

When you are only taking and not giving, this is oppression. You are cheating, and this brings imbalance. To be unfair to people is a sin which Allah hates. The ones who are just will be given victory, even if they are disbelievers. Those who take more than they give are the defrauders.

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said : إنَّ اللَّهَ يُقِيمُ الدَّوْلَةَ الْعَادِلَةَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ كَافِرَةً وَلَا يُقِيمُ الظَّالِمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ مُسْلِمَةً . الدُّنْيَا تَنُوْمُ مَعَ الْعُدْلِ وَالْكُفُرِ وَلَا تَنُوْمُ مَعَ الظَّلْمِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ Allah allows the just state to remain even if it is led by unbelievers, but Allah will not allow the oppressive state to remain even if it is led by Muslims. The world will endure with justice and disbelief, but it will not endure with oppression and Islam (al-Amr bil Ma'ruf 1/29)

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
The companions of the
thicket denied the
messengers
26:176

The story of Shu'ayb عليه السلام is the last one in the Surah, and it wraps up all the others. He was a messenger from the Arabs. He holds the title of خطيب الأنبياء, the scribe of the messengers. He was the most eloquent, after the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم

Shu'ayb عليه السلام gave beautifully worded speeches. This was a positive advantage, eloquence is a favour. Unlike the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, he didn't speak concisely. He used many truthful words. He surrounded the people with his perfect words, cornered them. Words can have a magical effect, specially when they are eloquent, truthful, and spoken for the right purpose and with the correct intention.

When two men who came from the east made a speech and the people were charmed with their eloquence. Upon that, the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said : إنَّ مِنَ الْبَيَانِ سِحْراً Some eloquent speech is as effective as magic. صحيح البخاري ، حديث # 5767

The Messenger of Allah

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : إِنَّ مَدِينَ وَأَصْحَابَ الْأَيْكَةِ أَمْتَانٌ
بَعَثَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِمَا شَعِيبًا النَّبِيًّا
عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allah sent Shu'ayb عليه السلام as the prophet for both the nations of Madyan and the people of Aikah

الراوي : عبد الله بن عمرو | المحدث : ابن كثير | المصدر : البداية والنهاية | الصفحة أو الرقم: 1/178

The highlight of the Surah is eloquence. Poets write and compose eloquent poetry.

Shu'ayb عليه السلام was the only messenger sent to two groups of people, one after the other. أَصْحَابُ الرِّسْلِ and أَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ. The companions of the thicket were calculatingly wicked and greedy. So Allah didn't say أَخْرُوهُمْ for him, although he was from among them. But they were ظالِمٌ, oppressive, and Allah didn't want to connect Shu'ayb عليه السلام with them. This sin is so great. People take it lightly, but cheating is oppression, and Allah doesn't accept it.

They took the money of the people, and did not give back what they promised. They had no mercy or compassion for the people, and Allah described Shu'ayb حَيْمٌ وَدُودٌ as merciful and compassionate. This nation was self absorbed, they only cared about themselves, and they actively cheated the people.

The message of all the messengers is the same, but is specified to suit the messenger and the sin of the people. Each messenger was the most capable to face his people. The nation of Shu'ayb عليه السلام cheated people with their eloquent words, coercing them to give up their money. Their messenger was also the most eloquent.

The main message of da'wah is taqwa. In their case, the taqwa was to guard themselves from cheating the people. This is oppression. Don't climb on people to rise higher. Don't cheat people with a smile to become rich. Taqwa and obedience must go hand in hand.

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : إِنَّ الظَّلْمَ ظُلْمَاتٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
Verily oppression is darknesses on the Day of Resurrection.

صحيح مسلم ، حديث # 2579

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَقَوَّنَ
When Shu'ayb said to them : Will you not fear Allah ؟
إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ
Indeed, I am to you a trustworthy messenger
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونَ
So fear Allah and obey me
وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنَّ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ
ربِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
And I do not ask you for it any payment. My payment is only from the Lord of the worlds
26:177-180

There are 4 ayaat specific for their situation. Shu'ayb عليه السلام explained their sin to them in different ways, covering all kinds of situations. He tried to create more consciousness in them. So taqwa is mentioned three times.

Shu'ayb عليه السلام preached to them not to be unjust to the people. They took their rights in full, but when it was the turn of others, they played around to reduce and deduct from their rights. They would trick the people without them even realizing it.

أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ
Give full measure and do not be of those who cause loss
وَرِنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ
And weigh with an even balance
وَلَا تَبْخُسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْوَذُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ
And do not deprive people of their due and do not commit abuse on earth, spreading corruption
26:181-183

He varied between do and don't do. He started with a positive advice, give full measure. If he said don't cheat the people, this could have been offensive. This makes a balance.

So he said أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ, fulfill the weights and measures. This includes prices, value, and maintaining a standard. Then he goes on - don't be the cause of the loss of others. Taqwa is really needed in this situation. Don't only think of your rights, give others their rights too. This can be with words too.

وَيْلٌ لِلْمُطَغَّفِينَ
Woe to those who give less [than, due]
الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ
يَسْتَوْفِفُونَ

Who, when they take a measure from people, take in full
وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ
But if they give by measure or by weight to them, they cause loss
سُورَةُ الْمُطَفَّفِينَ
83:1-3

Everything with people must be fair. Don't just guess or estimate, measure, write, make a contract. It is important to have everything written, make an effort to organize things. There will be a scale on the Day of Judgement also, and although Allah knows everything, He will still weigh and measure all our deeds. We should also deal with people with justice.

Thanking people for favours is also being fair. Fulfill and give extra if you can. القسطاس is a very sensitive and accurate scale. Think of a precise measurement for gold, or for the carats of a diamond. The most accurate personal scale which you have is your conscience, an innate knowledge of right and wrong. When you do something wrong, you feel so disturbed. Don't ignore this feeling, act upon it. Don't let your emotions come in the way of measuring rights of others, they must be weighed perfectly. You must balance yourself.

Don't undermine the possessions of others. Don't put others down so that you can rise above them, specially in relationships, such as sisters in law, maids with each other, co-wives, etc. Don't spread mischief on earth, don't spread corruption at random. This is cruel and wicked. The truthful message with belief, taqwa and obedience will bring a revolution.

The command of taqwa comes again. Be conscious with your words and actions. But this must be for Allah. Who is Allah? He is the One who created you. He is the One who knows you inside out. He is the One who created the people before you.

When you are dealing with people, you are dealing with Allah. He created the generations before you. Shuayb عليه السلام described them as mountains, people well established and so intelligent. A جبل is something which is above the surface, firm, stable, echoing. The former

وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقْتُمْ وَالْجِبَلَةَ
الْأَوَّلِينَ
And fear He who created you and the former creation
26:184

generations had so much impact. Why are you lowering your standards? People before you were like mountains. You have no reason to cheat. When the poor steals, it is bad, but when the rich steal, it is worse, because there is no excuse.

Their response showed their denial. Again they attacked the messenger, like the previous nations. The one who doesn't want to change will accuse the messenger. Like the Thamud, they said he was bewitched. He was so eloquent and convincing, so they turned around and said you are under a spell. This is easy to say, so that the message can be disregarded.

قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ
They said : You are only of those affected by magic
وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَظُنَّكَ لِنَّ
الْكاذِبِينَ
You are but a man like ourselves, and indeed, we think you are among the liars
فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ
الصَّادِقِينَ
So cause to fall upon us fragments of the sky, if you should be of the truthful
26:185-187

Again like the Thamud, they declared he was a man like them. The Thamud asked for a sign, and they asked for the punishment. Both the nations were at the pinnacle of intelligence. They also accused

him of being a liar. The one who is lying will think that everyone is lying. The one who is cheating will suspect everyone.

They opposed the message, depriving themselves of mercy. They asked for their own destruction, by their own tongue. Look at their confidence. They asked for strange things from the sky, a piece of the sky falling down. They were financial experts, and this made them challenge the messenger, to see what he could do to harm them.

Shu'ayb عليه السلام exempted himself from all complications and burden regarding them. It was not his job to account them, or figure out how their minds worked. When the transgression came to a climax, the messengers left the nations. They didn't want anything to do with them anymore. Now he doesn't say ربكم, your Rabb, he says ربى, my Rabb. It is only about me and my Rabb. When you give the message to others, you are reforming yourself. Don't ever think that you are reforming others.

قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

He said : My Lord is most knowing of what you do
26:188

So he closed the topic, and left everything to Allah. We don't know what is in the thoughts of people. There was nothing left to say when they demanded the punishment for themselves. He focus on their actions, the cheating. Don't emotionally engage yourself with the people, or your message will not go through.

فَخَبَّوْهُ فَأَخْذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظَّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ
كَانَ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ عَظِيمٍ

And they denied him, so the punishment of the day of the black cloud seized them. Indeed, it was the punishment of a terrible day
26:189

They asked for a fragment of the sky falling on them, and their punishment was a day of shade. The punishment seized them, through the shade of a cloud. This cloud and its shade was deceiving.

On a severely hot day, with no shade, the cloud came. One person went under the sheet, and found coolness and delight, so he called everyone to come. When they were all under the shade of the cloud, , fire came out of it, and burnt them all.

All these events are but one sign.

This shows the might of Allah. Whenever needs the guidance, let them come forward, the standard of the message will not be lowered. Your Rabb is Irresistible. Surrender to His might, and He will show you His special mercy.

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةٌ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ

Indeed in that is a sign, but most of them were not to be believers
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ
And indeed, your Lord - He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful
26:190-191