

Asad's translation: 57:25 Indeed, [even aforetime] did We send forth Our apostles with all evidence of [this] truth; and through them 41 We bestowed revelation from on high, and [thus gave you] a balance [wherewith to weigh right and wrong], **so that men might behave with equity**; and **We bestowed [upon you] from on high [the ability to make use of] iron**, in which there is awesome power as well as [a source of] benefits for man: 42 and [all this was given to you] so that God might mark out those who would stand up for him and His Apostle, 43 even though He [Himself] is beyond the reach of human perception. 44 Verily, God is powerful, almighty!

The Quran's Text & Yusuf Ali's Translation:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ
بِالْقِسْطِ...^{up}

57: 25. We sent aforetime our messengers with Clear Signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of Right and Wrong), that men may stand forth in justice;

...وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ ...

and We sent down Iron, [["Sent down":
anzala]]

... فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ ...

in which is (material for) mighty war, as well as many benefits for mankind,

...وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ...

that God may test who it is that will help, unseen Him and His messengers;

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ (٢٥)

for God is Full of Strength, exalted in Might (and able to enforce His will).

Edip Yuksel's Translation

Iron: an Important Metal

57:25 We have sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and We sent down with them the

book and the balance, that the people may uphold justice. We sent down the iron, wherein there is great strength, and many benefits for the people. So that **God** would distinguish those who would support **Him and His messengers** on acknowledgement. **God** is Powerful, Noble.*

Muhammad Pickthall's Translation:

57: 25 We verily sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance, that mankind may observe right measure; and He revealed iron, wherein is mighty power and (many) uses for mankind, and that Allah may know him who helpeth Him and His messengers, though unseen. Lo! Allah is Strong, Almighty.

Asad's comments:

41 Lit., "with them".

42 Side by side with enabling man to discriminate between right and wrong (which is the innermost purpose of all divine revelation), God has endowed him with the ability to convert to his use the natural resources of his earthly environment. An outstanding symbol of this ability is man's skill, unique among all animated beings, in making tools; and the primary material for all tool-making - and, indeed, for all human technology - is iron: the one metal which is found abundantly on earth, and which can be utilized for beneficial as well as destructive ends.

The "awesome power" (ba's shadid) inherent in iron manifests itself not merely in the manufacture of weapons of war but also, more subtly, in man's every-growing tendency to foster the development of an increasingly complicated technology which places the machine in the foreground of all human existence and which, by its inherent - almost irresistible - dynamism, gradually estranges man from all inner connection with nature. This process of ing mechanization, so evident in our modern life, jeopardizes the very structure of human society and, thus, contributes to a gradual dissolution of all moral and spiritual perceptions epitomized in the concept of "divine guidance". It is to warn man of this danger that the Qur'an stresses - symbolically and metonymically - the potential evil (ba's) of "iron" if it is put to wrong use: in other words, the danger of man's allowing his technological ingenuity to run wild and thus to overwhelm his spiritual consciousness and, ultimately, to destroy all possibility of individual and social happiness.

43 Lit., "those who succour Him and His Apostle", i.e., those who stand up for the cause of God and His Apostle. The meaning is that only they who put God's spiritual and material gifts to right use can be described as "true believers".

44 See note 3 on 2:3.

Ali's comments:

5318. Cf. 22:40 and n. 2818. "Strength" is specific: Power or Might is more abstract, the ability to enforce what is willed.

5313. Three things are mentioned as gifts of Allah. In concrete terms they are;

- the Book,
- the Balance, and
- Iron,

which stand as emblems of three things which hold society together, viz.

- Revelation, which commands Good and forbids Evil;
- Justice, which gives to each person his due;
- and the strong arm of the Law, which maintains sanctions for evil-doers.

For Balance, see also 42:17, and n. 4550.

5314. "Sent down": anzala:

in the sense of revealed to man the use of certain things, created in him the capacity of understanding and using them: cf. 39:6: "sent down for you eight head of cattle in pairs".

5315. Iron: the most useful metal known to man. Out of it is made steel, and from steel and iron are made implements of war, such as swords, spears, guns, etc., as well as instruments of peace, such as ploughshares, bricklayers' trowels, architects' and engineers' instruments, etc.

Iron stands as the emblem of Strength, Power, Discipline, Law's sanctions, etc. Iron and steel industries have also been the foundation of the prosperity and power of modern manufacturing nations'. (R).

5316. In 21:49, I have translated "in their most secret thoughts" for the more literal "unseen" (bilgaibi). Perhaps the more literal "unseen" may do if understood in the adverbial sense; as explained in 35:18, n. 3902. The sincere man will help the Cause, whether he is seen or brought under notice or not.

5317. To help Allah and His messengers is to help their Cause. It is to give men an opportunity of striving and fighting for His Cause and proving their true mettle, for thus is their spirit tested.

As explained in the next line, Allah in Himself is Full of Strength, Exalted in Power, and Able to enforce His Will, and He has no need of others' assistance.