

# The Verbal Methods (Al-Asālīb Al-Qawliyyah) Used by the Oppressors in Confronting the People of Truth through the Story of Pharaoh in the Holy Qur'an

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.930000049>

Received: 10 December 2025; Accepted: 19 December 2025; Published: 26 December 2025

## ABSTRACT

The conflict between Truth and Falsehood has been perpetual since Allah (SWT) created the Earth and all upon it. Just as the people of Truth have a path, method, and sacrifices, the oppressors, tyrants, and criminals also have their own path, goals, and methods to obstruct and confront the people of Truth. Perhaps the most influential methods are the **verbal ones** used by the oppressors to alienate people from the people of Truth, preventing them from following them, and instead turning them against them.

Due to the obscurity of these methods and people's lack of awareness of their true nature, the researcher undertook this study, which aims to reveal the oppressors' verbal methods, demonstrate their recurrence in our contemporary reality, and measure their impact on people, drawing from the story of Pharaoh in the Holy Qur'an.

The researcher utilized the inductive-tracing method by collecting and intensely reading the verses related to the topic in Pharaoh's story, and understanding them through reference to books of exegesis, language, and relevant literature, in order to deduce these methods. The analytical method was also used for defining terms and explaining difficult vocabulary.

The results showed that Pharaoh confronted Moses (peace be upon him) with various verbal methods to distract people from him. These same verbal methods are used by today's oppressors against the people of Truth; the only difference lies in the modern means (media, social networks) used to deliver them to the public. Furthermore, these methods have a great impact on people, as they create intellectually stagnant societies that cannot distinguish between right and wrong, are deceived by the falsity of these methods, and unconsciously support the oppressors while fighting the people of Truth.

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of this research stems from the ambiguity of these verbal methods to a large segment of society, leading to their deception. This topic is also relevant to our contemporary reality, where oppressors confront the people of Truth with various verbal methods, and it is a rare subject in the Qur'anic library.

### The objectives of this research are:

- To reveal the verbal methods with which Pharaoh confronted Moses.
- To demonstrate the recurrence of these methods in our present era.
- To prove the impact of these methods on people and warn them against being deceived by them.

The methodology in this research consists of following the inductive-tracing method—collecting the verses related to the topic from the story of Pharaoh in the Qur'an, reading them intensely, and understanding them by

referring to books of exegesis, language, and relevant literature, to deduce these methods. The analytical method was also adopted for defining the terms.

**Definition Of Verbal Methods (Ta‘rīf Al-Asālīb Al-Qawliyyah)**

- **Al-Asālīb (Linguistically):** The plural of *uslūb*. It stems from the root "S-L-B" and means method, doctrine, or pattern. It is said, "I followed the *uslūb* (method) of so-and-so in solving the problem." Every person has his *uslūb* in life, meaning his way and doctrine.
- **Al-Uslūb (Terminologically):** It is the verbal form used to express meanings, or the arrangement and composition of speech to convey ideas. *Asālīb Al-Qawl* (Verbal methods) are its diverse arts.
- **Definition of Oppressors' Verbal Methods in Confronting the People of Truth (Conclusion):** They are those communicative ways and diverse arts of speech that the oppressors use in confronting the people of Truth.

**The Verbal Methods Pharaoh Used to Confront Moses (Peace Be Upon Him)**

Pharaoh (may Allah (SWT)'s curse be upon him) confronted Moses (peace be upon him) and his miracles using multiple verbal methods, switching between them to suit the situation, aiming to alienate people from the truth and defame its people. Pharaoh used all possible means, such as closed and open debates, festivals, and enthusiastic speeches, to convey these methods and convince people.

**FIRST: Methods of Distorting Facts and Falsifying Reality**

Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
1) False Claims	A) Claiming Divinity: Claiming to be the only god.	"And Pharaoh said, 'O eminent ones, I have not known for you any god besides me... and indeed,	The accursed one clung only to a false claim, misleading his
Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
		I think he is among the liars.'" (Al-Qaṣaṣ: 38)	people, though he knew Allah (SWT) was his Lord.
	B) Claiming Concern for People's Interests: Feigning concern to justify killing Moses.	"And Pharaoh said, 'Let me kill Moses and let him call upon his Lord. Indeed, I fear that he will change your religion or that he will cause corruption in the land.'" (Ghāfir: 26)	Pharaoh pretended before his entourage that the desire to kill Moses was driven solely by concern for their benefit.
2) Displaying Fairness in Dealing with Others	Inviting Moses to a public, announced debate/contest to show his justice.	"He said, 'Have you come to us to drive us out of our land with your magic, O Moses? (57) Then we will surely bring you magic like it, so appoint between us and you an appointment which neither we nor you will fail, [in] a place [that is] agreeable [to both].' (58)" (Ṭāhā: 57-58)	He displayed fairness and justice to solidify the loyalty of his people.
3) Describing the People of Truth with the Oppressor's Own Attributes	Describing Moses as changing the religion and causing corruption, a quality inherent in Pharaoh himself.	"And Pharaoh said, 'Let me kill Moses... Indeed, I fear that he will change your religion or that he will cause corruption in the land.'" (Ghāfir: 26)	Pharaoh was the corruptor, like the proverb: "She hurled her sickness at me and slipped away." He intended to entrap Moses.

**SECOND: Methods of Distortion/Defamation (Al-Tashwih)**

Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
<b>1) Attaching Accusations (Ilṣāq AlTuhām)</b>	A) Insanity/Madness (AlJunūn): Immediately accusing Moses of madness to nullify the effect of his message.	"He said, 'Indeed, your messenger who has been sent to you is surely mad.'" (Ash-Shu‘arā’: 27)	He accused Moses of madness to remove the effect of his speech, which struck at the core of Pharaoh's political and religious status.
	B) Magic and Charlatanism (As-Sihr wal-Sha'wadhah): Using the prevalence of magic in his time to accuse Moses of using magic for his miracles.	"He said to the eminent ones around him, 'Indeed, this is a knowing magician.'" (Ash-Shu‘arā’: 34)	He accused him of magic to escape his predicament.
	C) Lying (Al-Kidhb): Accusing Moses of lying after failing to refute his clear evidence, exploiting people's natural aversion to liars.	"And indeed, I think he is among the liars." (AlQaṣaṣ: 38)	Pharaoh thus fooled the minds of his ignorant and cowardly people, making them believe there was no god but him and that Moses was a liar.
	D) Conspiracy with Magicians (At-Ta‘āmur ma'a As-Saḥarah): Accusing Moses and the magicians of conspiring to expel the people from their land after the magicians believed in Moses.	"He said, 'You believed in him before I gave you permission. Indeed, this is a plot which you have plotted in the city to expel therefrom its people; but you are	To negate the impact of the magicians' conversion on the people.
<b>Method</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Source Verse</b>	<b>Direction/Commentary</b>
		going to know.'" (AlA‘rāf: 123)	
<b>2) Arousing Doubts and Suspicions</b>	A) Doubting Intention and Purpose: Claiming Moses's true intention was political, to seize their land.	"He wants to expel you from your land by his magic, so what do you order?" (Ash-Shu‘arā’: 35)	The accursed one mentioned expulsion from the land to alienate his people from answering Moses, as the consequence in their minds would be leaving their homes.
	B) Doubting the Religion/Message: Casting doubt on Moses's message by calling him insane, implying his words were irrational.	"He said, 'Indeed, your messenger who has been sent to you is surely mad.'" (Ash-Shu‘arā’: 27)	Pharaoh brought something that would make his people doubt and imagine that what Moses said was not said by rational people.
	C) Doubting the Miracles: Describing Moses's miracles as mere magic, exploiting the fame of magic at that time.	"He said, 'Have you come to us to drive us out of our land with your magic, O Moses?'" (Ṭāhā: 57)	The accursed one called Moses's miracles "magic" to remove the effect of these dazzling miracles from his people's minds.
<b>3) Sarcasm and Mockery</b>	Turning to his entourage and asking them if they were listening, in a manner of ridicule, disbelief, and mockery.	"He said to those around him, 'Do you not listen?'" (Ash-Shu‘arā’: 25)	Pharaoh turned to his entourage, mockingly and disbelievingly, saying: "Do you not wonder what this one is claiming: that you have a god other than me?"

**Third: Methods of Cunning/Treachery (Al-Makr)**

Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
<b>1) Weaving Conspiracies (Hiyakat AlMu'amarāt)</b>	Plotting to kill Moses, which was revealed by a man from the city, warning Moses to flee.	"And a man came from the farthest end of the city, running. He said, 'O Moses, indeed the eminent ones are conspiring against you to kill you, so depart; indeed, I am to you of the sincere advisors.'" (AlQaṣaṣ: 20)	The King, his entourage, and the elite were scheming and setting traps to kill Moses; thus, he advised him to hurry and flee.
<b>2) Resorting to the People of Truth During Crises</b>	Pharaoh and his people would appeal to Moses during afflictions, promising to believe and release the Children of Israel, only to return to their oppression afterward as a deceptive tactic.	"And when the punishment fell upon them, they said, 'O Moses, invoke for us your Lord by what He has promised you. If you remove the punishment from us, we will surely believe you, and we will let with you the Children of Israel.'" (Al-A'rāf: 134)	They intended to trick Moses (peace be upon him) to fulfill their need, then return to their oppression and hostility. The proof is: " <b>But when We removed the affliction from them until a [future] term which they were to attain, then at once they broke their word.</b> " (Al-A'rāf: 135).
Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
<b>3) Concealing Evil Intentions towards the People of Truth (Ibtān Ash-Sharr)</b>	After failing to defeat Moses with arguments, Pharaoh secretly plotted to kill or exile Moses and his followers from Egypt, which Allah (SWT) revealed.	"So he wanted to provoke them from the land, but We drowned him and those with him all together." (Al-Isrā': 103)	Pharaoh wanted to provoke Moses and his people out of Egypt, or to exterminate them by killing, but his plot backfired, and Allah (SWT) drowned him and his people.

**FOURTH: Taking a Corrupt Entourage (Ittikhādh Al-Biṭānah Al-Fāsidah)**

Pharaoh surrounded himself with a corrupt entourage—ministers and courtiers—whom he enriched, and whose purpose was to secure their support against any potential revolt by the Children of Israel. This entourage confronted Moses with various verbal methods:

Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
<b>1) Repeating and Spreading the Oppressor's Words</b>	The entourage immediately echoed Pharaoh's accusation of magic and the intention to expel people from the land, to validate Pharaoh's	Pharaoh's speech: (Ash-Shu'arā': 3435). Entourage's reply: " <b>The eminent ones among the people of Pharaoh said, 'Indeed, this is a knowing magician (109) who wants to</b>	They repeated his exact words so people would think what they said was true.

	statement in the public's eyes.	<b>expel you from your land, so what do you order?' (110)" (Al-A'raf: 109-110)</b>	
<b>2) Offering Solutions and Consultations</b>	The corrupt entourage provided immediate solutions to extricate Pharaoh from predicaments, enabling him to continue confronting Moses.	Pharaoh's question: (Ash-Shu'arā': 3435). Entourage's reply: <b>"They said, 'Postpone [the matter of] him and his brother and send among the cities gatherers (36) who will bring you every knowing magician.' (37)" (Ash-Shu'arā': 36-37)</b>	They immediately offered a solution to remove him from the danger and shock that had shaken his foundations.
<b>3) Incitement/Provocation (Al-Tahrīd)</b>	When Pharaoh was weakened by the magicians' conversion, the corrupt entourage intervened to incite him against Moses and his believers,	<b>"And the eminent ones among the people of Pharaoh said, 'Will you leave Moses and his people to cause corruption in the land and abandon you and</b>	This incitement moved the spirit of vengeance in Pharaoh, and he immediately responded with a tyrannical decision to kill their sons to reassure his followers and demonstrate his strength: <b>"He said, 'We will kill their sons and keep their women alive; and indeed, we</b>
<b>Method</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Source Verse</b>	<b>Direction/Commentary</b>
	stirring his spirit of vengeance.	<b>your gods?" (Al-A'raf: 127)</b>	<b>are conquerors over them." (Al-A'raf: 127).</b>

**FIFTH: Methods of Bargaining and Enticement (Al-Musāwamah wal-Ighrā')**

Pharaoh used bargaining and enticement to win people over to his side against Moses, or to weaken their support for Moses, luring them with worldly rewards and his fading kingdom:

Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
<b>1) Bargaining and Enticement with Money</b>	The magicians bargained for wages before the contest, and Pharaoh, in a state of fear, quickly accepted their request and promised a great reward.	<b>"And the magicians came to Pharaoh. They said, 'Indeed for us is a reward if we are the predominant.' (113) He said, 'Yes...'" (Al-A'raf: 113-114)</b>	He promised and gave them hope that he would give them what they wanted if they defeated Moses.
<b>2) Bargaining and Enticement with Rank and Status</b>	Pharaoh did not stop at payment; he added enticement by promising them closeness to him and a position among his inner circle to encourage them.	<b>"And indeed, you will then be of those brought near [to me]." (Al-A'raf: 114)</b>	He enticed them with financial reward and promised them moral closeness to his heart to encourage their excellence.

<b>3) Enticement with the Oppressor's Own Possessions</b>	Pharaoh boasted of his power, wealth, and temporary rule to deceive the naive masses.	<b>"And Pharaoh called out among his people, saying, 'O my people, does not the kingdom of Egypt belong to me, and these rivers flowing beneath me? Do you not then see?'" (AzZukhruf: 51)</b>	Pharaoh used his splendor and authority to captivate the minds of the simple masses with superficial logic. He knew how to play on the sentiments of these hearts and deceive them with the deceptive, near glitter.
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**SIXTH: Methods of Discouraging Efforts and Breaking Morale**

Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
<b>1) Threats and Warnings (Al-Tahdīd wal-Wa'id)</b>	A) Threat of Imprisonment: Moving from argumentation to threat when unable to refute Moses's argument.	<b>"He said, 'If you take any god besides me, I will surely place you among those imprisoned.'" (Ash-Shu'arā': 29)</b>	Pharaoh felt that Moses had silenced him, so he resorted to threats, which is the habit of tyrants when they cannot counter an argument with an argument.
	B) Threat of Torment and Mutilation: Threatening the believing magicians with amputation and crucifixion to frighten	<b>"He said, 'You believed in him before I gave you permission... (123) I will surely cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides; then I will surely crucify you all.'" (Al-A'rāf: 123-124)</b>	His purpose was to intimidate and terrorize the magicians so they would retract their faith.
Method	Description	Source Verse	Direction/Commentary
	them into abandoning their faith.		
	C) Threat of Killing: Announcing the policy of killing the sons and sparing the women in response to the entourage's incitement.	<b>"He said, 'We will kill their sons and keep their women alive; and indeed, we are conquerors over them.'" (Al-A'rāf: 127)</b>	The speech of Pharaoh's eminent ones is the logic of evil entourages in all eras of tyranny, and Pharaoh's speech is the logic of arrogant tyrants who use physical force to protect their sins, desires, and unjust rule.
<b>2) Causing Despair (Al-Ta'yīs)</b>	Trying to break Moses's morale and weaken his resolve by declaring they would never believe, regardless of the signs he brought.	<b>"And they said, 'Whatever sign you bring us to bewitch us thereby, we will not be believers in you.'" (Al-A'rāf: 132)</b>	Meaning, even if you bring every kind of sign to prove the truth of your call and gently turn us away from our religion, we will not believe you.
<b>3) Breaking Pledges (Nakth Al-Uhūd)</b>	Breaking their solemn promise to believe and release the Children of Israel once the affliction ( <i>Rijz</i> ) was lifted.	<b>"And when the punishment fell upon them, they said, 'O Moses, invoke for us your Lord by what He has promised you. If you remove the punishment from us, we will surely believe you, and we will let with you the Children of Israel.'" (Al-A'rāf: 134)</b>	Their breaking of the covenant destroyed Moses's high morale and shattered his hopes of their faith and the release of the Children of Israel.

**Conclusion of Pharaoh's Confrontation:** By using these methods, Pharaoh was able to alienate people from Moses and sow doubt about him and his miracles. He succeeded in creating a misguided, intellectually stagnant, and fanatically loyal society, which hindered Moses's mission and sustained Pharaoh's dominance.

### Recurrence Of Pharaoh's Verbal Methods in the Contemporary Era

Anyone who contemplates and follows the confrontation of oppressors with the people of Truth in our present era will find that the verbal methods Pharaoh used against Moses are the same methods modern oppressors use today, as if time repeats itself. Today's oppressors have benefited from the oppressors of yesterday, drawing all their methods from their predecessors, foremost among them their master Pharaoh. They appear to have "graduated from his school," confirming that just as disbelief is one nation, oppression is also one nation.

The only difference is that modern oppressors use the latest **media**—visual, audio, and print—as well as **social networking sites**, to confront the people of Truth. Their goal is to convey their verbal methods to the largest possible number of people to create a misguided society that supports falsehood and fights the truth and its people.

### Impact Of the Oppressors' Verbal Methods On People

Contemplating the reality of the situation reveals that these verbal methods have a significant impact on people, especially the general public. Among these effects are:

- **People's Deception (Inkhidā' An-Nās):** People's following and belief in the oppressor indicates the extent of their influence. These methods create a deceived and misguided society that supports falsehood and fights the truth. Pharaoh succeeded in creating such a society, leading his people to perdition. This same model of deception is seen in our contemporary era.
- **Intellectual Stagnation (Al-Taballud Al-Fikrī):** Due to the impact and repetition of these methods, people become intellectually stagnant, meaning they are unable to distinguish between truth and falsehood. This is evident as they did not believe in Moses's miracles, despite seeing them, due to the influence of Pharaoh's methods that cast doubt on their veracity. They continued to follow Pharaoh to the Fire, due to their lack of intellect and dull thinking.
- **Fanaticism/Prejudice (Al-Ta'aṣṣub):** These methods produce a society fanatically loyal to the oppressors, even when the truth is clear. This is demonstrated by the elite urging the people to gather for the contest: "**And it was said to the people, 'Are you [also] gathering (39) that perhaps we may follow the magicians if they are the predominant?' (40)**" (Ash-Shu'arā': 39-40). They did not say: "We follow the truth, whether it is from the magicians or from Moses," because "the subject is on the religion of their king." This indicates their fanaticism for Pharaoh and their refusal to submit to the truth, due to the entrenchment of Pharaoh's methods in their minds.

## CONCLUSION

After a brief explanation that the researcher hopes has achieved the study's objectives, the most important findings are as follows:

1. Oppressors do not rely only on physical methods in confronting the people of Truth; they also use verbal methods to deceive and mislead people and alienate them from the people of Truth.
2. Pharaoh did not rely on a single verbal method but used multiple methods, switching them according to the situation to avoid people's boredom and maximize impact.
3. The most dangerous and frequently used methods by Pharaoh were distorting facts and defamation, due to their speed of influence and the ease with which people are deceived by them.
4. The verbal methods Pharaoh used against Moses are not exclusive to him; they are recurrent and are used in our contemporary era.

5. Oppressors benefit from each other's experiences. Modern oppressors act as if they graduated from Pharaoh's school, having benefited from his method of confronting the people of Truth.
6. Today's oppressors use modern media and social networking sites to spread their verbal poisons among all segments of society.
7. These methods constitute a major obstacle to the people of Truth and hinder their mission by deceiving people.
8. The oppressors' verbal methods are more influential on people than their physical methods because people are quickly convinced, easily digest them, and their true nature remains hidden.
9. These methods produce a society that is deceived, misguided, intellectually stagnant, fanatically loyal to the oppressors, and fights the people of Truth while supporting falsehood.

And praise be to Allah (SWT), Lord of the Worlds.

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