

## Surah 35. Fatir

Asad: ALL PRAISE is due to God, Originator of the heavens and the earth, who causes the angels to be [His] message-bearers, endowed with wings, two, or three, or four.<sup>1</sup> [Unceasingly] He adds to His creation whatever He wills:<sup>2</sup> for, verily, God has the power to will anything.

Malik: Praise be to Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth! Who appoint the angels having two, three and four pairs of wings as His messengers. He adds to His creation as He pleases; for Allah has power over all things.

Mustafa Khattab:

All praise is for Allah, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, Who made angels ?as His? messengers with wings—two, three, or four. He increases in creation whatever He wills. Surely Allah is Most Capable of everything.

Pickthall: Praise be to Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, who appointeth the angels messengers having wings two, three and four. He multiplieth in creation what He will. Lo! Allah is Able to do all things.

Yusuf Ali: Praise be to Allah Who created (out of nothing) the heavens and the earth Who made the angels messengers with wings two or three or four (Pairs): He adds to Creation as He pleases: for Allah has power over all things. [3869](#) [3870](#) [3871](#) [3872](#)

### Author Comments

1 - The "wings" of the spiritual beings or forces comprised within the designation of angels are, obviously, a metaphor for the speed and power with which God's revelations are conveyed to His prophets. Their multiplicity ("two, or three, or four") is perhaps meant to stress the countless ways in which He causes His commands to materialize within the universe created by Him: an assumption which, to my mind, is supported by an authentic hadith to the effect that on the night of his Ascension (see Appendix IV) the Prophet saw Gabriel "endowed with six hundred wings" (Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

2 - I.e., the process of creation is continuous, constantly expanding in scope, range and variety.

3869 - See n. 3785 to xxxiv. 1. When we praise Allah, it means that we understand and bring to mind that His glory and power are exercised for the good of His Creation, and this is the subject-matter of the Sura.

3870 - As man's knowledge of the processes of nature advances, he sees how complex is the evolution of matter itself, leaving out the question of the origin of Life and the spiritual forces, which are beyond the ken of experimental science. But this knowledge itself becomes a sort of "veil of Light": man becomes so conscious of the proximate causes, that he is apt, in his pride, to forget the primal Cause, the ultimate hand of Allah in Creation. And then, creation is such a complex process: see some of the ideas involved explained by different words in n. 120 to ii. 117. The word fatara here used means the creation of primeval matter, to which further creative processes have to be added by the hand of Allah, or Allah "adds to His Creation as He pleases", not only in quantity, but in qualities, functions, relations and variations in infinite ways.

3871 - They are Messengers or Instruments of Allah's Will, and may have a few or numerous Errands entrusted to them. Cf. the description of the Spirit of Inspiration in xxvi. 193, and of the spirits or angels for executing the Commands of Allah in lxxix. 1-5.

3872 - See n. 3870 above, where the complexities of the creative processes is referred to Allah's creation did not stop at some past time: it continues, for He has all power, and His mercies are ever poured forth without stint.

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