

Islam urges us to use pleasant speech and decent words. Selection of words distinguishes a human being and is a means to achieve Paradise or Hellfire. Countless aḥadīth emphasize the necessity of safeguarding one's tongue, and a number of verses mention the virtues of using good words. Allah 'azza wa jall compares good words to a virtuous tree:

جِئْ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا طَيِّبَةً أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ تُؤْتِي أَكْلَهَا كُلَّ نَفَسٍ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ

“Have you not considered how Allah presents an example, a good word like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches in the sky? It produces its fruit all the time, by permission of its Lord.” (14:24-25)

He 'azza wa jall has ordered the believers to say:

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا “And speak to people good [words].” (2:83)

وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا “And speak to them words of appropriate kindness.” (4:5)

And Allah 'azza wa jall informed us:

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ

“Whoever desires honor – then to Allah belongs all honor. To Him ascends good speech, and righteous work raises it.” (35:10)

While our religion holds good, pure language in high esteem, our youth (and adults) have succumbed to the use of profanity. It is heart-breaking to see even the good children use:

- vulgar jokes
- profanity to emphasize a point
- swear at others
- insult friends as a sign of “friendship”
- use words that contain a demeaning/disparaging tone as a normal way of communication

Allah 'azza wa jall commands us:

سَدِيدًا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا

“O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice.” (33:70)

قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا is defined as:

قَوْلٌ: This is the speech that is released from a person's mouth and reflects his inner self.

سَدِيدًا: indicates shooting an arrow that hits the target without even slightly deviating, i.e. it leaves the bow and goes *straight* to the target.

Concurrently, it means a word/statement that is said without adding anything useless to it. In other words, a speech conveyed in the most cleanly and pure form. It has also been explained as:

“Together it consists of obligatory statements, righteous and beneficial statements, like salutation with salaam, and good words that brings about happiness in the hearts of the believers, and improvement among people.”[\[i\]](#)

What possible benefit, blessings or goodness can using words like damn, flippin', freakin', or other insulting words bring in a believer's life?

Aim for the Stars

We must keep in mind that often we achieve less than what we had originally aimed to achieve. If we only aim for keeping our children from using swear words, the chances are our results will slouch at some point, and they may actually end up using profanity. However, if we try to aim high, and keep away from any insulting words or words that have no beneficial meaning, then even if we achieve less than our goal, inshaAllah they will still be safe from using profanity. And if we achieve our goal then alhamdulillah we definitely, with Allah's help, have raised our children to a higher moral standard and kept them from اللغو.

اللغو: generally means any word/speech that is purposeless, does not bring about any benefit and is considered ill-speech.[\[ii\]](#)

Allah 'azza wa jall told us that the people of Jannah will be safe from اللغو:
اَيَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا

“They will not hear therein ill speech...” (56:25)

Most importantly, Allah 'azza wa jall described those believers who are successful as:
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ

“And they who turn away from ill speech.” (23:3)

Benefits of Pleasant Speech & Good Words

I now conclude with the last part of the verse from Sūrat'l-Aḥzāb. Though Allah commands us to say قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا, He gives us an incentive:

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

“He will [then] amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins.”

The result of using righteous words and pleasant speech leads towards Allah's forgiveness. Allah 'azza wa jall improves and corrects one's action and replaces the bad deeds and forgives one's

sins. This is the reward of those who are mindful of their speech and selective of their words so much so that using insults towards others doesn't suit their personality anymore.

Would we not want our children's actions to be corrected? What wouldn't we give up to get their sins forgiven by Ar- Raḥmān? What wouldn't we do to have Allah Himself, 'azza wa jall, monitor their actions?

Knowing the blessings and excellence of clean language should only makes us more fervent to instill the habit of using good words and eliminating any foul/insulting words from their daily language. Hence, I urge parents to carefully monitor the selection of their children's words and their own words at home.

May Allah 'azza wa jall give us and our children tawfīq to use سَدِيدًا قَوْلًا.