

## ANSWER

وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

*And give the measure and the weight to the full in all fairness - We do not obligate anyone beyond his capacity [6:152]*

## COMMENTARY

The [command] in this verse is to give full weight and full measure in all fairness. The word: (*bi al-qist*) translated as 'in all fairness,' applies to a transaction in which the giver does not decrease anything from what is due to be received by the other party - and the receiver does not take anything more than what is due to come to him from the giver (Rūh al-Ma'ānī).

Weighing and measuring short in common give and take of things has been sternly forbidden by the Qur'ān. Severe warning to those who do that appears in Sūrah Al-Mutaffifīn (83).

Commentator of the Qur'ān, Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radi'allāhu 'anhu* reports that, addressing those who weigh and measure in business, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: *Weighing and measuring is a line of duty being unfair in which has caused many communities before you to be destroyed by Divine punishment (so, be fully cautious in this matter)*. (Tafsīr ibn Kathīr)

### Officials and Workers who fall short in Set Duties come under this Qur'ānic Ruling

It should be borne in mind that weighing and measuring short called "*Tatfif*" in the Qur'ān is not simply restricted to weighing short and measuring less. In fact, falling short in giving the other person his right is also included under "*Tatfif*" as illustrated by a report from Sayyidnā 'Umar *radi'allāhu 'anhu* appearing in the Mu'atta' of Imām Mālik. When Sayyidnā 'Umar noticed someone making the required movements of his Salah short, he said: 'You made 'Tatfif,' meaning thereby that he did not fulfill the right of Salāh as it was due and obligatory. After having reported this incident, Imām Mālik says: that is, giving the full measure due, and giving short of it, applies to everything, and not in weights and measures only.

This tells us that an employee who does not discharge his duties as required, steals time or delays work; and a wage earner who falls short in delivering the service agreed to; and for that matter anyone - a minister of government or his peon, an assistant in an office, or a scholar or religious worker - shall all be included under the Qur'ānic term, "*Al-Mutaffifīn*," if they fall short in fulfilling the right of others due against them.

After that, it was said: (**We do not obligate anyone beyond his capacity**). In some narrations of Hadīth, it has been explained as a hint of exception, that is, a person who does everything possible within his control to give full consideration to the need of giving full weight and measure as due and,



in case, some insignificant increase or decrease takes place inadvertently, then, that would stand excused because that is beyond his power and control.

According to Tafsīr Mazharī, the addition of this sentence in between indicates that it is better to give a little more while fulfilling what is due so that there remains no doubt of being short in giving - as it was when the Holy Prophet ﷺ, on a similar occasion, ordered a person weighing: (*ẓin wa arjib*) that is, 'weigh and be liberal' (literally, weigh and tilt the balance in favour of the receiver). (Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, and Tirmidhī following a narration of Sayyidnā Suwayd ibn Qaiys).

**End.**

