

## Rhetoric of Prophet Abraham and Prophet Joseph Peace Upon Them

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### Article history

Received :

(18-12-2022)

Revised :

(28-12-2022)

Accepted :

(10-01-2023)

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### ABSTRACT

*Rhetoric of da'wah will determine the success or failure of a "persuade" conveyed by preachers. The use of rhetorical sentences gives an impression of a "falseness" was actually used by Prophet Abraham and Prophet Joseph Peace Upon Them when preaching. This article proves to present one of the rhetorical models spoken by Prophet Abraham and Prophet Joseph Peace Upon Them. The research method used in this research is the library study method. This method was chosen because researchers are more able to explore related texts that contain the rhetoric of the preaching of the prophets. Prophet Abraham gave an example of his rhetoric when he destroyed obedient idols and Prophet Joseph gave an interpretation of dreams. It is this rhetoric that makes debaters or people who are enemies of them aware of the true truth through different ways between prophets from one another due to the conditions of the people of different times and conditions.*

*Keywords: Rhetoric, Da'wah, Prophet Abraham, Joseph*



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## INTRODUCTION

The da'wah (Islamic preaching) movement, which has been one of the strengths of Islam since ancient times, has always experienced dynamics. Da'wah is not only limited as an invitation to get closer to Allah SWT but also invitations to make society get closer to Allah SWT (Abdillah, 2015). This invitation to the community or wider society is sometimes assumed to be a political da'wah movement that can lead to the disagreements among people (Abdurrahman, 2012). The rhetoric of preaching may have political nuances. It is because in the Muslim community, Islamic da'wah cannot be separated from political issues. However, it may lead to certain debates among Muslims or Non-muslims who are against bringing religions to the political spheres. In addition, bringing certain themes such as different perceptions or interpretations of Islam may lead to the conflicts. Thus, it seems important to use certain rhetoric sentences to avoid conflicts that may arise to the disagreements. Da'wah carried out by preachers in Indonesia cannot be separated from the effectiveness of the use of rhetoric. By arranging the forms of speech, choosing the right nuances of word meanings and choosing interesting language styles and aphorisms, it will be easier for speakers to get their messages across and influence the listeners (Putra, 2021; Putra & Hasbiyah, 2020; Wardani, 2018).

Due to the disagreements toward the existences of the use of 'political da'wah' and religious interpretations, the preachers need to use successful rhetoric sentences. The preachers usually use ones shown by Prophet Muhammad SAW or even other prophets as set forth in the Koran. For example, the preachers can use how prophets such as the Prophet Abraham, the Prophet Musa, the Prophet Khidir, the Prophet Yusuf, the Prophet Isa or the prophet Muhammad SAW convey their da'wah.

In this regard, rhetoric can be defined as the ability to give a specific speech style and has been grouped into a scientific field since the 5th century BC (Heryanto, 2013). Rhetoric in Aristotle's view is a combination of language techniques accompanied by conveying emotions that can affect those who listen to them (L'Etang, 2016). The study of rhetoric is closely related to democratization as it allows people to express their opinions and thoughts. On the other hand, Islamic religious rhetoric is carried out

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within the framework of calling, influencing, inviting and directing to the path of Allah in accordance with the rules and principles of da'wah based on revelation (Hasanah, 2020). In Islam, Islamic rhetoric is a combination of the art of communication with Islamic values that include Islamic messages of peace such as tabligh (information), taghyir (social change), khairu ummah (exemplary of the people) and al-karimah (morals) (Bakti & Lecomte, 2015). In this regard, the purpose of this article is to analyze various kinds of da'wah rhetoric that have been exemplified by the prophets in the Koran as a reference for preachers for conveying rhetoric according to the conditions of the society they face.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In order to provide solutions to research questions, the researcher uses a qualitative approach with a literature study approach. Following are the stages of this article: 1) Exploring general ideas about research, 2) seeking information that supports the research topic, 3) Clarifying the research focus and organizing appropriate materials, 4) Searching for and finding data sources in the form of library sources main sources, namely books and articles in scientific journals, 5) Re-organizing materials and concluding notes obtained from data sources, 6) reviewing information that has been analyzed and is appropriate for discussing and answering research problem formulations, 7) Enriching data sources to strengthen data analysis and 8) Compiling research results. The general idea raised in this research is to analyze the rhetoric forms used by the prophets. Then the researcher will analyze scientific journals, books, interpretations and other sources of literature as well as from various interpretations of verses of the Koran related to the rhetoric of the preaching of the prophets.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Da'wah delivered by the preachers has its own challenges or difficulties. These different conditions make the accuracy of the use of da'wah rhetoric very important to know. When referring to da'wah rhetorical literacy according to Al-Qaradawi & Ridlo, (2004), the types of rhetoric written in the Qur'an can be divided into 2 types:

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1. Makkiyah rhetoric. The rhetoric in this section is more focused on polytheists who were hostile to the teachings of monotheism brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The language used in this is firm and tends to be harsh.
  2. Madaniyah rhetoric. The rhetoric in this section tends to be subtle and full of enthusiasm. This section is more about orders and prohibitions, as well as directions to be able to become a real human being.

The method of da'wah in Islamic teachings can generally be divided into wisdom, mau'izhah hasanah, and mujadalah (Q.S An-Nahl: 125). The three methods of preaching do not only apply to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, but also to every prophet and even all humans. Wisdom can be interpreted as the ability possessed by a person to explain Islamic teachings by presenting arguments that can be well received by the person being preached and using language that is easy to understand (Al-Munawar & Fitriana, 2020). The Mau'izhah hasanah is a word that is presented as a guide and advice to everyone based on the Koran (Suparta, 2019). The comparison between wisdom and mau'izhah hasanah lies in the object given the lecture. If wisdom is more directed to the human mind in order to understand the message conveyed, mau'izhah hasanah is more focused on the heart and feelings so that they are aware to act of kindness. It can be said that wisdom is more targeted at the intellectual community, while mau'izhah hasanah is more focused on the common people (Ulhaq, 2020). The mujadalah method is the ultimate method when an argumentative situation cannot be avoided. However, Islamic da'wah is recommended to be conducted politely. This action is in accordance with the sentence written in the Koran "bi allati hiya ahsan" or exchanging views politely. Following are some examples related to the three methods of preaching above which can be seen in the Koran about the preaching of prophets and apostles before the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

### **Prophet Abraham**

Prophet Abraham/Ibrahim, a prophet who was nicknamed "The father of the prophets", began his preaching by observing the behavior of the people around him,

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including his father, which was considered unacceptable by common sense. Idolatry carried out by his people made him look for Allah before he was appointed to be a prophet. The idols that were worshiped by his father and his people at that time were unacceptable to his (rational) sense. For Abraham, idols which were only made of stone, wood are similar to the sun, moon and stars, they were made by Allah. At the peak of his search for the existence of God, Abraham believed that everything but Allah will die.

The stage of da'wah that was started by the Prophet Abraham was by having dialogue and discussing with his father (named Azar) about the existence of idols that were made by God to be worshiped. The dialogue carried out by Prophet Abraham with his father, can actually be categorized as a form of "mau'izah hasanah", namely giving advice to his father to abandon the bad habit that has been passed down for generations to worship idols. The rhetoric conveyed by Prophet Prophet Abraham at this early stage, was only using sentences asking his father about the customs of worship carried out by his father and his people.

The next stage carried out by the Prophet Abraham was to openly criticize the worship procedures of his people, no longer limited to the criticism being conveyed to his father, but also openly conveyed to his people. It is this open condemnation and criticism that becomes a "clue" for the followers of the father of Prophet Abraham, namely Azar, to be able to identify the perpetrators who destroyed the idols in the Kaaba.

Prophet Abraham ravaged the idols and left only one large statue with an ax around its neck. He immediately made his people aware of idol worshipers that it is impossible for this large idol to move and destroy other idols. The "awareness" that idols are inanimate objects and cannot bring benefit or harm is the "wisdom" is one that the Prophet Abraham wanted to give to his people. The dialogue between the Prophet Abraham AS and his father, which is a stage of wisdom as well as mujadalah is found in the Qur'an Surah al-Anbiya verses 56-67.

The mujadalah performed by Prophet Abraham is actually the rhetoric of a question sentence whose meaning was able to make his debating opponent unable to

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answer the question. Following is an example of a question sentence said by the Prophet Abraham:

﴿قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا فَسْأَلُوهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا يَنْطِقُونَ ۖ﴾ (63)

63. . *Abraham replied: "Actually it was the big statue that did it, so ask the idols, if they can speak".*

According to the author of the book *Tafsir Marah Labid*, the answer of the Prophet Abraham was "lying" and did not admit being the perpetrator of destroying the idols in the Kaaba. This is because there is a much better purpose than the sentence expressed by the Prophet Abraham, namely "awareness" that the statue that has been worshiped is an inanimate object. The "awareness" that it is impossible for idols to provide answers to the question of who destroyed other idols, shows that the da'wah that has been conveyed by Prophet Abraham regarding the invitation to leave worshiping idols is true and in accordance with human common sense. For humans who are able to think sanely, of course the events that shocked Mecca at that time would make them turn away from worshiping idols towards worshiping the almighty substance, namely Allah SWT (Al-Jawi, 2014)

Based on the stages of da'wah carried out by Prophet Abraham, if it is to be applied in the present, then the intellectual and emotional level of the preachers must be one of the main assets that must be possessed. Intellectuality in understanding various kinds of rhetoric or sentences which are actually criticism but packaged in the form of question sentences which in turn raises awareness for those who listen to them. In addition, emotional control when preaching is also something that must be considered. The emotions that were regulated precisely by the prophet Abraham AS, when he politely dialogued with his father, and was firm when destroying idols, are proof of perfect emotional control.

### **Prophet Joseph**

Prophet Joseph/Yusuf was one of the children of the Prophet Jacob who became the ancestor of the Israelians (Mahjudin:165). The preaching carried out by the Prophet Joseph can actually be divided into two parts. First, preaching to the people of Egypt,

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including the royal family. Second, the preaching that was carried out against the brothers and sisters of the Prophet Joseph himself.

In the first part of the da'wah, the preaching method delivered by the Prophet Joseph was dominated by wisdom through an interpretation of dreams. The ability to interpret (interpret) dreams is a characteristic of the da'wah of Prophet Joseph. The success of understanding the essence of the dreams of his inmates and the king made Egyptian believed in Allah and free from the dangers of hunger. The method of preaching that was carried out by the Prophet Joseph while in prison was not a method that prioritized the propositions approach or the rewards of heaven and hell. The method used is inviting persuasively with the ability to interpret dreams so that people who listen to them have confidence (Rahem, 2018).

This model of da'wah certainly cannot be carried out by most humans, but must be with the permission of Allah SWT who gives wisdom to the special person he wants. Actions that seem impossible to be accepted by common sense make it a proof of the existence of wisdom. Submission of intentions and objectives that seem unseen is the strength of the Prophet Joseph's method of preaching.

The method of proselytizing the Prophet Joseph in other royal circles is to show the virtue of morality when acting, even in very unpleasant conditions. The accusation of rape that was addressed to the Prophet Joseph did not necessarily generate anger and hatred towards those who had slandered him. Submission to being willing to go to jail is one of the commendable behaviors that not only shows trust in Allah SWT, but also gives a positive message to the king of Egypt.

The attitude of surrender and resignation practiced by the Prophet Joseph does not mean that he does not have confident behavior in preaching. One of them was when the Prophet Joseph was released from prison and felt the need to maximize his preaching through an important position in the Egyptian kingdom. In the Qur'an Surah Yusuf verse 55 it is stated:

قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥٥

55. Yusuf said: "Make me treasurer of the state (Egypt); in fact I am a person who is good at guarding, more knowledgeable".

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Based on this verse, it can be seen that in order to be able to preach optimally, the Prophet Joseph "promoted" himself as the royal treasurer. A confident attitude of behavior reflects the ability and belief in the goals to be achieved when this important position is in their hands.

In the second part of the preaching, namely when preaching to his family, the Prophet Yusuf showed the use of rhetorical sentences that were not commonly used. A different sentence was uttered by the Prophet Joseph when he spoke to Benjamin (his younger brother) and to Yahudza with his other brothers. When speaking to Benjamin, the Prophet Joseph spoke softly and carefully stated that he was his brother who had previously been declared dead by desert wolves. However, the words conveyed to Yahudza and the other brethren were firm and even tended to be flat. One example is as stated in the Qur'an Surah Yusuf verse 70:

﴿فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَّازِهِمْ جَعَلَ السَّقَايَةَ فِي رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيُّهَا الْعَيْرِ إِنَّكُمْ لَسُرُفُونَ ۝٧٠﴾

70. So when they had prepared their food for them, Yusuf put the cup (drinking vessel) into his brother's sack. Then shouted someone who called: "O caravan, actually you are the ones who steal".

The accusation uttered by the Prophet Joseph towards his entourage of brothers actually has almost the same meaning as the words that the prophet Abraham Peace upon him conveyed to his father Azar, which both contain the meaning of "lies". If the Prophet Abraham did not admit to being the person who destroyed the idols, while the Prophet Joseph accused them of fabricating it as if the Yahudza entourage were thieves. Even so, the words of the Prophet Joseph did not include lies because there was benefit in the accusation and there was learning from his brothers who had thrown him into an old well (Al-Jawi, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

Rhetoric is one of the strengths of the preachers. Rhetoric will be influenced by the preachers and the people they face. The rhetoric when conveying wisdom or mau'izah hasanah and exchanging views can be seen from the conveyance of the aims and objectives achieved by Prophet Abraham and Prophet Joseph. Prophet Abraham

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gave a rebuttal as the perpetrator of the destruction of idol. Instead of admitting that he was wrong, he only said that his people were the wrong ones as they did idolatry. It is precisely this rhetoric that can make the debating opponent unable to answer and will be aware of the true truth. While the actions of the Prophet Joseph who interpreted dreams as a method of wisdom through providing information about the future. On the other hand, the accusations of fabrication that the Prophet Joseph conveyed to Yahudza and his entourage were also not lies that were prohibited by SWT, but there was benefit and learning behind it all. The example of rhetoric that was conveyed by the prophet Abraham peace be upon him and also the Prophet Joseph became an additional method of preaching, when conveying wisdom, mau'izah hasanah and mujadalah.

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