

With The Name of Allah,
The Intensely Merciful, The Eternally Merciful

Al-Fatiha **The Opening to The Qur'an**

Al-Fatiha or "The Opening" is the first of the 114 chapters of The Noble Qur'an.

The translation of the meanings of this short chapter is as follows:

*With the name of Allah,
The Intensely Merciful, The Eternally Merciful*

*All praise and gratitude belongs to Allah,
The Lord of All Nations*

The Intensely Merciful, The Eternally Merciful

Master/Owner of the Day of Judgment

*You Alone we worship and
You Alone we call on for help*

Guide us to The Straight Path

*The Path of those whom You have favoured;
not of those who have earned anger,
or those who are lost.*

This was the first complete chapter revealed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

This chapter consists of 7 verses,
25 words and 113 letters.

It is the first chapter memorized by a Muslim.

Its recitation is compulsory in every cycle (*raka'*) of the prayer.

It is recited seventeen times daily in the five obligatory prayers.

Al-Fatiha is the essence of The Qur'an as reflected in the many names attributed to it:

Al-Hamd (The Praise and Gratitude)

As-Salah (The Prayer)

Al-Kafia (The Treasure House)

Al-Kanz (The Sufficient)

Ash-Shifa (The Cure)

Ar-Ruqyah (The Remedy)

Sab'a Mathani
(The Seven Often Repeated)

Umm-al-Kitab
(The Core of The Qur'an)

Asasul-Qur'an
(The Basis of The Qur'an)

The Almighty divides *Al-Fatiha*
into two parts:

"The first part is for Me [when the slave praises His Lord] and the rest is for My slave who shall receive what he asks."
[Muslim]

Al-Fatiha is a prayer of the Believer acknowledging the sovereignty of Allah over all things.

He pledges his obedience to Allah as The only One God that he worships.

The Believer seek Allah's guidance to live in The Straight Path.

The chapter begins with the invocation of the Name of Allah The Exalted.

This lays the foundation as the Believers are encouraged to start every act by invoking the Name of Allah so that they will develop the habit of reflecting on the righteousness of their actions at the point they are about to *start* them.

In the next verse, the Believer says, "*All praise and gratitude belongs to Allah.*"

This helps to prevent the Believer from becoming arrogant by believing that his success is the result of his cleverness.

All things happen only by the *Rahma* or Mercy of Allah. The Believer acknowledges this Truth when he says, "*Alhamdulillah.*"

The *Rahma* includes giving human beings free will either to be part of this Divine Mercy or follow their ways.

Human beings will therefore have to accept responsibility for all their actions and they will be judged accordingly on The Day of Judgment by their Lord (*Rabb*).

Those who obey Allah's commands will be rewarded. From this recognition flows gratitude and the desire to please Allah The Merciful as the *only* One the Believer will worship and turn to for everything.

The Believer makes this pledge not only for himself but also on behalf of all created things as Man is Allah's *khalif* on Earth [2:30]:

*You Alone **we** worship,
You Alone **we** call on for help.*

In the prayer to The Almighty to show us The Straight Path, the Believer pleads for guidance through human models.

The Believer prays for examples of those *favoured* by The Lord and are therefore in The Straight Way, as well as examples of those who have earned anger or have lost The Way.

Allah The Merciful places the whole of The Noble Qur'an before the Believer in answer to this prayer, as if to say, "*This is My guidance to you.*"

The Prophets (peace be upon them), the Truthful, the Martyrs and the Righteous are *favoured* by Allah. [4:69]

Those who "*disobeyed and exceeded all limits*" [2:61] set by The Lord are the models to be avoided.

The Qur'an describes Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as *the "Best Model"* [33:21] for everyone to follow.

The Qur'an describes him as "*a mercy for all the worlds.*" [21:107]

The Qur'an commands the Believers "*to obey The Lord and obey His Messenger.*" [64:12]

Those who accept and follow the confirmed traditions of Allah's final Messenger are in The Straight Way.

Al-Fatiha is a miniature portrayal of Islamic beliefs and values. The rest of The Noble Qur'an is an elaboration.

For a more detailed commentary of *Al-Fatiha*, listen to "Divine Speech" in www.bayinah.tv



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