

SURAT-UL-FATIHAH

The Opening Chapter
Revealed at Mak-ka; Consists of 7 Years.

[In accordance with the Qur'aan Majeed, before reciting it, refuge has to be sought with Allaah against the Satan, originally named Iblis, thus “*A-‘u-zu-bil-la-hi mi-nash-shai-ta-nir-rajeem*” – I seek refuge with Allaah against the Satan (the accursed). It is one of the forms recited by the Prophet. It is not written in the Qur'aan Majeed but has to be read.]

Bis-mil-la-hir-Rah-ma-nir-Raheem

(We begin) with the name of Allaah, the All-Compassionate, the Most Merciful. It is read and written before each chapter (*Surah*) of the Qur'aan Majeed except *Sura-tut-Taubah* (9). It is also an *Ayat* of *Sura-tun-Nami*. According to *Hadis* (saying of the Prophet) it is to be recited by the Muslims before beginning an act or deed.

1. ***Al-ham-du-lil-la-hi Rab-bil-‘a-la-meen***. – **All praise to Allaah the RABB of all the Worlds.** *Rabb* means the Creator, Nourisher, Cherisher and Sustainer of all His creations. Worlds here include men, angels, jinns (and life, energy, matter, heavenly bodies and heavens etc., in all their stages.)
2. ***Ar-Rah-ma-nir-Raheem*** – **The All-Compassionate, the Most Merciful.** (*Rahman* signifies the Divine, attributes of Kindness and Benevolence of highest order, which cannot be attributed to anyone else except Allaah, as none else can reciprocate His Kindness and Generosity. *Raheem* is the Divine height of being Merciful and Kind.)
3. ***Ma-li-ki yau-mid-deen*** – **The MALIK of the Day of Judgment.** *Malik* here means Supreme Justice. Day of Judgment is the day of recompense of virtue and vice.

4. **Iy-yaka-na'-bu-du wa iy-ya-ka-nas-ta'een** – **Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we pray for help.** (After the Praise and Adoration of Allaah, this is an address to the Almighty from His humble servants.
5. **Ih-di-nas-si-ra-tal-mus-ta-qeem** – **Guide us on the right path.** Guidance here means to lead to His chosen path i.e. the Islam (and to keep steadfast on the principles enunciated in His last Book – the Qur'aan Majeed).
6. **Si-ra-tal-la-zina an-'am-ta-'a-lai-him** – **The path of those on whom Thou has bestowed Thy Bounties.** Here 'bounties' refer to reward of '*Din*' (the Islamic way of life) and those so rewarded, according to the Qur'aan Majeed, included Messengers, *Sid-dee-qeen*, *Shu-ha-da-'i* and *Sa-li-heen*. The Qur'aan says, "Those who obey Allaah and the Prophet, shall be with those rewarded from amongst *Na-bi-'een* (Messengers), *Sid-dee-qeen* (those who verify and are eminently truthful), *Shu-ha-da'i* (those who give up their lives in Divine cause) and *Sa-li-heen* (who lead a perfectly pious and sacred life).
7. **Ghai-ril-magh-zhu-bi, - 'alai-him wa lazh-zhal-leen** – **Neither was Thy 2.** There are two possible causes of going astray. (1) Lack of analysis and research into it; such people have been termed *zhal-leen* (2) In spite of analysis and enquires they do not accept to act on it; such people are termed *Magh-zhub* because knowingly going astray makes them susceptible to greater anger than otherwise.

The above seven verses of the Qur'aan Majeed and the *Surah*, amongst its thirty names, is also known as "*Um-mul-Kitab*", i.e. the basis of the Qur'aan Majeed in a nutshell. It combines His Praise, Greatness and Omnipotence and the manners to seek salvage and guidance to the "Right Path". Actually, it is an address revealed by the Almighty for recitation by His humble servants while offering the prayer, and indicative of the manner in which a prayer is to be moved before the Almighty.

It has been the practice of the Prophet to say "*A'meen*" at the end of this *Surah*. This word means – "May it be so".