should talk to him in a gentle and persuasive manner so that he might ponder and reflect on the message which they had brought to him. This guideline was emphasized in spite of the fact that Allah knew that the Pharaoh would never give up his obduracy nor his perverse ways. Here the intention was to bind the prophets to a conduct which might induce people to reflect and ultimately instil the fear of Allah in their hearts.

An unfortunate tendency is in vogue among the scholars of criticizing each other which they regard as a service to Islam. There is a need for curbing this tendency and the true teaching of Islam should be adopted.

TAFSĪR IBN KATHĪR

(And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear (Allah).) This Ayah contains a great lesson. Even though Fir'awn was the most insolent and arrogant of people and Mūsā was the friend of Allah among His creation at that time, Mūsā was still commanded to speak to Fir'awn with mildness and softness. Therefore, their invitation to him was with gentle, soft and easy speech that is used by one who is a close friend. This is so that the message may have more effect on the souls, and so it would have deeper and more beneficial results. This is as Allah, the Exalted, says, **(Invite (mankind) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better.) (16:125)**

(perhaps he may accept admonition or fear (Allah).) This means that perhaps he will recant from

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that which he is in of misguidance and destruction

(or he will fear) meaning that he will become obedient due to fear of Allah. This is as Allah says,
(For such who desires to remember or desires to show his gratitude.) (25:62) Thus, to
remember means to recant from that which is dangerous, and fear means to attain obedience.

