



Life With Allah

Connecting to The Creator

Al-Fatihah

# سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

Surah Al-Fatihah

The Opening

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

# Surah Al-Fatihah

## The Opening



Life With Allah

الحياة مع الله

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**Sūrah al-Fātiḥah.** Have you ever wondered why Allah chose this specific sūrah from all the other sūrahs in the Qur'ān? Why are we required to read Sūrah al-Fātiḥah at least **17 times a day**?

Why is it repeated in every single rak'ah? What's so amazing about this sūrah?

Al-Fātiḥah means 'the Opening' as it opens the Qur'ān. It is the entrance for the Qur'ān and your ṣalāh; and your entry for attaining closeness to your Lord. Sūrah al-Fātiḥah is also known as the Mother of the Qur'ān, the Seven Oft-Repeated āyāt and the Cure. It is the greatest sūrah in the Qur'ān and the **key to the entire Qur'ān**. It is also both an **introduction** and a **summary** of the whole Qur'ān.



In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

All praises and thanks are for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾

The All-Merciful, The Very Merciful.

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾

Master of the Day of Judgement.

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾

You Alone we worship, You Alone we ask for help.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾

Guide us on the Straight Path,

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾

the path of those whom you have favoured, not of those who incur (Your) anger nor of those who have gone astray.

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا  
الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧﴾

“

Al-Ḥasan رضي الله عنه said,

“Allah sent down 104 books from the heavens and He condensed these books into four books: the Torah, the Zabūr, the Injīl and the Qur’ān. Then He condensed the content of the first three books into the Qur’ān. He then condensed the content of the Qur’ān into the Mufaṣṣal (Sūrahs 50-114). He then condensed the content of the Mufaṣṣal into Sūrah al-Fātiḥah.” Others added that the content of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah can be condensed into the āyah: “You Alone we worship, and You Alone we ask for help.”

”

## The 3 Key Themes

Sūrah al-Fātiḥah was revealed in Makkah. In keeping with the other Makkan sūrahs it focuses on the **three fundamental principles**:

1

Establishing  
the Oneness of  
Allah ﷻ.

2

Establishing  
Prophethood

3

Belief in the  
Hereafter

## Sūrah al-Fātiḥah: A Special Conversation

A distinctive quality that makes Sūrah al-Fātiḥāh extremely special is that it forms a unique conversation between you and Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ responds to you after every āyah that you read in it.



Memorise the following **dialogue**, as it will transform your ṣalāh.

**You say:**

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

**Allah ﷻ replies:**

My slave has praised Me

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

My slave has extolled Me  
(i.e. repeatedly praised me)

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

My slave has glorified Me  
(or My slave has entrusted  
his affairs to Me.)

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

This is between Me and My slave  
and My slave shall have what he  
asked for.

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ،  
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ  
الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

This is for My slave and  
My slave shall have what  
he asked for.

At the end of each āyah, pause like the Prophet ﷺ would when reciting Sūrah al-Fātiḥah. Take a moment to reflect on Allah's reply to you.

## Reflect

On reading 'My slave' in the above ḥadīth, what feeling does this invoke in you?

Think back to when you would visit your parents or grandparents, and they would affectionately say, 'My child/son/daughter has come.' How did this phrase make you feel?

Allah ﷻ is above all examples. He is the Most Powerful and the Lord of the worlds. Despite being an unworthy sinful slave of His, He still addresses you here as, 'My slave.'

“ How extreme is the joy and happiness of the slave when his Lord says **'My slave'** three times. By Allah, if the hearts were not clouded by the smoke of the desires and lusts, they would **erupt from joy and delight** when their Lord, Creator and God says, 'My slave has praised Me, My slave has extolled me, My slave has glorified Me.'" (Ibn al-Qayyim ﷺ)

## Sūrah al-Fātiḥah: The Best Du‘ā’

Each time you recite Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, do you remember that it is a du‘ā’?

Allah ﷻ taught us this perfect du‘ā’ because of His endless mercy. As humans, we continuously make mistakes and commit sins, and are in constant need of guidance. We need this guidance more than food and drink. By guiding us, Allah ﷻ helps us to obey Him and to stop sinning. Thus, no evil will befall us in this world nor the hereafter. For this reason, this sūrah is one of the most comprehensive du‘ās.

The sūrah is also a lesson and a reminder on **how** to make du‘ā’. Firstly, you ask Allah ﷻ through His Perfect Names, and, secondly, you express your servitude and need for Him. Sūrah al-Fātiḥah also reminds you of the importance of repetition and persistence when making du‘ā’, as you make this du‘ā’ at least 17 times every day.



## الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

*All praises and thanks are for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.*

In the very first āyah of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, the **central fact of this life** is conveyed to us: who Allah ﷻ is. Knowledge of Allah ﷻ is the pinnacle of all knowledge and the greatest of all sciences, as there is no one greater than Him.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ : Endless, infinite and inherent praise belongs to Allah Alone.

Alḥamdulillāh is an expression encompassing both:

- 1 **Gratitude** for what Allah ﷻ has blessed us with; īmān, life, health etc.
- 2 **Praise:** Allah ﷻ is worthy of every possible praise on account of His very existence, His mercy, beauty, generosity and all of His other Noble Attributes and Names. All of His Attributes are perfect; be they of His majesty (*jalāl*) or beauty (*jamāl*). Even if none of His slaves praised Him, He would still be worthy of all praise.

In truth, it is Allah ﷻ who praises Himself on the tongues of His slaves. Any slave who praises Him is only able to do so following His permission for such praise.

Our praise of Him emanates from our love and reverence of Him. Our praise of Him is, in fact, a blessing from Him which deserves even more praise. Even if we were to spend our entire life praising Him, this would be insufficient.

How much we praise Allah ﷻ depends on how well we know Him (*ma'rifah*). The more knowledge we have of Him and the more intimate we are with Him, then the more we will praise Him.

**رَبِّ** : The Owner, The Master, The Nurturer, The One who nourishes and sustains the whole of creation. It is He who regulates their affairs and grants them endless blessings. He is their sole Creator and Provider. He is their Protector and Caretaker.

Allah ﷻ did not create the world and abandon it to its devices. Rather, He constantly and actively manages the affairs of His creation. **Rabb is a beautiful Name that draws us closer to Him and guides us to reflect upon His endless favours:** how He created us, provides for us and takes care of us. This should make us worship Him Alone wholeheartedly.



العَالَمِينَ [the worlds]: Al-‘Ālamīn is the plural of ‘ālam.  
According to Qatādah ﷺ, ‘ālam refers to everything in  
existence besides Allah.

Al-‘Ālamīn indicates that the universe should remind us about  
its Creator, Allah ﷻ. Moreover, it reminds us that Islam is a  
universal religion and is not restricted to any race or nation –  
Allah is the Lord of everyone.

In summary, Allah ﷻ is worthy of all praise: **(1)** simply  
because He is Allah, and **(2)** because He created us, nurtures  
us, provides for us and manages the affairs of the entire  
universe.



## الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

*The All-Merciful, The Very Merciful*

Following on from the earlier āyah where we learnt that Allah is the Lord of the worlds, it is logical to wonder: what kind of a Lord is He? Is He a vengeful, angry and harsh Lord? Or is He a Loving, Kind and Generous Lord?

The answer to this question is provided in the next āyah: Allah ﷻ is an Extremely Merciful Lord.

Allah ﷻ sustains us, but He does not do so because He needs us; rather, He sustains us out of His mercy. **His Lordship is characterised by mercy and justice, and not oppression.** Even His punishment arises from pure justice.

Both the words of this āyah - al-Raḥmān and al-Raḥīm - originate from the word raḥimah. Raḥimah can be understood as **mercy, compassion and tenderness.**



## What is the difference between al-Raḥmān and al-Raḥīm?

Al-Raḥmān is a Name which encompasses the mercy Allah shows to all of His creation. However, al-Raḥīm is a specific attribute that is exclusive to the believers, both in this world and in the hereafter. The form of raḥmah He extends to the believers - particularly to His friends (awliyā') - differs from His general mercy which He extends to all of His creation.

Al-Raḥmān can also mean the one who is extremely merciful, whereas al-Raḥīm is the one who is permanently merciful. Together, these Names describe Allah ﷻ as extremely merciful, all the time.

Although the scholars have also mentioned other differences, it is important to remember that both Names encompass all aspects and dimensions of mercy.

The mercy of Allah knows no bounds. He said, **“My mercy encompasses everything”** (7:156). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that Allah said, **“Indeed My mercy has preceded My anger”** (Muslim).

**Every blessing we have stems from His mercy.** We were created through His mercy; the Messengers and the Books

were sent down to guide us towards the truth through His mercy and Paradise was created through His mercy.

It is because of His mercy that we are invited to stand before Him in salah, humbling ourselves, pleading with Him, praising Him and talking to Him. It is because of His mercy that – through worshipping him – we become more aware of and closer to Him.

If we want to be recipients of Allah's mercy, we must be **merciful to His creation**, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "Have mercy on those who are on the earth, and the One who is in the Heaven will have mercy on you" (Tirmidhi). Just as Allah ﷻ nourishes us with love and mercy, we should nurture ourselves and those under our care with love and mercy.

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

*The Owner of the Day of Judgement.*

The previous āyah established the supreme and unending mercy of Allah ﷻ. However, if it is taken on its own, we may become complacent. **Excessive hope in His mercy could lead us to neglect His rights and those of His creation.** Because of this, this next āyah reminds us that Allah is the Owner of the Day of Judgement.

What is the Day of Judgement? Allah ﷻ answers this in Sūrah al-Infīṭār,

وَمَا آدْرَبِكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ ﴿١٧﴾ ثُمَّ مَا آدْرَبِكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ ﴿١٨﴾ يَوْمَ لَا  
تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا، وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ ﴿١٩﴾

*“What will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is? Again, what will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is? The Day when no soul will have the power to do anything for another; on that Day, command will belong to Allah” (82:17-19).*

The Day of Judgement is the Day when all souls will have to account for their actions, and will be held responsible for everything they did in the world.

Allah ﷻ is the Mālik (Owner) and according to another recitation, the Malik (King) of the entire universe. Thus, Allah ﷻ does not need any of His creation; but His creation need Him. Although He is the Owner and King of the entire universe, this Day has been singled out because, unlike in this world, on that Day, **nobody will compete with Him for Supreme Authority**. All of His creation will stand before Him; the slaves and the worldly kings, the downtrodden and the elite, the poor and rich will all be the same. They will all be assembled in the court of Allah ﷻ, humbled before the King of kings, waiting for their judgement, hoping for His reward and terrified of His punishment.

Allah ﷻ says, “The Day they will all appear. Nothing about them will be hidden from Allah. Who does all authority belong to today? To Allah—the One, the All-Dominant!” (40:16). The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah will hold the whole earth, and roll up the heavens in His Right Hand. Then He will say, ‘**I am the King! Where are the kings of the earth?**’” (Bukhārī).

This āyah establishes a **fundamental principle: belief in the hereafter**. We are reminded that life is temporary. Instead of becoming besotted with it, we should prepare for what is to come. Death is inevitable and the hereafter is eternal. Preparing for it will help us survive the tribulations of that Terrible Day. This āyah reminds us to be humble before the Almighty, and to be humble before His creation. Furthermore, it is a snapshot of the beautiful balance between mercy and justice inherent in Islam.

## *Reflect*

When you are reciting this āyah, think about your plight on the Day of Judgement. Visualise yourself, standing in front of Allah ﷻ. Imagine how terrified you will be: naked, thirsty, hot and desperate for water. Your parents will disown you, your spouse will turn away, and your friends will be disinterested. Only the Lord of the Worlds, the Master of this Horrific Day, will have the power to save you.

## إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

*You Alone we worship, You Alone we ask for help.*

**نَعْبُدُ** is derived from *'ibādah*, a comprehensive term for every action and utterance that Allah loves and is pleased with.

Every human has a void in his heart. Some try to fill this with the worship of money, others with the worship of power. Others worship fame, pleasure, beauty, knowledge, people, nature and even animals! All these objects of worship are delusions that leave its adherents unfulfilled. **To be truly free, happy, and at peace, the heart's void can only be filled with the worship of Allah ﷻ.** We must connect to Him, be in awe of Him, remember Him, and we must love Him above everyone and everything, including our desires. Worship comprises of:

- 1 **Utmost humility and submission**
- 2 **Utmost love**

To be His true slave, we must submit to Him and love Him. Solely focusing on obedience will lead to a limited focus on the external aspects of the *dīn*, at the expense of the inner. And only focusing on love will lead to a rejection of Allah's commands. Therefore, our outer actions must complement the inner actions of our hearts.

For our worship to be accepted by Allah ﷻ, it must be:

- 1 Sincere and only for His sake (*ikhlaṣ*)
- 2 In accordance with the teachings of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

### Reflect

What do you really worship? What is it that you really desire? Crave? Love? What occupies most of your day? What occupies your thoughts and dreams?

وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ [You Alone we ask for help]: Asking Allah ﷻ makes us humble and submissive before Him. By asking Allah ﷻ we are acknowledging our dependence upon Him and our need for Him. We are certain that He will grant us good and remove harm from us. We are placing our complete trust in Him (*tawakkul*).

*Istiānah* (the verbal noun of *nastaīn*) combines trust and reliance. Trusting someone does not mean they are necessarily reliable. Conversely, relying on someone does not mean they are trustworthy. The reliance may be due to compulsion or a lack of alternatives. With Allah ﷻ, we rely on Him **and** trust Him. We will never trust anyone as much as Him, nor will we rely on anyone as much as Him. He is the

Most Powerful and we know that no one loves us as much as He does, so long as we obey Him.

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته said, “I reflected on what the most beneficial du‘ā’ was, and realised it was the du‘ā’ of the servant asking His Lord to help him achieve His Pleasure. I then found it in **إِيَّاكَ** **نَسْتَعِينُ** **نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ**.” In this āyah, it is as though we are saying, “O Allah, help us fall in love with You, to remember You always and to be outstanding in worshipping You.”

The same meaning is also conveyed in the beautiful du‘ā’ of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

*O Allah help me in remembering You, in being grateful to You, and in worshipping You in an excellent manner (Abū Dāwūd).*

The word ‘iyyāka’ has been repeated in this āyah. **This repetition emphasises that both worship and asking for help should be reserved for Allah Alone.** Therefore, I worship Only You, Ya Allah. Moreover, this āyah is also a reminder that we should not allow our actions to become tarnished by showing off (riyā’) or seeking fame (sum‘ah). Instead, we should ensure our actions are purely for His sake Alone.

‘Ibādah is neither a chore nor a burden. On the contrary, it is where genuine happiness and sweetness lie. It is because of this that Ibrāhīm b. Adham رحمته said, “If the kings and their sons knew what we experience of spiritual pleasure and happiness, they would fight us for it with their swords.”

In conclusion, in this āyāh we are seeking Allah’s help for everything. Moreover, we are **specifically asking Him for the most important purpose and goal in our lives: worshipping Him**. Unless He helps us, we cannot achieve this purpose.

“ Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله would frequently say, “إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ” wards off showing off (riyā’) and إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ wards off pride.”



“

Muḥammad b. ‘Awf al-Ḥimṣī رضي الله عنه saw Aḥmad b. Abī al-Ḥawārī رضي الله عنه pray ‘Ishā’ by the Ka’bah. When he finished, he stood up to pray voluntary prayers and started with

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

until he reached

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ.

Muḥammad al-Ḥimṣī رضي الله عنه proceeded to do ṭawāf of the Ka’bah and when he finished, he found Ibn Abī al-Ḥawārī رضي الله عنه still repeating the same āyah. He continued to repeat it till Fajr.

”

## إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾

*Guide us on the Straight Path*

The previous āyah involves asking Allah ﷻ for help. In this āyah, we ask Allah ﷻ for the **greatest matter in which we require His help**: guidance to and on the straight path. Attaining this guidance and direction on the straight path is impossible without His direction, care and mercy.

The duā' in this āyah is essential as guidance will determine our eternal success.

إِهْدِنَا [Guide us]: O Allah, define the right path for us, explain it to us, direct us to it and grant us the *tawfīq* (ability) to follow it. O Allah, we are weak and we need You to show and guide us to Your path.

الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ [On the Straight Path]: The Straight Path is the way of Allah ﷻ, the path of truth, the path of His beloved Messenger ﷺ and the path to paradise. Allah ﷻ has defined the Straight Path for us to ensure we are led to Him. On this path we single Allah ﷻ out for worship, and remain obedient to Him and His Messenger. It is the path of truth (*ḥaqq*) which is embodied in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the way of his Companions .

**There is only one path of truth and that is the path of Allah.** Allah ﷻ says, “This is My path which is straight, so follow it. Do not follow other ways, for they cause you to deviate from His way. This is what He has instructed you to do, so that you will have taqwā (piety)” (6:153).

## **Why pray for guidance if you're already a believer?**

Why do we have to repeat this supplication every single day? Why do we repeat it at least 17 times daily, even though, by the grace of Allah ﷻ we have already been guided to Islam. The following are some reasons:

- 1 Lack of knowledge.** Though you are a believer, you may lack the knowledge of the essentials of this path. Alternatively, you may have knowledge of the essentials, but may lack the finer details and the subtleties of the various branches of knowledge.
- 2 Knowledge but no capability.** You may have knowledge, but you face barriers to performing righteous actions. For instance, you may wish to go for ḥajj, but you cannot afford to do so.
- 3 Knowledge and capability but no determination.** For example, you know about the importance of ḥajj, and you're able to afford it, but you have no desire to perform it.
- 4 Knowledge, capability and desire but a lack of sincerity.** You may have the knowledge, the financial abilities, the desire to perform it, yet you may lack sincerity when performing it.

**5 Sincerity, but not in accordance with the Sunnah.** You may have knowledge, capability, desire and sincerity, but you may not perform the deed in accordance with the Sunnah. For instance, you may be carrying out a deed which is an innovation (*bid'ah*). Despite being sincere in your efforts, your deed will not be accepted because it is not in accordance with the Sunnah.

**6 Lack of consistency.** Again, you may have knowledge, capability, desire, sincerity and perform the deed as prescribed in the Sunnah, but you may lack consistency. **By saying 'Guide us', you ask Allah to give you firmness and consistency on these deeds. Or you may be guided at this moment, but you do not know if you will remain steadfast on the path in the future.**

It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ describes the ones firmly grounded in knowledge as saying, "Our Lord, do not let our hearts swerve from the truth after You have guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Yourself. Surely, You, and You Alone, are the Great Bestower" (3:8).

**7 A never-ending pursuit.** *Iḥsān* (worshipping Allah ﷻ as though you can see Him) and *ma'rifah* (knowledge of Allah ﷻ) are endless pursuits. No one can claim to have reached the pinnacle or attained a level close to the best of Allah's creation. Accordingly, we are continuously in need of 'guidance' from The Ultimate Guide (*al-Hādī*), which will help us ascend these levels.

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧﴾

*The path of those upon whom you have bestowed favours.  
Those upon whom neither is there anger nor are they astray.*

Regarding guidance, people can be divided into three categories:

### 1 The Blessed [أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ]

The blessed people stated in this āyah are described in Sūrah al-Nisā'. Allah ﷻ says, "Whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger will be with those **whom Allah has blessed: the Prophets and the Ṣiddīqīn, the martyrs and the righteous.** What excellent company such people are!" (4:69).

The Ṣiddīqīn are those who have attained the highest status of īmān, conviction and truthfulness. Even in difficult times, their actions consistently verify their words. Examples of such people include the best of the Prophets' followers, such as Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ.

This āyah reminds us of the **importance of good company.** Those who we spend time with and who influence us - consciously or subconsciously - will determine our future. The Prophet ﷺ said, "A man is upon the religion of his friend, so let him look carefully as to whom he befriends" (Tirmidhī).

The word 'أَنْعَمْتَ' - You have favoured' indicates that **bestowed guidance and obedience are only through Allah's tawfiq** (divine enablement). Accordingly, if Allah ﷻ had willed, we would not have been guided. Instead of taking it for granted, we should thank Allah ﷻ for the blessings of īmān and guidance.

The āyah also reminds us to be optimistic, ambitious and extremely hopeful in making duā'. Through the words of this āyah we are specifically asking Allah ﷻ to place us in the company of His **best creation**. Thus, it directs us to have lofty aspirations (*uluww al-himmah*) and strive towards the best.

Moreover, this āyah is an antidote to loneliness. Traversing the Straight Path can be lonely. It is a path for which we may be shunned and ridiculed. The āyah helps us recall those who traversed this path before us. This should comfort us, and help us to remain focused, so that we can be united with them in the hereafter inshā'Allah.

## Reflect

Read the stories and biographies of the Prophets, our Messenger ﷺ, the Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and the pious people رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ of the past. Be inspired by their devotion and steadfastness, and try your best to emulate them. Consider how you can bring their example into your own life.

## 2 Those who incurred anger [غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ]

The second group defined by the above phrase are those who **had the knowledge but did not act upon it**. Instead, they deliberately rejected the truth and invented their own falsehood.

By making this *duā'*, we seek to safeguard ourselves from losing the guidance and spurning the knowledge given to us. There is a danger that we may end up belittling the truth. We may become intolerant of it and begin thinking that other sources of guidance fabricated by humans are superior. To prevent this, we ask Allah ﷻ in this *sūrah* to protect us from such transgression, to safeguard us from sliding into error, and to keep us firm on the Straight Path.

## 3 The misguided [وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ]

The third group consists of those who **lacked the knowledge** and hence veered off the Straight Path.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The Jews are those who incurred anger and the Christians are the misguided ones” (Tirmidhī).

## Three lessons from this āyah:

1

To only seek knowledge is not enough. To ensure you are amongst the blessed ones, you must combine knowledge ('ilm) with action ('amal).

2

Do not follow the ways of those who have deviated from the Straight Path. Emulate those who have secured their place in Paradise.

3

Loving and hating for the sake of Allah ﷻ is essential.



## Sūrah al-Fātiḥah reminds me...

- of who Allah ﷻ is
- to affirm the Oneness of Allah ﷻ and to strengthen my īmān in Him
- of the endless mercy and love of Allah ﷻ
- of my end and my ultimate destiny
- to not only contemplate deeply over Paradise and the love of Allah ﷻ, but also to think about the Hell-fire and the fear of Allah ﷻ
- to praise Allah ﷻ with His Beautiful and Perfect Names
- of the importance of gratitude
- of my purpose in life, while also answering my questions of 'Where did I come from?' and 'Where am I going?'
- of the most important relationship in my life: the slave-Master relationship
- to ask, trust, humble myself and worship Him Alone
- of who I should and should not aspire to be like
- of the importance of following the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger ﷺ and of loving him
- not to become complacent and to always ask Allah ﷻ for guidance and firmness.

	Opens the door of:	Protects you from:
أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ	Clinging on to Allah ﷻ	Vanity and self-admiration ('ujb)
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ	Remembrance (dhikr)	Relying on yourself
أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ	Gratitude (shukr)	Ingratitude
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ	Love (ḥubb) and hope (rajā')	Despair
مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ	Fear (khawf)	Complacency and disobedience
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ	Sincerity (ikhlaṣ)	Shirk and showing off (riyā')
وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ	Reliance on Allah ﷻ (tawakkul)	Pride and stress
اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ	Supplication (du'ā')	Deviancy
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ	Having pious role models	Loneliness
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ	Submission and humility	Arrogance and stubbornness
وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ	Knowledge and adherence to the Sunnah	Ignorance and bid'ah (innovation)

“

While the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was sitting with Jibrīl ؑ, he heard a creaking sound above him. Jibrīl ؑ looked up towards the sky and said, “This is (the sound of) a gate that has been opened in Paradise today, and it has never been previously opened.” Then an Angel descended through it and came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “Rejoice in the good news of two lights that have been given to you, which no Prophet before you was given: Sūrah al-Fātiḥah and the concluding (two) verses of Sūrah al-Baqarah. You will never recite a word from them, except that you will be given (its blessings).”

(Nasā’ī)

”

The previous discussion provides just an outline of this sūrah, for this sūrah is an endless ocean. Carve out time to read or listen to its tafsīr regularly so you can stay connected to it.

## Āmīn

Remember to seal Sūrah al-Fātiḥah with Āmīn. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “When the imām says Āmīn, then say Āmīn; for indeed the one **whose Āmīn coincides with the Āmīn of the angels will have his previous sins forgiven**” (Bukhārī).

Āmīn means, “**O Allah, accept my duā.**” ‘Alī ﷺ said, “Āmīn is the seal of the Lord of the worlds. It is with it that His slaves seal their duā’.”





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