

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝
 إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ
 الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝

I

AL-FĀTIHAH

الْفَاتِحَةُ

Verses: 7

Revealed at Makkah

*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.*¹

1-3 Praise is only for Allah,² the Lord of the Universe,³ the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful,⁴ the Master of the Day of Judgement.⁵

4-7 Thee alone we worship⁶ and to Thee alone we pray for help.⁷ Show us the straight way,⁸ the way of those whom Thou hast blessed⁹; who have not incurred Thy wrath, nor gone astray.

1. Islamic culture requires a man to commence everything with the name of Allah. If this is done consciously and sincerely, it will surely produce three good results. First, it will keep him away from evil, because the very name of Allah will impel him to consider whether he is justified in associating His name with a wrong deed or an evil intention. Secondly, the very mention of the name of Allah will create in him the right attitude of mind and direct him to the right direction. Thirdly, he will receive Allah's help and blessing and will be protected from the temptations of Satan, for Allah turns to a man when he turns to Him.

2. It has been stated in the Introduction to this Sūrah that *Al-Fatihah* is a prayer. It begins with the praise of Allah to Whom it is addressed in order to teach us the right way of making a supplication. We should not put forward our request bluntly and abruptly without an appropriate introduction. The right way is to acknowledge the excellences and the favours and the high position of the One to Whom we address our prayer. That is why we begin our prayer with the praise of Allah, for He is the perfection of all excellences and is also our Benefactor. We pay homage to Allah to show that we sincerely acknowledge His excellences and also are grateful to Him for His countless favours.

It should also be noted that not only Praise is for Allah but also Praise is only for Allah. This distinction is very important because it cuts at the root of the worship of any of His creation. As none of them is worthy of praise, none is worthy of worship. No man, no angel, no prophet, no so-called god, no star, no idol, in short, none of His creation inherently possesses any good quality. If one has any, it is given by Allah. Hence the Creator of these qualities alone deserves devotion, worship, gratitude, and none of His creation.

3. The word *Rab* which has been translated into 'Lord' stands for (a) Master and Owner, (b) Sustainer, Provider and Guardian, (c) Sovereign, Ruler, Administrator and Organiser. Allah is the Lord of the Universe in all these senses.

4. Although the Arabic word *Rahmān* itself is in the superlative form and denotes the attributes of beneficence and mercy in the highest degree, even this word fails to express the boundless extent of these attributes of Allah. Hence another word *Rahīm* of the same root has been added to make up for the deficiency.

5. After saying that Allah is Beneficent and Merciful, it has immediately been added that He is the Master of the Day of Judgement, so that the qualities of mercy and kindness might not mislead anyone into forgetting that on that Day He will gather together all human beings from the first to the last and require each and every one to give an account of all of one's acts to Him. A Muslim should, therefore, always keep in view the fact that Allah is not only Merciful, but He is also Just. He has, however, full authority to pardon or punish anyone He pleases, for He has complete power over everything. Therefore we should have full conviction that it lies absolutely in His power to make our end happy or sorrowful.

6. The Arabic word *ibādāt* is used in three senses: (a) worship and devotion, (b) submission and obedience, (c) subjection and servitude. Here it implies all the three, that is, We are Thy worshippers, Thy subjects and Thy slaves and We keep these relations with Thee and Thee alone and "We make none else the object of our worship in all the three senses."

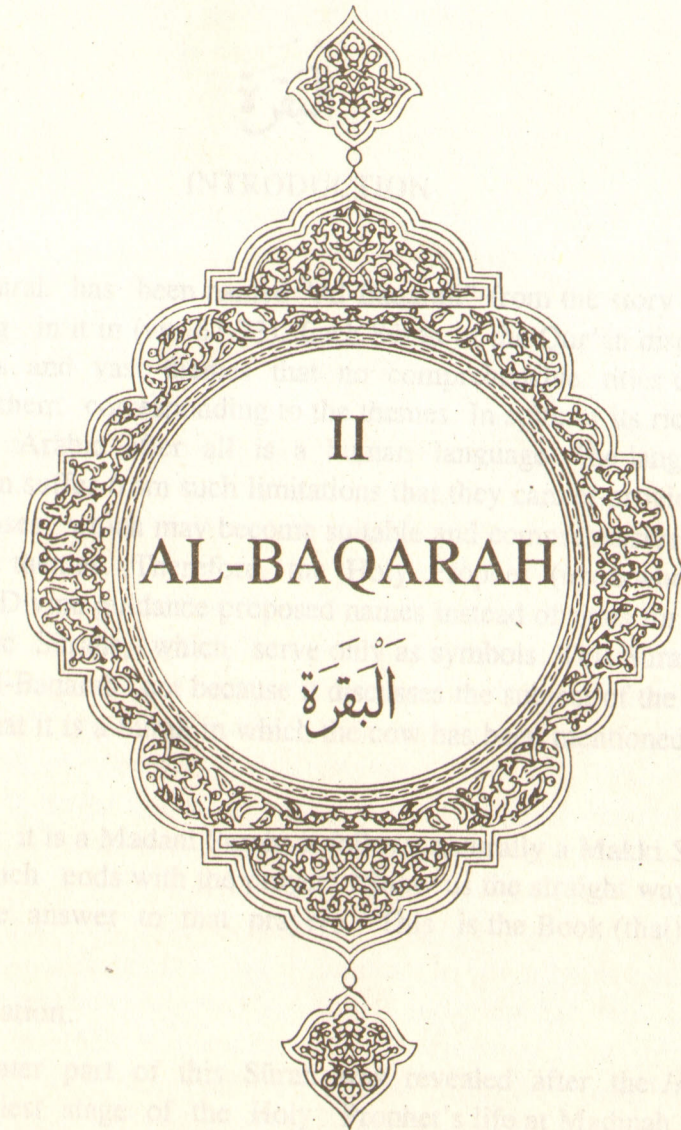
7. It means, We ask for Thy help because we know that Thou art the Lord of the whole Universe and Thou hast all powers and Thou art the Master of every thing. Therefore we turn to Thee for help for the fulfilment of our needs and requirements.

8. That is, "Show us that way which may lead us aright in every walk of life and keep us absolutely free from errors and evil consequences and bring us success in the end."

This is the request which the servant of Allah makes to Him when he begins the study of the Qur'an. He prays to Him to guide him in every walk of life and save him from the labyrinths of doubt and uncertainty, which result from the lack of true knowledge. The servant also requests the Master to show him the right and the straight way of life from among the many by-paths and crooked ways.

9. The straight way for which we are praying is the way which has always been followed by the people favoured by Thee and which has always brought Thy favours and blessings.

10. This is to show that the favoured people are not those who go astray and incur the wrath of Allah, though apparently they might be enjoying the transitory good things of life. The really favoured people are those who receive blessings on account of their righteous living. From this it also becomes clear that by favours are meant those real and permanent rewards, which result from righteous living and from winning the pleasure of Allah, and not those transitory good things of life which have been enjoyed even by the tyrants and worshippers of mammon and which are being enjoyed even today by all sorts of evildoers who have gone astray from the straight way.

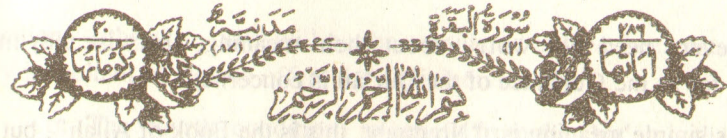


honest conduct of day-to-day business transactions.

284-286

The basic articles of the Faith have been recapitulated here at the end of the Surah, just as they were enunciated at its beginning. Then the Surah ends with a prayer which the Muslim Community needed very much at that time when they were encountering untold hardships in the propagation of the Guidance.

الجزء



مَعَانِدَةٌ ۝ اَللّٰهُ ذٰلِكَ اَلْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝ اَلَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۝ وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِمَا اُنزِلَ اِلَيْكَ وَمِمَّا اُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُوْنَ ۝

II

AL - BAQARAH

البقرة

Verses: 286

Revealed at Al-Madinah

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Alif. Lām. Mim.¹ This is the Book of Allah: there is no doubt² about it. It is guidance to Godfearing people,³ who believe in the unseen,⁴ establish the Salāt⁵ and expend (in Our way) out of what We have bestowed on them;⁶ who believe in the Book We have sent down to you (i.e. the Qur'an) and in the Books sent down before you,⁷ and firmly believe in the Hereafter.⁸

1. Letters of the Arabic alphabet like Alif, Lām, Mim, called the muqatta'at, which are pre-fixed to a number of the Sūrahs of the Qur'an, were in common use in the Arabic literature of the period when the Qur'an was revealed. The poets and rhetoricians made use of this style, and instances of this can even be found in the pre-Islamic prose and poetry which has survived. As their significance was appreciated by all concerned, none objected to or questioned their use, because it was no enigma to them. Even the bitterest opponents of the Qur'an, who never missed an opportunity, did not raise any objection against their use. But as their use was abandoned with the passage of time, it became difficult for the commentators to determine their exact meaning and significance. An ordinary

reader, however, need not worry about their meanings because they make no difference as far as the Guidance of the Qur'ān is concerned.

2. Its simple meaning is: "No doubt, this is the Book of Allah", but it may also imply that this is the Book which contains nothing doubtful. It is not like the common books on metaphysics and religion which are based on mere speculation and guess-work. Therefore even their authors cannot be free from doubts concerning their own theories, in spite of their assertion that they are convinced of them. In contrast to them, this Book is based on the Truth: its Author is He Who possesses full knowledge of the Reality. Therefore, there is indeed no room for doubt about its contents.

3. That is, though there is nothing but guidance in this Book, there are a few pre-requisites for benefiting from it. The first pre-requisite is that one should be inclined to avoid vice, and should seek and practise virtue. But there is no guidance in the Qur'ān for the people who do not bother to consider whether what they are doing is right or wrong, who follow the ways of the world or their own whims and lusts or move aimlessly in the ways of life.

4. The second condition for obtaining guidance from the Qur'ān is that one must believe in the "unseen" -- those realities which cannot be perceived by the senses and which do not come within human experience and observation, *e.g.* the essence and attributes of Allah, Angels, Revelation, Heaven, Hell, etc. These things must be taken on trust from the experts (Prophets) just as we do in many cases in the physical world. Therefore, only such a person, who believes in the "unseen", can benefit from the Guidance of the Qur'ān. As for the one who believes only in those things which can be seen, tasted and smelt, or can be measured and weighed, cannot get any guidance from this Book.

5. The third condition to benefit from the Qur'ān is that one should be willing and ready to put into practice the teachings of the Qur'ān. As the *Salāt* (Prayer) is the first and foremost obligatory duty enjoined by the Qur'ān, it is the practical proof and permanent test of the sincerity of one's Faith. Therefore, after a person's profession of Islām, the moment he hears the call to the Prayer (which sounds regularly five times a day from every mosque in the Muslim world), he should join the congregation for the *Salāt*, because this determines whether he is sincere in his profession or not. If he does not attend to the call and join the congregation, it is an indication that he is not sincere in his profession.

It must also be noted that "*iqama-tus-Salāt*" (the establishment of Prayer) is the comprehensive term. It means that *Salāt* should be performed in congregation and that permanent arrangements should be made for it in every

habitation; otherwise *Salāt* will not be considered to have been established, even if every inhabitant of a place offers the *Salāt* individually.

6. The fourth condition to benefit from the Qur'ān is that one should be willing to part with one's money according to the instructions of the Book in order to render the rights of Allah and Man and should make monetary sacrifices for the cause of Islām which he has accepted.

7. The fifth condition is that one should believe in the truth of all those Books which Allah sent down by Revelation to the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings) and the Prophets before him at different times in different countries. Those who do not believe in any kind of guidance from Allah, cannot at all benefit from the guidance of the Qur'ān. Likewise those who profess to believe in the necessity of guidance from Allah but do not turn to Revelation and the Prophets for it, or who dub their own theories as "divine light", cannot obtain any guidance from it. Moreover, guidance is also denied to those who believe only in that revealed Book or Books in which their forefathers believed and reject all other guidance received from the same Source. Apart from all such people, the Qur'ān guides only those who believe that they stand in need of Divine Guidance as well as admit that it does not come to every man individually but reaches humanity only through the Prophets and revealed Books. Then those who want guidance should not be slaves to any racial or national prejudices but should be seekers after truth and should submit to it wherever and in whatever form they find it.

8. This is the sixth and last condition. "Hereafter" is a comprehensive word which applies to the collection of many beliefs, which are as follows:

- (a) Man has not been created irresponsible in the world but he is answerable to Allah for all his deeds here.
- (b) The present world order is not everlasting, but has to come to an end at a time only known to Allah.
- (c) After the present order has been brought to an end, Allah will create a new world, when He will bring back to life all human beings, born from the beginning of creation till Resurrection, simultaneously and will call them to account for their deeds, and then will reward them justly accordingly to what they had done in the world.
- (d) Those, who will be judged as good by Allah, will go to Paradise, and those who will be judged as bad will be cast into Hell.
- (e) The criterion of success or failure is not the prosperity or adversity of this worldly life, but successful in actual fact will be he who comes out successful in Allah's final judgement, and failure he who is a failure there.

أُولَئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
 سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
 قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِمْ ۖ وَعَلَىٰ أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝
 وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝
 يُخَدِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يُخَدِعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝
 فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ ۖ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۖ بِمَا كَانُوا
 يَكْذِبُونَ ۝ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ
 مُصْلِحُونَ ۝ إِلَّا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝ وَإِذَا
 قِيلَ لَهُمِ امْنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا
 إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِن لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝ وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا
 آمَنَّا ۖ وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ ۝
 اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ۝ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ
 اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ۝
 مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا ۖ فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ
 بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلْمٍ ۖ لَّا يَبْصِرُونَ ۝ صُمُّوا بكمُ عَمًى فَهُمْ لَا
 يَرْجِعُونَ ۝ أَوْ كَصَيْبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمٌ ۖ وَرَعْدٌ ۖ وَبَرْقٌ ۖ يَجْعَلُونَ
 أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ
 بِالْكَافِرِينَ ۝ يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا
 فِيهِ ۖ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ

١
 ٢
 ٣
 ٤
 ٥
 ٦
 ٧
 ٨
 ٩
 ١٠
 ١١
 ١٢
 ١٣
 ١٤
 ١٥
 ١٦
 ١٧
 ١٨
 ١٩
 ٢٠

تَفَاتُرًا

Such people are on the right way from their Lord and such are truly 5
successful.

As for those who have rejected⁹ (these things), it is all the same 6-7
to them whether you warn them or do not warn them: they are not
going to believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and ears and a
covering has fallen over their eyes,¹⁰ and they have incurred the
severest punishment.

Then there are some who say, "We believe in Allah and the 8-16
Last Day", whereas they do not believe at all. They thus try to deceive
Allah and the Believers, but they succeed in deceiving none except
themselves and they realize it not.¹¹ In their hearts is a disease which
Allah has increased all the more¹² and a painful doom is in store for
them for the lie they utter. Whenever it is said to them, "Spread not
disorder on the earth", their reply is, "We only seek to put things
aright". - Beware! they do spread disorder but they realize it not. And
when it is said to them, "Believe sincerely as the other people have
believed",¹³ they reply, "Should we believe as fools have believed?"¹⁴
Beware! they themselves are the fools, but they know it not. When they
meet those who believe, they say, "We, too, are believers", but when
they privily meet their evil geniuses,¹⁵ they say, "Indeed we are with
you: we are only mocking at these people". -- (Little do they realize
that) Allah is mocking at them. He gives them rope enough, and they
wander on and on blindly in their mischief and rebellion. These are the
people who have bartered away Guidance for error, but this is a
profitless bargain that they have made, and they are not at all on the
right way.

Their condition may be described in a parable: a man kindled a 17-20
fire and when it illuminated all around him, Allah took away the light
from their eyes and left them in utter darkness, where they could not
see anything.¹⁶ They are deaf; they are dumb; they are blind¹⁷ so they
will not return (to the right way). Or (still another parable may be cited
to depict their condition): heavy rain is falling from the sky,
accompanied by pitch darkness, thunder and lightning. When they hear
the thunderclap, they thrust their fingers into their ears for fear of
death, but Allah is encircling the disbelievers on all sides.¹⁸ The
lightning terrifies them as if it were going to snatch away their eye-
sight from them. When they see light, they move on a little further and