



CHAPTER 35

Al-Fāṭir: The Originator

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 sections; 45 verses)

The title of this chapter, *Al-Fāṭir*, is taken from the Divine attribute mentioned in its opening verse. *The Originator* of the heavens and the earth sweeps away the old order and generates a new one, because, if truth must prosper, a new generation must be raised to propagate that truth. The chapter is also known as *Al-Malā'ikah* or The Angels, because of the mention, in its opening verse, of angels who make men attain the nearness of God. For the date of revelation and relation to the previous chapter, see introductory note on last chapter.

The first section speaks of Divine favours to man, and the second reasserts the promise that truth will prevail. The third section refers to the rising of a new generation, which will take the place of the old generation that proved itself unfit to promote the cause of truth and justice in the world. The section that follows promises peace, safety, success, and abundance to the believers, while the last section reiterates the law that punishment is due to evil deeds.

SECTION 1: Divine Favours

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 Praise be to Allāh, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, the Maker of the angels, messengers flying on wings, two, and three, and four.^a He increases in creation what

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةَ رُسُلًا أُولِي أجنحةٍ
مَثْنَى وَثُلثَ وَرُبْعَ يُزِيدُ فِي

1a. God is here mentioned by his name *Fāṭir*, from *faṭara*, which means he *clove* or *split*, also he *originated* or *brought a thing into existence newly* or *for the first time*, it *not having existed before* (LL). There may be reference to the creation of primeval matter in the original significance of *cleaving* or *splitting*. Derived from the same root is *fiṭrah*, which means *nature* or *constitution* or *natural* or *original quality* in which all men are said to have been made — the nature made by Allāh in which He has created men (30:30) — and which has therefore been translated as the *faculty of knowing God*

He pleases.^b Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

2 Whatever Allāh grants to men of (His) mercy, there is none to withhold it, and what He withholds, none can grant thereafter. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

3 O men, call to mind the favour of Allāh to you. Is there any Creator besides Allāh who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is no God but He. How are you then turned away?

4 And if they reject thee — truly messengers before thee were rejected. And to Allāh are all affairs returned.

5 O men, surely the promise of Allāh is true, so let not the life of this world deceive you. And let not the arch-deceiver deceive you about Allāh.

6 Surely the devil is your enemy, so take him for an enemy. He only invites his party to be companions of the burning Fire.

الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا ۖ وَمَا يُمْسِكُ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ طَرَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۗ فَآلَىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣﴾

وَإِنْ يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الأُمُورُ ﴿٤﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرُّكُمْ الأَحْيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلا يَغُرُّكُمْ بِاللَّهِ العَرُورُ ﴿٥﴾

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا ۗ إِنَّمَا يَدْعُو حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٦﴾

with which He has created mankind (LL). So there may be reference to this *fiṭrah* in the use of the word *Fāṭir*, the *fiṭrah* or *nature of man* having a close relation with the *Fāṭir* or the Maker of that *fiṭrah*.

The representation of angels as possessing wings is met with in sacred history, but the *janāḥ* or *wing of an angel* by no means indicates the fore-limbs of a bird, which fit it for flight. It is a symbol of power enabling these immaterial beings to execute their functions, and in Arabic, the word *janāḥ* stands for *power*, as you say *huwa maqṣūs al-janāḥ* (lit., *he has the wing clipped*), meaning *he is one who lacks strength or power or ability*, or *he is impotent* (T, LL). Angels are here spoken of as having two, three or four wings. Is there a reference here to the *rak'ahs* of prayer which are two, three or four in number? The morning prayer consists of two *rak'ahs*, the *maghrib* of three and the two afternoon prayers, and the '*Ishā'*' of four *rak'ahs*. In prayer man holds communion with God and is raised to spiritual eminence; he, as it were, flies to God, is on his wings, and the angels are the agents which make him fly to God, their wings thus standing for the *rak'ahs* of prayer.

1b. The increase in creation may refer in a general sense to the new creation which is going on momentarily in this universe, or there may be a reference here to the increase in the number of the elect which was to be brought about through the Prophet. Or still again, the meaning may be that the power of angels is not limited to two, three or four wings, for there are angels of mighty power like Gabriel, who is spoken of as having six hundred wings.

7 Those who disbelieve, for them is a severe chastisement. And those who believe and do good, for them is forgiveness and a great reward.

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧﴾

SECTION 2: Truth will prevail

8 Is he whose evil deed is made fair-seeming to him so that he considers it good? — Now surely Allāh leaves in error whom He pleases and guides aright whom He pleases, so let not thy soul waste in grief for them. Surely Allāh is Knower of what they do.

أَمَّنَ زُجَّانَ لَهُ سُوءٌ عَلَيْهِ فَرَأَهُ
حَسَنًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَ
يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَتٌ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا
يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٨﴾

9 And Allāh is He Who sends the winds, so they raise a cloud, then We drive it on to a dead land, and there-with give life to the earth after its death. Even so is the quickening.^a

وَاللَّهُ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ فَتُثِيرُ
سَحَابًا فَسُقْنَاهُ إِلَى بَدْيٍ مَيِّتٍ فَأَحْيَيْنَا
بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۗ كَذَلِكَ النُّشُورُ ﴿٩﴾

10 Whoever desires might, then to Allāh belongs the might wholly. To Him do ascend the goodly words, and the goodly deed — He exalts it. And those who plan evil — for them is a severe chastisement. And their plan will perish.^a

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ
جَمِيعًا ۗ إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ
وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ
يَمْكُرُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ
وَمَكْرُهُمْ هُوَ يُبْوَسُّ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And Allāh created you from dust, then from the life-germ, then He made you pairs. And no female bears, nor brings forth, except with His knowledge. And no one living long is granted a long life, nor is aught diminished of one's life, but it is all in a book. Surely this is easy to Allāh.^a

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ
ثُمَّ جَعَلَكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ۗ وَمَا تَحْسِلُ مِنْ
أُنْثَىٰ وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِ ۗ وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ
مِنْ مُعْتَمَرٍ ۗ وَلَا يُنْقِصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِ
إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ ۗ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

9a. The quickening here is clearly the quickening to spiritual life.

10a. The ultimate triumph of truth and the destruction of falsehood could not be expressed in clearer words. Good words ascend to God, i.e., prosper and bear fruit, and good deeds are exalted, while the evil plans to destroy Truth perish.

11a. There is a hint that the seed of truth is sown and generates in a similar manner.

12 And the two seas are not alike: the one sweet, very sweet, pleasant to drink; and the other salt, bitter. Yet from both you eat fresh flesh and bring forth ornaments which you wear. And thou seest the ships cleave through it, that you may seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks.

13 He causes the night to enter in upon the day, and causes the day to enter in upon the night, and He has made subservient the sun and the moon, each one moves to an appointed time. This is Allāh, your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those whom you call upon besides Him own not a straw.^a

14 If you call on them, they hear not your call; and if they heard, they could not answer you. And on the day of Resurrection they will deny your associating them (with Allāh). And none can inform thee like the All-Aware One.

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْبَحْرَيْنِ ۗ هَذَا عَذْبٌ
فُرَاتٌ سَائِغٌ شَرَابُهُ وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ
أُجْحٌ ۗ وَمِنْ كُلِّ تَأْكُلُونَ لَحْمًا
طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُونَ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا
وَ تَرَى الْفُلْكَ فِيهِ مَوَآخِرَ لِبَدْتِعُوا
مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾
يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ
فِي اللَّيْلِ ۗ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ
كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ذَلِكُمُ
اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ
مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ قِطْمِيرٍ ﴿١٣﴾
إِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ
سَمِعُوا مَا اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ ۗ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
يَكْفُرُونَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ ۗ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ
مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ ﴿١٤﴾

SECTION 3: A New Generation will be raised

15 O men, it is you that have need of Allāh, and Allāh is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised One.

16 If He please, He will remove you and bring a new creation.

17 And this is not hard to Allāh.

18 And no burdened soul can bear another's burden. And if one weighed down by a burden calls another to carry his load, naught of it will be carried, even though he be near of kin.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾
إِنْ يَشَاءُ يُدْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾
وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿١٧﴾
وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۗ وَإِنْ
تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ جُنْحٍ لَا حِمْلَ مِنْهُ
شَيْءٌ ۗ وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۗ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ

13a. The Arabic word *qitmir* stands for the white point in the back of a date-stone.

Thou warnest only those who fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer. And whoever purifies himself, purifies himself only for his own good. And to Allāh is the eventual coming.

19 And the blind and the seeing are not alike,

20 Nor the darkness and the light,

21 Nor the shade and the heat.

22 Neither are the living and the dead alike. Surely Allāh makes whom He pleases hear, and thou canst not make those hear who are in the graves.^a

23 Thou art naught but a warner.

24 Surely We have sent thee with the Truth as a bearer of good news and a warner. And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.^a

25 And if they reject thee, those before them also rejected — their messengers came to them with clear arguments, and with scriptures, and with the illuminating Book.^a

26 Then I seized those who disbelieved, so how (terrible) was My disapproval!

الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَأَقَامُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَمَنْ تَزَكَّى فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّى
لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٩﴾

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَلَا الظُّلُمَاتُ وَلَا النُّورُ ﴿٢١﴾

وَلَا الظِّلُّ وَلَا الْحَرُورُ ﴿٢٢﴾

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَحْيَاءُ وَلَا الْأَمْوَاتُ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَسْمِعُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَمَا أَنْتَ
بِمُسْمِعٍ مَّن فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٢٣﴾

إِنَّ أَنْتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا
وَأَنْ مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَأَنْ يُّكذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِمْ ۗ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ ﴿٢٦﴾

ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَكَيْفَ
كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٢٦﴾

22a. Note how spiritual truths are conveyed in words relating to physical life. *Those in the graves* are the very men who were actively engaged in opposition to the Prophet. The seeing are those who have their eyes opened spiritually, the light is the spiritual light, the living are those alive in spirit, and so on.

24a. This broad doctrine that a prophet was raised among every nation is taught repeatedly in the Qur'an, and, curiously enough, it is met with in the earlier revelation at Makkah as well as the later revelation at Madinah. This great truth, which had remained hidden for thousands of years from the wisest men of the world, had shone upon the mind of an unlearned Arabian, who did not even know what nations then existed and what scriptures they possessed. This broad doctrine alone could form the basis of the universality of a Divine message to the whole of mankind. Only he who had the breadth of mind to recognize truth in all could unite all men.

25a. See 3:184a.

SECTION 4: The Elect

27 Seest thou not that Allāh sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth therewith fruits of various hues? And in the mountains are streaks, white and red, of various hues and (others) intensely black.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً
فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَمَرَاتٍ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهَا
وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيْضٌ وَحُمْرٌ
مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And of men and beasts and cattle there are various colours likewise. Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear Allāh. Surely Allāh is Mighty, Forgiving.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ
مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى
اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Surely those who recite the Book of Allāh and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them, secretly and openly, hope for a gain which perishes not^a —

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا
وَأَعْلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّن تَبُورًا ﴿٢٩﴾

30 That He may pay them back fully their rewards and give them more out of His grace. Surely He is Forgiving, Multiplier of reward.

لِيُؤْتِيَهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ وَبِزِيدَهُمْ مِّنْ
فَضْلِهِ إِنَّهُ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And that which We have revealed to thee of the Book, that is the truth, verifying that which is before it.^a Surely Allāh is Aware, Seer of His servants.

وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
هُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ لَخَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Then We have given the Book as inheritance to those whom We have chosen from among Our servants: so of them is he who wrongs himself, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who is fore-

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى الْكُتُبِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا
مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ
وَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ

29a. *Tijārah* literally signifies a buying and selling for gain, hence I render the word here as meaning gain.

31a. Note that as the Holy Qur'an recognizes that prophets were raised in every nation, so it claims that previous revelation contains prophecies which have been fulfilled in the advent of the Holy Prophet. This is an early Makkan revelation.

most in deeds of goodness by Allāh's permission.^a That is the great grace,

بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Gardens of perpetuity, which they enter — they are made to wear therein bracelets of gold and pearls, and their dress therein is silk.^a

جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَكُلُوفًا ۖ وَلبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And they say: Praise be to Allāh, Who has removed grief from us! Surely our Lord is Forgiving, Multiplier of reward,^a

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Who out of His grace has made us alight in a house abiding forever; therein toil touches us not nor does fatigue afflict us therein.^a

الَّذِي أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ الْمَقَامَةِ مِن فَضْلِهِ ۗ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نُصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And those who disbelieve, for them is Fire of hell; it is not finished with them so that they should die, nor is chastisement thereof lightened to them. Thus We deal retribution on every ungrateful one.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And therein they cry for succour: Our Lord, take us out! we will do good deeds other than those which

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِحُونَ فِيهَا ۗ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ﴿٣٧﴾

32a. After speaking of the revelation of the Qur'ān to the Prophet, we are told that the Holy Book was now being given as an inheritance to a *chosen* people, i.e., the Muslim community, who are chosen to carry this great message to the whole world. But the chosen people are not all alike. Among the elect are some people who wrong themselves — they do not fulfil Divine commandments. There are others among them who follow a middle course; they are not wrongdoers but they are not very active in the doing of good. There are others still, who are foremost in the doing of good, who are elsewhere called *muqarrabūn* (56:11), those who have attained to nearness to God. It is thus made clear that when a community is spoken of as being a *chosen community*, all members of it are not alike. It is chosen because of those who are foremost in the doing of good, whose example the others should try to follow.

33a. The promise refers to this life as well as to the next. See 22:23a, where it is shown that the Caliph 'Umar made Surāqah wear Kisrā's bracelets of gold.

34a. Here is drawn a true picture of paradise: *Who has removed grief from us*. This shows that freedom from grief and anxiety is the real bliss of paradise. The repeated promise to the righteous, that they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve, expresses the same truth, and shows that paradise begins in this life.

35a. Note this further description of a spiritual paradise: *where toil and fatigue no more afflict a man*. It is all peace and satisfaction and the highest bliss.

we used to do! Did We not give you a life long enough, for him to be mindful who would mind? And there came to you the warner. So taste; because for the iniquitous there is no helper.

أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ ۝

SECTION 5: Punishment due to Evil Deeds

38 Surely Allāh is the Knower of the unseen in the heavens and the earth. Surely He is Knower of what is in the hearts.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ غَيْبِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝

39 He it is Who made you successors in the earth. So whoever disbelieves, his disbelief is against himself. And their disbelief increases the disbelievers with their Lord in naught but hatred; and their disbelief increases the disbelievers in naught but loss.

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَن كَفَرَ تَعْلِيهِ كُفْرُهُ ۗ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا مَقْتًا وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ۝

40 Say: Have you seen your associates which you call upon besides Allāh? Show me what they have created of the earth! Or have they any share in the heavens? Or, have We given them a Book so that they follow a clear argument thereof? Nay, the wrongdoers hold out promises one to another only to deceive.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ شُرَكَاءَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَا ذُخِفُوا مِن الْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ أَمْ آتَيْنَهُم كِتَابًا فَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَتٍ مِّنْهُ ۗ بَلْ إِن يَبِغِدَ الظَّالِمُونَ بَعْضُهُم لِبَعْضٍ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ۝

41 Surely Allāh upholds the heavens and the earth lest they come to naught. And if they come to naught, none can uphold them after Him. Surely He is ever Forebearing, Forgiving.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمْسِكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَن تَزُولَا ۗ وَلَئِن رَّزَاتَا إِن أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِّن بَعْدِهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ۝

42 And they swore by Allāh, their strongest oaths, that, if a warner came to them, they would be better guided than any of the nations. But when a warner came to them, it increased them in naught but aversion,^a

وَآتَسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِن جَاءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ لَّيَكُونُنَّ أَهْدَىٰ مِن إْحْدَىٰ الْأُمَمِ ۗ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ مَّا زَادَهُم إِلَّا نُفُورًا ۝

42a. There were Jews and Christians in Arabia who were as corrupt as the idolaters

43 Behaving proudly in the land and planning evil. And the evil plan besets none save the authors of it. So they wait for naught but the way of the ancients. But thou wilt find no alteration in the course of Allāh; and thou wilt find no change in the course of Allāh.

اَسْتَكْبَارًا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَمَكْرُ السَّيِّئِ
وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئُ اِلَّا بِاهْلِهِ
فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ اِلَّا سُنَّتَ الْاَوَّلِينَ
فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللّٰهِ تَبْدِيلًا
وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللّٰهِ تَحْوِيلًا ۝

44 Have they not travelled in the land and seen what was the end of those before them — and they were stronger than those in power? And Allāh is not such that anything in the heavens or the earth can escape Him. Surely He is ever Knowing, Powerful.

اَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْاَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
وَكَانُوا اَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَّمَا كَانَ
اللّٰهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَلَا فِي الْاَرْضِ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا قَدِيْرًا ۝

45 And were Allāh to punish men for what they earn, He would not leave on the back of it any creature,^a but He respites them till an appointed term; so when their doom comes, then surely Allāh is ever Seer of His servants.

وَلَوْ يَؤُخِذُ اللّٰهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوْا
مَا تَرَكَ عَلَى ظَهْرِهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَّلٰكِنْ
يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ اِلَىٰ اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاِذَا جَآءَ
اَجَلُهُمْ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ بَصِيْرًا ۝

of Arabia. The Arabs, therefore, said that, if a prophet came to them as prophets came to other people, they would follow him, and set an example of goodness.

45a. Similar words occur in 16:61: "And if Allāh were to destroy men for their iniquity, He would not leave therein a single creature". Evidently by *dābbah* or *creature* here are meant people bent low on earth, people ignorant of the higher or spiritual values of life, or the iniquitous; see 27:82a and 34:14a.