

**PERSUASIVE MISSIONARY ENDEAVOR IN THE STORY OF PROPHET MUSA  
AND FIR'AUN: STUDY OF CHAPTER THAHA VERSE 44**

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**ABSTRACT**

Persuasive da'wah is a da'wah that is carried out in a gentle and warm way. Not all da'i can apply persuasive da'wah to their mad'unya. Some da'i still exist who preach using language that does not touch the heart. This paper aims to find out how persuasive preaching was carried out by the prophets Moses and Aaron against Fir'aun. This paper uses the countenance analysis method, which analyzes the meaning of Surah Thaha, verse 44, of the Qur'an using the theory of persuasive da'wah. The results showed that the Al-Quran Surah Thaha, verse 44, reveals the story of Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron preaching to Pharaoh in a gentle way even though Pharaoh knew that he was a despotic king and disobeyed Allah. The term "qaulan layyina" has a meaning that is gentle, pleasant to hear, touches the heart, and reassures the mind. Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron have done persuasive da'wah with several methods, namely: the association method, integration, payoff, fear-arousing, and icing methods. This was done in the hope that Pharaoh would be touched by his heart and fear Allah so that he would believe in

**Keywords:** *Persuasive Da'wah, Prophet Musa, Fir'aun, Surah Thaha*

**ABSTRAK**

Dakwah persuasif merupakan dakwah yang dilakukan dengan cara lemah lembut dan penuh kehangatan. Tidak semua da'i dapat menerapkan dakwah persuasif kepada mad'unya. Sebagian da'i masih ada yang berdakwah menggunakan bahasa yang tidak menyentuh hati. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana dakwah persuasif yang dilakukan oleh Nabi Musa dan Harun terhadap Fir'aun. Tulisan ini menggunakan metode counten analysis, yaitu menganalisis makna ayat al-Quran surah Thaha ayat 44 dengan menggunakan teori dakwah persusif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Al-Quran surah Thaha ayat 44 menyampaikan kisah Nabi Musa dan Nabi Harun berdakwah kepada Fir'aun dengan cara yang lemah lembut walaupun Fir'aun diketahui bahwa ia adalah sebagai raja yang dhalim dan ingkar kepada Allah. Istilah *qaulan layyina* memiliki makna yang lemah lembut, enak didengar, menyentuh hati dan menentramkan batin. Nabi Musa dan Nabi Harun telah melakukan dakwah persuasif dengan beberapa metode yaitu: metode asosiasi, integrasi, *pay off* dan *fear-arousing* dan metode icing. Hal ini dilakukan dengan harapan Fir'aun tersentuh hatinya dan takut kepada Allah sehingga mau beriman kepada Allah.

**Kata Kunci:** *Da'wah Presuasif, Nabi Musa, Fir'aun, Surah Thaha*

## **A. Introduction**

The Qur'an is the holy book of Muslims that provides guidance to humans in various aspects of life. The Qur'an contains three main elements of teachings that humans must follow: creed, sharia, and morals. In conveying these main teachings, the Qur'an has a unique way. Among other things, the invitation to pay attention to the universe, the questions asked, the promises and threats, and the story of past events that it tells.<sup>1</sup>

In the Qur'an, there are many stories of the past related to the stories of the prophets preaching to their people. Telling several stories in the Qur'an is an appropriate method to convey the rules and teachings of the Qur'an. Each story has a high level of literary acumen. The main purpose of the Qur'anic story is as an "ibrah" (lesson), so the priority in the story is not to mention the place and date of the event. This reinforces the argument that the Qur'an is universal and was revealed not for a particular place and nation but for all mankind. Because the stories told in the Qur'an are stories that really happened, scientists are encouraged to seek the truth behind the past stories told in the Qur'an.<sup>2</sup>

There are three categories of stories in the Qur'an: the first is the story of the prophets, their miracles, the phases of da'wah (missionary endeavor), their opponents, and their followers. such as the stories of Prophet Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, etc. Second, the stories of certain figures, such as Luqmanul Hakim, Qarun, Thaluth, Ashabul Kahfi, etc. Third, events during the Prophet Muhammad Saw's lifetime, such as the battle of Badr, the battle of Uhud, Isra' Mi'raj, and so on.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, the stories of the Qur'an are the real stories, not fiction or fairy tales. Scientists have proven the truth of many Qur'anic stories through scientific research. Among them is the story of Prophet Musa's da'wah to King Fir'aun (Pharaoh).

It is known that among many other stories, the story of Prophet Musa and King Fir'aun is very much told in the Qur'an,<sup>4</sup> namely in Surah al-Baqarah, al-A'raf, Yunus, Thaha, ash-Syu'ara', al-Qasas, and an-Nazi'at. This paper invites readers to investigate the Qur'anic story of Prophet Musa confronted by King Fir'aun in Surah Thaha verse 44. This paper examines the story using a da'wah science approach and analyzes it with persuasive da'wah theory. The purpose of this study is to answer the question of how the application of persuasive da'wah was carried out by Prophet Musa to Fir'aun in Qur'an Surah Thaha Verse 44 (Qur'an Chapter Thaha/20: 44).

## **B. Theoretical Review**

Here are several terms studied in this paper: persuasive *da'wah*, the story of Prophet Musa and Fir'aun, and chapter Thaha.

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<sup>1</sup> Mira Fauziah, 'Istifham Sebagai Metode Dakwah Al-Quran', *Kalam, Jurnal Agama Dan Sosial Humaniora*, 5.1 (2020), 127–48 (p. 128).

<sup>2</sup> Nashrudin Baidan, *Wawasan Baru Ilmu Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), pp. 244–45.

<sup>3</sup> Effendi Effendi, 'Historisitas Kisah Fir'aun Dalam Perspektif Islam', *Al-Adyan: Jurnal Studi Lintas Agama*, 13.1 (2018), 71–96 (p. 74) <<https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsla.v13i1.2944>>.

<sup>4</sup> Moh. Mauluddin, 'Sunnatullah Dalam Kisah Musa Dan Fir'aun', *Al Furqan: Jurnal Ilmu Al Quran Dan Tafsir*, 4.1 (2021), 66–80 (p. 66) <<http://ejournal.iai-tabah.ac.id/index.php/Alfurqon/article/view/638>>.

## **1. Persuasive *Da'wah***

According to Syeikh Ali Mahfudz, *da'wah* means motivating people to perform good deeds, follow instructions, order goodness, and prevent evil so that they can gain happiness in the world and the hereafter. According to Prof. Toha Yahya Omar, MA, *da'wah* is inviting people in a wise way to the right path in accordance with God's commands, for their safety and happiness in the world and the hereafter.<sup>5</sup>

According to the definitions, *da'wah* is an effort to invite mankind to the right path that is pleasing to Allah SWT and to prevent one from actions that are not pleasing to Allah SWT. This is committed in order to gain a happy life in this world and in the hereafter.

The main goal of Islamic *da'wah* is to spread the Islamic faith to people by using specific methods that fit the needs of the *mad'u*.<sup>6</sup> A *da'i* (Islamic missionary) should be able to choose a method that suits the *mad'u* (the target's) situation so that the *da'wah* goals can be accomplished.

Persuasive is derived from the words to persuade, induce, and believe. Persuasion is a psychological activity; the goal is to be able to change attitudes, opinions, or behavior without using threats, violence, strength, power, suppression, blackmail, bribery, terror, intimidation, or boycotts, but with awareness, sympathy, and a full sense of feeling.<sup>7</sup>

Persuasion means to persuade, invite, or entice. Persuasive *da'wah* means an attempt to influence *mad'u* with a psychological approach so that they follow the *da'i*'s invitation with the feeling that they are doing something of their own free will.<sup>8</sup>

Persuasive *da'wah* is an activity to spread Islam by using psychological data and facts from *mad'u* so that people find the truth and awareness that affects their attitudes and behavior and directs them to accept and implement the teachings of Islam. Persuasive *da'wah* is a *da'wah* activity using persuasive communication methods to change, modify, or create a response (attitude or behavior) from the *mad'u*.<sup>9</sup>

In doing persuasive *da'wah*, a *da'i* should equip himself with persuasive theories; hence, their *da'wah* becomes more effective. Basically, the term "persuasive *discourse*" is from persuasive communication theory. To be able to understand persuasive *da'wah*, it is necessary to first understand persuasive communication.

Wahyu Ilahi explains some theories used as the basis of persuasive communication; they can be developed into several methods, as follows: First, the association method, which is the presentation of communication messages by superimposing on an actual or mass-attracting event, Second, there is the integration method, which is the ability to unite the communicator and communicant both verbally and non-verbally. Third, pay-off and fear-arousing methods, namely activities to influence others by describing feeling-encouraging and pleasing things to the communicant or things that give hope or describe bad and

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<sup>5</sup> Samsul Munir Amin, *Ilmu Dakwah*, 2nd edn (Jakarta: AMZAH, 2013), p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Mira Fauziah, 'Konsep Kebaikan Dalam Perspektif Dakwah', *Al-Idarah: Jurnal Manajemen Dan Administrasi Islam*, 3.1 (2019), p. 90 <<https://doi.org/10.22373/al-idarah.v3i1.5130>>.

<sup>7</sup> Amin.

<sup>8</sup> Achmad Mubarak, *Psikologi Dakwah* (Malang: Madani Press, 2014), p. 167.

<sup>9</sup> St Aisyah BM and others, 'BENTUK PENERAPAN DAKWAH PERSUASIF TERHADAP PEMBINAAN EKS PEKERJA SEKS KOMERSIAL DI PANTI SOSIAL KARYA WANITA MATTIRODECENG KOTA MAKASSAR', *Jurnal Diskursus Islam*, 6.1 (2018), 109–34 (p. 114) <<https://doi.org/10.24252/jdi.v6i1.6992>>.

frightening things, Fourth, there is the "icing method," which is to make something beautiful so that it attracts those who receive it.<sup>10</sup>

Da'i should use the above-mentioned methods of association, integration, pay-off, fear-raising, and icing when doing persuasive *da'wah*. This makes the *da'wah* more interesting and gets to the heart of *mad'u*.

Based on the definition by the experts, persuasive *da'wah* is carried out in a very gentle way, persuading and enticing so that *mad'u* are quickly and psychologically affected by da'i. The human soul tends to like softness, warmth, and comfort. *Da'wah* performed in a gentle way, full of warmth and comfort, can be referred to as persuasive *da'wah*.

## **2. The story of Prophet Musa and Fir'aun in the Qur'an**

The story of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and Fir'aun is told in many chapters in the Qur'an. Like other stories, the story of Fir'aun is spread over several chapters, so the *mufassir* (an author of a *tafsir*) needs to make a serious effort to understand the chronology between the various events that occur.

The word "Fir'aun" is mentioned 74 times in 27 different chapters. The scholars of *tafsir* differed in their opinions about who exactly was the Fir'aun living among the contemporaries of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him). Imam al-Qurtubi argued that Fir'aun was the name of certain great kings of Egypt. Fir'aun, who lived at the time of Moses, was named Qaboos. In addition, he argued that Fir'aun was an attribute and not a person's name. In *Tafsir al-Lubab fi 'Ulum al-Kitab*, Ibn Adil explains that the word "fir'aun" means "defiance, resistance, grumbling." Imam al-Suyuti mentioned that Fir'aun is a title.

There are several obstacles among the *mufassir* to understanding the stories in the Qur'an, namely: First, the *mufassir* often understand Qur'anic stories as they read history. Whereas the Qur'an's story should be understood as a religious message as well as for the beauty of its literature. Second, stories in the Qur'an contain religious, moral, and social material. Third, the Qur'an appears to purposefully conceal historical elements of a story, both time and place.<sup>11</sup>

To understand the content of the Qur'an about stories, the *mufassirs* always try to apply the science of *munatsabat al-Qur'an*, the science of *asbabun nuzul*, and so on. However, the results of their interpretations cannot definitely determine the time or place of the event.

If Fir'aun is a trait of a person, then it is likely to be inherited by the next generation. The Fir'aun, who lived at the time of Prophet Moses, was drowned in the sea, and now his body is kept in Egypt. But the people who have the nature of Fir'aun will still be alive today.

The story of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) preaching to Fir'aun is often mentioned repeatedly in several chapters of the Qur'an. The *mufassir* try to put the order of events in a way that makes sense by using themes so that Muslims can understand how the whole story fits together.

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<sup>10</sup> Wahyu Ilahi, *Komunikasi Dakwah* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2010), p. 126.

<sup>11</sup> M. Ahmad Khalafullah, *Al-Quran Bukan Kisah Sejarah: Seni, Sastra Dan Moralitas*, ed. by Zuhairi Misrawi and Anis Maftukhin (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2002), p. 15.

### 3. Chapter of Thaha

Chapter of Thaha is the 20th chapter of the Qur'an. This chapter consists of 135 verses and belongs to the *Makkiyah* chapter group. *Surah Makkiyah* is a chapter revealed by Allah (the most glorious and the most high) to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) before the Prophet migrated to Medina. In chapter 4, Thaha, the story of Prophet Musa facing Fir'aun is told in verses 41–79. In verse 44, Allah commands Prophet Moses and Prophet Harun to confront Fir'aun in a gentle manner. *Fa'quula lahuu qaulan layyinaa*: "Then speak to him (Fir'aun) with gentle words." *Da'wah* scholars then interpreted the term "gentle" as "persuasive."

#### C. Analysis of Persuasive Da'wah Values in the Qur'an, Chapter Thaha 20:44

Allah said in chapter Thaha/20:44:

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ

"And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear (Allah)."

*Speak to him gently*, which means inviting him to believe in Allah and calling him to the truth without arousing his antipathy or anger. Hopefully, he will be reminded of the greatness of Allah and the weakness of the creatures, so that he will be in constant amazement at Allah and fully obey Him, or he will be in constant fear of Him due to his disobedience to Allah.<sup>12</sup>

The sentence *Speak to him gently* becomes the fundamental reason for the importance of a wise attitude in preaching, which is characterized by polite speech that does not hurt the hearts of the *mad'u*. Fir'aun, who was very disobedient to Allah, had to be dealt with in a gentle way, let alone the *mad'u*, who did not commit an act of disobedience like Fir'aun. However, this does not mean that *Da'i* cannot criticize or firmly advise the *mad'u*. In delivering *da'wah*, the *da'i* must pay attention to the way, time, place, and gentle wording, not by cursing or blaming.<sup>13</sup>

The word *la'alla* can be translated as "hopefully," which implies the hope of something happening. "The one who hopes" is not Allah, who is the Greatest and the Most Extensive in His Knowledge. Therefore, there are scholars who understand *la'alla* to mean so that, or that the hope contained in the word leads to humans, namely Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun. In delivering *da'wah* to Fir'aun, Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun instilled in their hearts both hope and optimism that the *da'wah* would benefit Fir'aun.<sup>14</sup>

Allah's command to Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun means that humans should always try and not rely solely on fate. Allah already knew of Fir'aun's rejection of the Prophet Musa's preaching, but Allah still ordered the Prophet Musa to preach because Allah does not impose sanctions and rewards based on His eternal knowledge but based on His knowledge and the reality of human life in the world. In addition, if the command had been implemented

<sup>12</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Quran* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2001), p. 594.

<sup>13</sup> Shihab.

<sup>14</sup> Shihab.

but rejected, then the rejection will be evidence that incriminates the target of *da'wah*, because if there is no *da'wah*, on the Day of Judgment they will say that "we do not know the guidance of Allah because no one has ever conveyed it to us."<sup>15</sup>

In Tafsir al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur, it is stated that Allah commanded Prophet Musa and Harun to "speak to Fir'aun with gentleness, using interesting words so that it will be more effective on his soul." Carry out your duty. Be diligent and fill your chest with hope (optimism) that Fir'aun will realize his mistake or that in him the fear of Allah will arise.<sup>16</sup>

God taught Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun to deal with Fir'aun with smooth words and gentle speech. By facing this way, everyone's hearts will be impressed, and they will welcome the *da'wah* delivered to them.<sup>17</sup>

*Qaulan layyina* means gentle, friendly, a pleasant voice to hear, one who touches the heart, calms the mind, and behaves pleasantly in preaching.<sup>18</sup>

In this verse, there is a persuasive *da'wah* value, namely in the sentences "*then speak to him both of you with gentle words*" and "*hopefully he remembers or fears.*"

The value of persuasive *da'wah* in this verse can be understood from what Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun have done in preaching to Fir'aun. They have done persuasive *da'wah* by using several methods. First, the association method involves inviting Fir'aun to cleanse himself of shirk and repent. Second, the integration method was the way Prophet Musa conveyed God's teachings to Fir'aun with language that really touched the soul, so that Fir'aun realized his mistake. Third, by the method of pay-off and fear-arousing, where the Prophet Musa conveyed God's warning of a painful punishment if he refused to believe in God. Fourth, the icing on the cake is that the Prophet Musa conveyed to Fir'aun that God would forgive his sins if he repented and feared God. But the efforts of Prophet Musa and Harun were obviously rejected by Fir'aun.

In the verse above, the language of *da'wah* delivered to Fir'aun by Prophet Musa was a very soft, comfortable, and soothing language so that it could touch his heart. Thus, it is hoped that Fir'aun can realize his mistakes and feel the fear of Allah's punishment for his disobedience, which, in essence, can awaken Fir'aun to return to the path of Allah and repent. In addition, this sentence contains the explicit meaning that if Fir'aun does not realize it, there will be a punishment that awaits him. There is a threat to Fir'aun, which he realizes.

Although Fir'aun was harsh on Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun, it is still expected to use gentle (persuasive) language to bring Fir'aun to light. Gentle *da'wah* (persuasive) will be remembered in the heart and will welcome the call for *da'wah*.

Allah encouraged Prophet Musa to continuously preach to Fir'aun because he was a great ruler and had a strong influence. If he believed, all his people would believe.<sup>19</sup> Fir'aun, on the other hand, refused to believe until he drowned in the sea at the end of his life. Based on the story of Prophet Musa preaching to Fir'aun, the *da'i* of today are likely to find *mad'u*

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<sup>15</sup> Shihab.

<sup>16</sup> Teungku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqy, *Tafsir Al-Quranul Majid an-Nur*, 3rd edn (Jakarta: Cakrawala Publishing, 2011), p. 44.

<sup>17</sup> Ash-Shiddiqy.

<sup>18</sup> Ahmad Atabik, 'Konsep Komunikasi Dakwah Persuasif Dalam Perspektif Al- Quran', *At-Tabsyir: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, 2.2 (2014), p. 132 <<https://doi.org/10.21043/at-tabsyir.v2i2.499>>.

<sup>19</sup> Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Wasith* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2013), pp. 528–29.

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with the nature of Fir'aun. Therefore, the *da'i* should follow the *da'wah* strategy carried out by the Prophet Musa, preaching in a persuasive way.

#### D. Conclusion

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the Qur'an tells the story of the past related to the prophet and their people as a lesson for mankind. Among the stories of the Qur'an, the story of Prophet Musa preaching to Fir'aun is told in great detail; one of them is in Qur'an chapter Thaha 20:44. It is known that Fir'aun was a very despotic and cruel king and considered himself a god. Nevertheless, this verse contains Allah's command to Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun (peace be upon them) to preach to Fir'aun persuasively, with gentle, smooth, and polite words. People who are very transgressive, like Pharaoh, are faced in a persuasive way in the hope that he and his people will be mindful and fearful of Allah.

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