

نَصُّ شِعْرِي

Poetry text

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ السَّيْفَ يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ
إِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ السَّيْفَ أَمْضَى مِنَ الْعَصَا



Don't you think

That the value of the sword diminishes (is reduced)

If it is said

That a sword is sharper than a walking stick ?



Lexical & Grammatical Notes



أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ السَّيْفَ يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ...

- نَقَصَ نَقْصًا، وَنُقِصَانًا (a-u), to diminish, to reduce; to be diminished, to be reduced.
- As you can see from the meaning that the verb is used both transitively, and intransitively.

In the Glorious Qur'aan it is used transitively as in the following *ayah*:

﴿وَلَا تَنْقُصُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيزَانَ...﴾ 

And do not diminish the measure and the balance. (Q11:84).

- It may take two objects as in the following *ayah*:

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنْقُصُوكُمْ شَيْئًا﴾ 

Except those idolaters with whom you made a treaty, and they have not been deficient towards you in anything ... (Q9:4).

But in the poetic line it is used intransitively in the sense of 'diminishes'.

- In: **أَنَّ السَّيْفَ يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ**, the verbal sentence **يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ** is the *khabar* of **أَنَّ**, and therefore, it is **فِي مَحَلِّ رَفْعٍ**.



...إِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ السَّيْفَ أَمْضَى مِنَ الْعَصَا

- **أَمْضَى** is the *ism al-tafDiil* of **مَاضٍ** which is the *ism al-faa'il* of **مَضَى يَمْضِي مَضَاءً** (a-i).

One of the meanings of this verb is *to be very sharp*.

- Note that both **أَمْضَى** and **الْعَصَا** are *maqSuur* nouns, and therefore, the case-endings do not appear in them.
- **أَمْضَى** is *khabar* of **إِنَّ** and therefore, it is **مَرْفُوعٌ**, and **الْعَصَا** is **مَجْرُورٌ** because it is preceded by a **حَرْفُ جَرٍّ**.

This proverb warns us against comparing a thing with something not worthy of comparison.

