

With the Noble Quran

The Book (الكتاب Al-Kitab), the Balance (الميزان Al-Meezan), and the Hour (الساعة As-Saa'ah)

(Translated)

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Allah (swt) says, ﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ﴾ **“It is Allah Who has sent down the Book in truth and the Balance. And what will make you know? Perhaps the Hour is near”** [TMQ Surah Ash-Shura: 17]

This noble verse consists of two sentences. The first informs us of Allah's (swt) sending down the Book with the truth and His sending down the Balance. The second sentence indicates the nearness of the Hour, that is, the Last Day.

The Book referred to here is the Noble Quran, although it is possible that it refers to all the heavenly books, in which case the word “Book” would be a generic term (اسم جنس ism jins). The revelation of the Book from Allah (swt) to His Messenger (saw) was in truth. In linguistics (لغة lughah), truth (حق haqq) means soundness, certainty, and veracity. In terminology (اصطلاح istilaah), it means conformity (موافقة muwaafiqah) and correspondence (مطابقة mutabiqah), that is, believing something to be true in accordance with its actual state. Therefore, the revelation of the Noble Quran from Allah (swt) is true and verified, as He (swt) said, ﴿لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ﴾ **“But Allah (swt) bears witness to that which He has revealed to you. He has revealed it with His knowledge, and the angels bear witness to that. And sufficient is Allah (swt) as Witness”** [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa: 166]. Everything in the Noble Quran is in accordance with Allah (swt)'s Divine Intent and conforms to what is best for humankind in this life and the Hereafter.

The verse connects the Balance (الميزان Al-Meezan) to the Book (الكتاب Al-Kitab), meaning: Allah (swt) is the One who revealed the Book in truth, and Allah (swt) is the one who revealed the Balance. Allah (swt) combined in the revelation the Book and the Balance that it contains, so they are one matter. The Book contains the Balance, and the Balance was specifically mentioned because of its importance in regulating the worldly life of people and the afterlife. Perhaps it is the most important matter for which the Book was revealed, and that is why the connection came with the conjunction “and” (عطف الجزء على الكل) “which connects the part to the whole.”

The meaning of the Balance is justice, as Ibn Abbas and most of the commentators said, and as Al-Qurtubi reported. Ibn Ashur says in Al-Tahrir wa Al-Tanwir (التحرير والتنوير The Liberation and the Illumination), ﴿والميزان هنا مراد به العدل؛ مثل الذي في قوله تعالى: ﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ﴾ [سورة الحديد/25]؛ لأنه الذي وضعه الله؛ أي: عينه لإقامة نظام الخلق) “The balance here is meant by it justice, like that in the Almighty's saying, **“And We sent down with them the Scripture and the Balance”** [TMQ Surat Al-Hadid: 25], because it is what Allah (swt) established. That is, He appointed it to establish the order of creation...” The Book that Allah (swt) revealed in truth contains the Balance that He intended people to follow. This includes the Balance of thoughts and

concepts, the Balance of the soul and its inclinations, and the Balance of actions and behavior, so that all may be governed by justice and uprightness on the straight path.

People cannot do without balance in their transactions of buying and selling. They use the pound for weight, the saa' for volume, and the number for counting. They need precision in expressing temperature, humidity, and pressure, and they use the meter for measuring objects. They cannot do without balance in various sciences such as physics, chemistry, medicine, and mathematics. If this is the case with tangible, physical things, then it is even more so that they need balance to judge thoughts, concepts, inclinations, and behavior. However, they are incapable of establishing a balance for them. Therefore, Allah (swt) revealed his standards in His Book, and His Messenger (saw) explained them. This meaning is also evidenced by His saying, **“Indeed, Allah (swt) has revealed the scales for these things in His Book and explained them to His Messenger (saw). We sent Our messengers with clear evidences and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance so that mankind may uphold justice”** [TMQ Surat Al-Hadid: 25]. The Shariah reasoning (تعليل ta'leel) is provided by the preposition “li” (for), meaning so that mankind may uphold justice, that is, fairness. Mankind cannot uphold justice unless their thoughts, concepts, inclinations, and behavior are upright. All of this was explained in the books that Allah (swt) revealed to His Messengers (as). Similarly, the meaning of the balance is found in His saying, **“And the heaven He raised and established the balance”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Rahman: 7].

As for the second phrase in the noble verse we are discussing today, it indicates the nearness of the Hour. Allah (swt) addressed His noble Messenger (saw), with a rhetorical question implying affirmation. That is, evidencing that the Messenger (saw) does not know the time of the Hour, and the principle is (خطاب الله سبحانه لرسوله ﷺ هو خطاب) “Allah (swt)’s address to His Messenger ﷺ is an address to his Ummah unless there is contextualization evidencing that it is specific to him,” and here there is no evidence. So, if the Messenger (saw) does not know the time of the Hour, then the rest of the people are ignorant of its time all the more so.

The word (لعلّ) “perhaps” linguistically generally expresses hope for the occurrence of a matter that follows it. However, when related to Allah (swt), it signifies certainty and obligation. This was stated by al-Zajaj in his (معاني القرآن وإعرابه) “Meanings of the Qur'an and its Grammar” (2/367) and by Ibn Faris in his (معجم مقاييس اللغة) “Dictionary of Language Standards” (4/317). This is also the view of linguists and Quranic interpreters (مفسرون mufasssiroon). That is, there is no doubt that the Hour is near. This is a statement from Allah (swt), the Knower of the Unseen and the seen, affirming the imminence of the Hour’s arrival with certainty and compulsion.

The verse uses the word “near” (قريب qareeb) in the masculine form, rather than the feminine form “near” (قريبة qareebah) for two reasons. First, the feminine form of the Hour is metaphorical (مجازي majaazi), not literal. Second, the statement refers to the time of the Hour, implying the literary style of word omission, such as “Perhaps the time of the Hour is near” or “Perhaps the appointment of the Hour is near.” Further confirming that the statement refers to the appointed time of the Hour and not its occurrence alone is the following: The verse that immediately follows it is, **﴿يَسْتَعْجِلُ بِهَا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مُشْفِقُونَ مِنْهَا وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهَا الْحَقُّ أَلَا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُمَارُونَ فِي السَّاعَةِ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ﴾** “Those who do not believe in it seek to hasten it, while those who believe are fearful of it and know that it is the truth. Unquestionably, those who dispute

concerning the Hour are in extreme error” [TMQ Surah Ash-Shura: 18]. Those who do not believe in it seek to hasten its occurrence, its time, and its appointed time. However, those who believe are certain of its occurrence and fear it. Those who dispute its occurrence are in extreme error. It is undoubtedly an event, a coming, and near, because everything that is coming is near, as the saying goes.

In summary, we say: The noble verse began with the name of Allah (swt), the Obligatorily Existent (واجب الوجود waajib ul-wujood), Who is before this worldly life, and informed us of His sending down the Book with truth and His sending down the Balance. Both the Book and the Balance contain the connection of commands and prohibitions with Allah (swt), which is the connection of this worldly life with what came before it. Then it followed with an evidencing of the nearness of the Hour, so that the connection of commands and prohibitions with what comes after this worldly life, which is the Last Day, would be completed, so that the connection of reward and punishment after the resurrection and gathering would be established for adhering to those commands and prohibitions. Thus, this short verse came expressing the solution to the great dilemma for man, which are the three questions: Where did I come from? Why? And where am I going? The correct answer, in accordance with human nature and convincing to the mind, was the comprehensive idea of the universe, humanity, and life, and of their relationship to what came before them, and their relationship to what comes after them. What came before this worldly life is Allah (swt), and what comes after it is the Hereafter. The connection to what came before this worldly life is twofold: the connection of creation and bringing into existence from nothing, and the connection of commands and prohibitions. The connection to what comes after this worldly life is the connection of Allah (swt) holding people accountable for their adherence to the commands and prohibitions. Thus, this comprehensive idea, which resolves the major dilemma for humanity, becomes the basis for its advancement, and becomes the rational belief from which the system emanates; that is, the ideology. It becomes the intellectual leadership that determines humanity's course in life, and determines its viewpoint, its highest ideals, its concepts of this worldly life, its view of happiness, and its civilization, which is the distinctive style of living. It blends its inclinations with its correct concepts, so that its emotional disposition is shaped by what its mentality is shaped by; thus, its distinctive Islamic personality is formed, which makes its goal the pleasure of Allah (swt). Society is shaped by Islamic thought, Islamic sentiments, and Islamic systems, thus becoming, in principle, a fully-fledged embodiment of Islam and a bearer of its Risaalah message to all people.

We ask Allah (swt) to guide us to the right path, to grant us power on earth so that we and all people may establish justice by implementing His Book and His Balance, and to enable us to carry this Risaalah message to all people, to bring them happiness and lead them from darkness to light, from the worship of created beings to the worship of the Lord of all beings.