

Sūrat al-Hud Verses 32

قَالُوا يَا نُوحُ قَدْ جَادَلْتَنَا فَأَكْثَرْتَ جِدَالَنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

11:32 - They said, ‘O Nuh, you have disputed with us already, and you have disputed with us a lot. Now bring us what you threaten us with, if you are truthful.

Questions for Reflection

- 1) What attitude is reflected in these words of the people?
- 2) How do they describe his preaching?

Commentary

These words of the people to Prophet Nuh (a) show their disrespect for him. They dismiss all his preaching and explaining to them as a dispute. They do not believe in what he has told them and are not afraid of what he warned them about. They don’t want to listen to him anymore and ask him to bring down the punishment he talked about.

Prophet Nuh (a) had struggled for many years, trying to convince them of the truth of belief in One God and the last day. But all those efforts did not bear fruit except for a small group of people who believed in him.

The words of the people show the following qualities;

- a) Rudeness. Despite the soft and caring approach of the Prophet they are not considerate enough to be polite to him. Even when we don’t agree with someone, Islam recommends the use of good and respectful language.
- b) Arrogance. They consider the words of the Prophet to be a dispute with them. They are not able to understand the sincerity and nobility of the Prophet.
- c) Heedlessness. The people are not aware of the true meaning of life and are not willing to think about deeper realities behind human creation. The indulgences in life of this world have put a curtain over their eyes.
- d) Stubbornness. Despite all the words the Prophet said to them, the hearts of the people are sealed against the truth. They do not believe that there will be any punishment that will come down upon them.

The word ‘jidal’ means arguing or explaining a point. It can be used in a positive way when one argues with reason and wisdom. The Quran says; *Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good advice and dispute with them in a manner that is best* (16:125). And it can be negative when it denotes baseless and unreasonable arguments. The Quran says; *Every nation attempted to lay hands on their Messenger and disputed by means of falsehood to refute the truth* (40:5).

Lessons

- 1) Words of people reflect their attitude.

- 2) Even when you don't agree with people, principles of respect and courtesy must be maintained in speaking.
- 3) Arguments can be done positively, with good manners and respect, or negatively with arrogance and stubbornness.

Cross reference verses

- 1) Other verses that show the attitude of the people when they reject Prophet Nuh (a) – 71:5-13.
- 2) Using polite language – 14:24-25, 2:83
- 3) Using negative language – 14:26

Connecting topic

- Power of Words (doc in QA Resources)
- Rights of the Tongue - <https://www.al-islam.org/treatise-rights-risalat-al-huquq-imam-ali-zayn-al-abidin/rights-allah-against-oneself#3-right-tongue>
- Arguing Reasonably - <https://academyofislam.com/reflection-no-507-on-q-1854-arguing-reasonably/>