

Prophet Ibrahim
Sura Maryam, verse 46

يَقَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ أَنْتَ عَنْ آلِهَتِي يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ ۖ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ لِلْأَرْجُمَتِكَ ۖ
وَاهْجُرْنِي مَلِيًّا

He said, 'Ibrāhīm.! Are you turning away from my gods? If you do not stop I will stone you. Get away from me for a long while

Commentary

The conversation of Prophet Ibrāhīm. and his uncle Azar now takes a different turn. All this time Ibrahim had been trying to explain to his uncle, with reason and affection. Now it was the uncle's turn to reply. The Quran shows how the two were very different, and their modes of communication also differed accordingly.

The words of Prophet Ibrāhīm. did not affect Azar. Instead they angered him as he perceived it to be a rejection of him and all he believed in. He begins with a question that shows surprise and contempt. How foolish of Ibrahim to reject the idols – that is what the question implies. There are many ways of asking questions;

- 1) The angels asked a question about why God created Adam (2:30). That was to understand. 2) Shaytan asked a question of arrogance (17:61) – why should he bow down to someone he thought was inferior?
- 3) Fira'un asked Prophet Musa who his god was (20:49). He was ridiculing Musa.
- 4) The brothers of Prophet Yusuf ask him if he really is Yusuf (12:90) - a question of wonder and embarrassment.

Note that Azar's question does not include any description of what Ibrāhīm. had said about the idols. He just asks why he is turning away, as though the culprit is Ibrāhīm. himself. He then threatens Ibrahim with the very painful death of stoning. Stoning was also a word used at that time to show contempt for someone and threaten him with painful consequences. If it would be done, other people would also be involved. It would be a punishment of society, meted out to one who rejected their beliefs.

Azar also puts emotional pressure on Ibrāhīm. by asking him to distance himself for a very long time. He does not want anything to do with Ibrāhīm. despite the fact that he was his uncle and they had been living together or had close connections. This was a personal rejection. This verse is also a reassurance to the Prophet who was concerned for his uncle Abu Lahab who did not accept Islam. The story of Ibrāhīm. shows that other Prophets also had family members who rejected them.

These words show the anger of Azar. He is not able to reason with Ibrāhīm. or reply to his accusations. There is no counter argument in his words. Instead he lashes out in anger, declaring physical and emotional animosity. His anger is because of his ego. How can his nephew dare to denounce the gods he has always believed in, and he also made a living from them? Up to this time he had not been aware of Ibrāhīm.'s beliefs and he was taken aback by them. His reaction was very severe.

Scriptures of Ibrahim (Suhufe Ibrahim)

God revealed twenty different scriptures to Ibrāhīm., all consisting of wisdom, moral lessons, and a canon of law that would supersede the law of Nūh. These books came to be known simply as the Scriptures of Abraham. They were revealed to him on the eve of the first of Ramadhan. The following are some of the teachings they contained:

- One with intellect, as long as his intellect is not compromised, should schedule the following times into his daily routine, a time in which he speaks intimately with his Lord; a time when he takes account of himself; a time when he contemplates what God has done to him; and a time when he avails himself privately of his lawful share of God's blessings. This last time is important because it fortifies him to make the best of the other three times and relaxes his mind.

- One with intellect should be insightful with regard to the issues of his times, proactive in his own interests, and mindful of his tongue, for if one considers his words to be part of his deeds, he shall say little more than what concerns him.

No soul shall bear the burden of another. A person only receives the results of his own efforts. And his efforts shall be examined.

(From God's Emissaries Adam to Jesus, by Rizwan Arastu)