

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Tafseer of Suratul Faatihah (Worksheet)

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Suratul-Faatihah “The Opening” of the Quran

Introduction:

The Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) informed us that the like of *Surah Al-Faatihah* (the chapter entitled: “The Opening”) has never been revealed, that it is the greatest *surah* (chapter) of the Quran, and that it is “The Mother (i.e. foundation) of the Quran”! The Quran, in its entirety, is an exposition of it, while *Surah Al-Faatihah* is a summation of the Quran. This is because of the meanings this *surah* is comprised of, like: the praise of Allah for what He deserves, worshipping Him by obeying His commands and prohibitions, and the promises of rewards and punishment.

Also amongst the virtues of this *surah*, is that, with the will of Allah, it is a cure, for the one who treats himself by reciting it with sincerity, surety, and comprehension.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon every Muslim to place great importance and concern in memorizing, reciting, studying, and striving to comprehend, reflect upon, and implement the teachings of *Surah Al-Faatihah*, the greatest *surah* of the Quran.

Allah says:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“In the Name of Allâh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.”

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“All praise is due to Allâh, Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).”

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.”

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

“The Only Owner of the Day of Recompense.”

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

“You, alone, we worship, and You alone, we ask for help.”

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

“Guide us to the Straight Path.”

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

“The path of those upon whom You have bestowed Your Grace.”

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

“Not of those who have evoked Your Anger, nor of those who are astray.”

{ بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ }

In the Name of Allâh

Meaning: I begin by every name of Allaah The Exalted.

This is because the grammatical rule of:

{ اسم }

Name

Is that it is singular, conjugated by what follows it. Therefore, it encompasses all the beautiful names of Allah.

{ اللّٰهُ }

Allah

He is The Deity, The One who is worshipped.

Allah: is the One who solely deserves to be worshipped, because of His unique and divine qualities; which are attributes of perfection.

{ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ }

The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

These are two great names of Allah, which signify that He, The Exalted, is the possessor of great and vast mercy. His mercy embraces every living being and encompasses everything.

However, Allah has decreed His unlimited mercy for those who obey Him upon knowledge, and follow the Messengers and the Prophets, while seeking His reward and fearing His punishment.

As for those whom this does not apply to; they are only limited to a portion of this mercy.

We must be aware that amongst the unanimous principles which have been agreed upon by the *Salaf* (pious predecessors) and *Imaams* (leaders) of the *Ummah* (Muslim nation), is the obligation to believe in the names and attributes of Allah, along with the effects that these attributes have.

For example: we believe that Allah is *The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful*. Therefore, He is The possessor of Mercy, which He is characterized by, and which is witnessed in His creation. All blessings, bounties, and favors, are a result of His Mercy!

Likewise, this principle is applied in all of Allah's names. To mention a few more examples:

His is *Al-'Aleem* (The All-Knower): meaning: He is The All-Knowing and the possessor of knowledge. Thus, with it, He knows everything.

He is *Al-Qadeer* (The All-Capable): He has unlimited ability, and therefore able to do anything.

{ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ }

All praise is due to Allâh,

This is praise of Allah by His attributes of perfection and His actions which constitute favor and justice. Thus, Allah is worthy of absolute praise, from all aspects.

{ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ }

...the Lord of the 'Alamîn

Ar-Rabb is The Lord of the *Aalameen*.

And ***Aalameen*** is everything that exists besides Allah. (The Creation)

Allah's Lordship of *Aalameen* is by: creating them, supplying them with bounties and provisions, and by blessing them with great favors; of which if they were to cease; then the *Aalameen* (the creation) would not be able to exist.

So every single blessing, bounty, and favor in the creation is from Him, The Exalted!

His nurture and maintenance of His creation, is of two types: the universal and the exclusive.

1. The universal: is His creating the Creation, then sustaining and providing them, and also guiding them to that which is of benefit to them in their survival in this world.
2. The exclusive: is His nurture and maintenance of His allies; the obedient believers. He nurtures them by adorning them with *Eeman* (faith), making them conform to it, and perfecting it for them.

Additionally, He guards them from deterrence and obstacles of *Eemaan*.

The reality of His nurture and maintenance of His allies is that He facilitates for them all good and protects them from all evil.

Perhaps, in this reality, lies the secret as to why most of the supplications made by the Prophets start with the word “*Ar-Rabb* [The Lord]” .

For indeed, all of the things they supplicated for, fell under His Specific Lordship (the exclusive nurture and maintenance of His allies).

So His statement “...*the Lord of the 'Alamîn* ” signifies and is proof for His exclusivity in creation, controlling the affairs , and granting favors. Also, it illustrates His total independence, and the complete neediness and dependence of everything else towards Him, in every aspect and point.

{ مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ }

The Only Owner of the Day of Recompense

Al-Maalik is The One who is characterized by attributes of Sovereignty. Effectively, He is The One who commands and forbids, rewards and punishes, and manages all affairs of His sovereignty. The ownership and control of The Day of Recompense is His. This is The Day of Resurrection, the day in which the people are recompensed for their actions; the good and the bad.

On that day His supreme sovereignty, justice, and wisdom will become totally manifest to the creation. Ownership amongst the creation, which is in this life, will clearly cease, to the extent that on that day the kings and rulers will be the same as common citizens, as will free people be the same as slaves. Everyone will be in the common state of compliance to His Greatness, and submission to His Mightiness, while awaiting His recompense, hoping for His reward, and fearing His torment.

For this reason Allah specifically mentions His Ownership of this day, while He is, undoubtedly, the sole Owner of not only this day, but also every other day.

{ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ }

You, alone, we worship, and You, alone, we ask for help.

Meaning : we single you out alone in worship and in seeking assistance. This is because, in Arabic, when you start a sentence with the object it signifies restriction of the mentioned action to the mentioned object, while negating it from other than it.

So it is like saying: “We worship You; and we don’t worship other than You. And we seek help from You; and we don’t seek help from others besides You.

The mention of *Ibaada* (worship) before *Isti’ana* (seeking help) is of the mode of mentioning the general first and then the more specific. Also, it gives attention to the precedence of Allah’s right, before the right of His creation.

Al-Ibaadah : is a comprehensive name for all actions and statements, whether apparent or unapparent, which Allah loves and is pleased with.

Al-Isti’ana : is dependence on Allaah, The Exalted, in the bringing about of beneficial things, and in prevention of harm, while having certainty that He is the One capable of this.

Being steadfast in worshipping Allaah, alone, while depending on and seeking help from Him, alone, is the only means of achieving eternal happiness and salvation from all evil. Therefore there is no way to achieve success, except by observing and being steadfast in *Al-Ibaadah* and *Al-Isti’ana*.

[It is important to mention here that] *Ibaada* (acts of worship), will only be accepted as such, if:

-It is taken from the guidance of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

- And it is only done to seek the Face of Allaah.

So with these two conditions met, than it is considered as an act of worship.

In order to illustrate the fact that the slave must seek Allah's assistance and rely on Him, in every single act of worship he/she does; *Al-Isti'ana* (seeking Allah's help and depending on Him) is mentioned after *Al-Ibaada* (worshipping Allah), even though it itself is an act of worship.

For indeed, if Allah does not assist His slave, he/she will never be successful in attaining that what he/she wants – not in performing the obligations nor in staying away from the prohibitions.

{ اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ }

Guide us to the Straight Path

Meaning: show us, guide us, and allow us to conform accordingly to the Straight Path; which is the clear path that leads to Allaah and His paradise.

And this path (in definition) is: knowledge of the truth and acting upon it.

So this verse means; guide us **to** the path, and guide us **upon** it .

- Guidance **to** the path entails adhering to the religion of Islaam, and abandoning all other religions.

- Guidance **upon** the path involves the guidance of all the details of the religion, both in belief and in action.

Appropriately, this *Du'aa* (supplication) is amongst the most comprehensive and beneficial supplications for the slave. That's why it is an obligation to pray to Allaah with it (recite it), in every *rakaa'* of every prayer; because of everyone's dire need and necessity for this *du'aa*.

And this straight path is:

{ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ }

The path of those upon whom You have bestowed Your Grace.

This is the path of the prophets, the path of the sincere affirmers and implementers of the truth that the prophets came with, the path of the martyrs, and the path of the righteous.

{ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ }

Not of those who have evoked Your anger.

They are those who learned of the truth, yet still abandoned it. They do not act in accordance to the truth that they know about. Such is the case with the Jews and others like them.

{ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ }

And not the path of those who went astray.

They are those who deviated from the truth, out of ignorance and misguidance. Such is the case with the Christians and others like them.

Lessons from Suraatul-Faatihah

This *surah*, in spite, of its conciseness, has compiled that which no other *surah* of the Quran has compiled!

It is comprised of:

1. The three categories of Tawheed:

- a. ***Tawheed ar-Rubbobiyah*** (The Oneness of Allah in His Lordship). This is taken from the statement of Allah:

"Lord of Aalameen"

- b. ***Tawheed al-Ilaahiyyah*** (The Oneness of Allah in Divinity and Godship)
This is to sincerely worship Allah, alone, without attributing to Him any partners in worship. This is taken from Allah's statement:

"...to Allah"

And from His statement:

"You, alone, we worship"

- c. ***Tawheedul-Asmaa wa Sifaat*** (The Oneness of Allah in His Names and Attributes) This means to believe and affirm attributes of perfection to Allah, which He has affirmed for Himself and His Messenger has affirmed for Him, without denial of any of the names and attributes, nor attributing likeness or similarity of His names and attributes to the creation. Indeed, this is indicated by the word:

"Praise"

...As previously mentioned in the *tafseer* (explanation).

2. **Affirmation of prophethood**, in Allah's statement:

"Show us the straight path"

Because this is impossible without the Message.

3. **Affirmation of the recompense of deeds, and that recompense will be done in justice**; in Allah's statement:

"Owner of the Day of Judgment"

Because, the meaning of *Deen* is recompense with justice.

4. **Affirmation of *Qadr* (pre-Decree of Allah)**: And the fact that the slave is the actual doer of his or her actions, contrary to beliefs of the deviant sects: *Qadariyah and Jabbariyah*.

5. **Rather, the surah comprises of a refutation against all the people of innovation and misguidance** with Allah's statement:

"Show us the straight path"

Because the Straight Path is to know the truth and act in accordance to it. And every person of misguidance and innovation is in opposition to this path.

6. **Purifying religion by making it solely and exclusively for Allah, Alone, through worship and seeking aid**: in the statement of Allah:

3- The Shaikh (*rahimahullaah*) not only advised us to memorize, learn and act upon this great surah, but he also advised us to reflect upon the meanings of this surah. So the next time you recite Surah al-Fatihah, you should ponder over the meanings as you recite them. So what meanings will you ponder, when you recite:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“In the Name of Allâh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.”

4- What meanings will you ponder, when you recite:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“All praise is due to Allâh, Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).”

5- What meanings will you ponder, when you recite:

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.”

6- What meanings will you ponder, when you recite:

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

“The Only Owner of the Day of Recompense.”

8- What meanings will you ponder, when you recite:

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

“Guide us to the Straight Path.”

9- What meanings will you ponder, when you recite:

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

“The path of those upon whom You have bestowed Your Grace. Not of those who have evoked Your Anger, nor of those who are astray.”

10- What is the difference between ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem?

11- List two examples of Names and Attributes of Allaah with their effects.

12- What is *Al-Hamd*?

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“All praise is due to Allâh, Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).”

13- What is *'Alameen*?

14- Define Al-'Ibaadah (worship) and Al-Isti'anah (seeking assistance) with the terms the *mu'alif* used.

15- What is the relationship between the beginning of this ayah and Tawheed?

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

“You, alone, we worship, and You alone, we ask for help.”

16- What are the two requirements for a deed to be accepted?

17- Name the ayah that is an affirmation of Purifying religion by making it solely and exclusively for Allah, Alone, through worship and seeking aid, and then name the ayah that is an affirmation of Prophethood.

19- In the ayah what does Deen mean?

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

“The Only Owner of the Day of Recompense.”

20- Which part of this Surah is an affirmation of the following: recompense of deeds; recompense will be done in justice; and of al-Qadr?
