

## Sūrah 35: Fātir

### Period of Revelation

The internal evidence of the style shows that the period of the revelation of this Sūrah is probably the middle Makkan period when antagonism had grown quite strong so every sort of mischief was being adopted to frustrate the mission of the Prophet.

### Subject Matter and Theme

The discourse is meant to warn and reprove the people of Makkah and their chiefs for their antagonistic attitude that they had then adopted towards the Prophet's message of Tawhid (Oneness of God) like a well wisher and also to admonish them like a teacher as if to say: "O foolish people the way to which this Prophet is calling you is to your own advantage. Your anger, your tricks, plotting against it and your conspiracies and designs to frustrate it are not directed against him but against your own selves. If you do not listen to him you will be harming your own selves not him. Just consider and ponder over what he says: there is nothing wrong in it. He repudiates shirk. If you look around carefully you will yourself realize that there is no basis for shirk in the world. He presents the doctrine of Tawhid. If you use your common sense you will come to the conclusion that there is no being beside God, the Creator of the Universe which might possess divine attributes, powers and authority. He tells you that you have not been created to be irresponsible in this world but you have to render an account of your deeds before your God and that there is life after the life of this world when everyone will meet the consequences of what he has done here. If you think a little you will see that your doubts and your astonishment about it are absolutely baseless. Don't you see the phenomenon of the creation of day and night. How can then your own recreation be impossible for that God Who created you from an insignificant sperm drop? Doesn't your own intellect testify that the good and the evil cannot be alike? Then think and judge for yourselves as to what is reasonable: should the good and the evil meet with the same fate and end up in the dust or should the good be requited with good and the evil with evil? Now, if you do not admit and acknowledge these rational and reasonable things and do not abandon your false gods and wish to continue living only as irresponsible people in the world the Prophet will not lose anything. It is you yourselves only who will suffer the consequences. The Prophet's only responsibility was to make the truth plain to you which he has done."

In this connection the Prophet has been consoled again and again as if to say: "When you are doing full justice to the preaching of your mission you do not incur any responsibility for those who persist in their error and do not accept and follow the right way." Furthermore he has also been consoled to the effect "You should neither grieve on account of those who do not want to believe nor consume yourself with the thought of how to bring them to the right path. Instead of this you should pay your full attention to those who are inclined to listen to you."

The believers also in this connection have been given the good news so that they may feel strengthened, encouraged and remain steadfast on the path of the truth with full faith in the promises made by God.

**Sūrah 35: Fātir**<sup>1162</sup>

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate,  
the Most Merciful

1. [All] praise is [due] to God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, [who] made the angels messengers having wings, two or three or four. He increases in creation what He wills. Indeed, God is over all things competent.
2. Whatever God grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.
3. O mankind, remember the favor of God upon you. Is there any creator other than God who provides for you from the heaven and earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are you deluded?
4. And if they deny you, [O Muhammad] - already were messengers denied before you. And to God are returned [all] matters.
5. O mankind, indeed the promise of God is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about God by the Deceiver [i.e., Satan].
6. Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze.
7. Those who disbelieve will have a severe punishment, and those who believe and do righteous deeds will have forgiveness and great reward.
8. Then is one to whom the evil of his deed has been made attractive so he considers it good [like one rightly guided]? For indeed, God sends astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. So do not let yourself perish over them in regret. Indeed, God is Knowing of what they do.
9. And it is God who sends the winds, and they stir the clouds, and We drive them to a dead land and give life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness. Thus is the resurrection.
10. Whoever desires honour [through power] - then to God belongs all honour.<sup>1163</sup> To Him ascends good speech, and righteous work raises it.<sup>1164</sup> But they who plot evil deeds will have a severe punishment, and the plotting of those - it will perish.
11. And God created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop; then He made you mates. And no female conceives nor does she give birth except with His knowledge. And no aged person is granted [additional] life nor is his lifespan lessened but that it is in a register. Indeed, that for God is easy.
12. And not alike are the two seas [i.e., bodies of water]. One is fresh and sweet, palatable for drinking, and one is salty and bitter. And from each you eat tender meat and extract ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships plowing through [them] that you might seek

<sup>1162</sup> *Fātir*: The Creator, Originator (of creation), or He who brings (it) into existence from nothing. Also called *al-Malā'ikah* (The Angels).

<sup>1163</sup> See footnote to 4:139.

<sup>1164</sup> For acceptance by God, meaning that righteous deeds are confirmation and proof of what is uttered by the tongue.

- of His bounty; and perhaps you will be grateful.
13. He causes the night to enter the day, and He causes the day to enter the night and has subjected the sun and the moon - each running [its course] for a specified term. That is God, your Lord; to Him belongs sovereignty. And those whom you invoke other than Him do not possess [as much as] the membrane of a date seed.
14. If you invoke them, they do not hear your supplication; and if they heard, they would not respond to you. And on the Day of Resurrection they will deny your association.<sup>1165</sup> And none can inform you like [one] Acquainted [with all matters].
15. O mankind, you are those in need of God, while God is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy.
16. If He wills, He can do away with you and bring forth a new creation.
17. And that is for God not difficult.
18. And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. And if a heavily laden soul calls [another] to [carry some of] its load, nothing of it will be carried, even if he should be a close relative. You can only warn those who fear their Lord unseen and have established prayer. And whoever purifies himself only purifies himself for [the benefit of] his soul. And to God is the [final] destination.
19. Not equal are the blind and the seeing,
20. Nor are the darknesses and the light,
21. Nor are the shade and the heat,<sup>1166</sup>
22. And not equal are the living and the dead. Indeed, God causes to hear whom He wills, but you cannot make hear those in the graves.<sup>1167</sup>
23. You, [O Muhammad], are not but a warner.
24. Indeed, We have sent you with the truth as a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And there was no nation but that there had passed within it a warner.
25. And if they deny you - then already have those before them denied. Their messengers came to them with clear proofs and written ordinances and with the enlightening Scripture.
26. Then I seized the ones who disbelieved, and how [terrible] was My reproach.
27. Do you not see that God sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby fruits of varying colors? And in the mountains are tracts, white and red of varying shades and [some] extremely black.
28. And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear God, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, God is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.
29. Indeed, those who recite the Book of God and establish prayer and spend [in

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<sup>1166</sup> Of the sun or of a scorching wind.

<sup>1167</sup> The four comparisons given by God in verses 19-22 are those of the believer and unbeliever, various kinds of misbelief and (true) belief, Paradise and Hellfire, and those receptive to guidance and those unreceptive.

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<sup>1165</sup> Of them with God or your worship of them.

- His cause] out of what We have provided them, secretly and publicly, [can] expect a transaction [i.e., profit] that will never perish -
30. That He may give them in full their rewards and increase for them of His bounty. Indeed, He is Forgiving and Appreciative.
31. And that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], of the Book is the truth, confirming what was before it. Indeed, God, of His servants, is Acquainted and Seeing.
32. Then We caused to inherit the Book those We have chosen of Our servants;<sup>1168</sup> and among them is he who wrongs himself [i.e., sins], and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of God. That [inheritance] is what is the great bounty.
33. [For them are] gardens of perpetual residence which they will enter. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments therein will be silk.
34. And they will say, “Praise to God, who has removed from us [all] sorrow. Indeed, our Lord is Forgiving and Appreciative -
35. He who has settled us in the home of duration [i.e., Paradise] out of His bounty. There touches us not in it any fatigue, and there touches us not in it weariness [of mind].”
36. And for those who disbelieve will be the fire of Hell. [Death] is not decreed for them<sup>1169</sup> so they may die, nor will its torment be lightened for them. Thus do We recompense every ungrateful one.
37. And they will cry out therein, “Our Lord, remove us;<sup>1170</sup> we will do righteousness - other than what we were doing!” But did We not grant you life enough for whoever would remember therein to remember, and the warner had come to you? So taste [the punishment], for there is not for the wrongdoers any helper.
38. Indeed, God is Knower of the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and earth. Indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts.
39. It is He who has made you successors upon the earth. And whoever disbelieves - upon him will be [the consequence of] his disbelief. And the disbelief of the disbelievers does not increase them in the sight of their Lord except in hatred; and the disbelief of the disbelievers does not increase them except in loss.
40. Say, “Have you considered<sup>1171</sup> your ‘partners’ whom you invoke besides God? Show me what they have created from the earth, or have they partnership [with Him] in the heavens? Or have We given them a book so they are [standing] on evidence therefrom? [No], rather, the wrongdoers do not promise each other except delusion.”<sup>1172</sup>

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<sup>1169</sup> Or “They are not killed.”

<sup>1170</sup> The implication is “Return us to the previous world.”

<sup>1171</sup> Understood to mean “Tell me about...”

<sup>1172</sup> By telling their followers that the so-called deities will intercede for them with God.

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<sup>1168</sup> The followers of Prophet Muhammad.

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41. Indeed, God holds the heavens and the earth, lest they cease. And if they should cease, no one could hold them [in place] after Him. Indeed, He is Forbearing and Forgiving.
42. And they swore by God their strongest oaths that if a warner came to them, they would be more guided than [any] one of the [previous] nations. But when a warner came to them, it did not increase them except in aversion.
43. [Due to] arrogance in the land and plotting of evil; but the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. Then do they await except the way [i.e., fate] of the former peoples? But you will never find in the way [i.e., established method] of God any change, and you will never find in the way of God<sup>1173</sup> any alteration.<sup>1174</sup>
44. Have they not traveled through the land and observed how was the end of those before them? And they were greater than them in power. But God is not to be caused failure [i.e., prevented] by anything in the heavens or on the earth. Indeed, He is ever Knowing and Competent.
45. And if God were to impose blame on the people for what they have earned, He would not leave upon it [i.e., the earth] any creature. But He defers them for a specified term. And when their time comes, then indeed God has ever been, of His servants, Seeing.

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<sup>1173</sup> i.e., in His punishment of those who deny the prophets.

<sup>1174</sup> Or “transfer” of punishment to others in place of them.