



Understanding the Qur'an

Exercises on Suurat Al-Faatihah (Chapter 1)

Mohamed Atif Mogahed Mohamed

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A word to brothers and sisters:

The Muslim must learn by heart Suurat Al-Faatihah for the five daily *salwaat* (prayers). It is also necessary to understand it. So, speakers of English need to listen to the Arabic original. They also need to listen to and/or read the English translation of meanings. There are NET sites that provide both the Arabic text and the English text in spoken and written forms. The teacher is to help and direct the learner to listen, read and learn from a suitable site, e. g. www.quran.ksu.ed.sa. Repeated listening to both texts and reading the meanings in English are necessary for reciting and understanding the suurah. It serves no purpose to learn by heart and recite without understanding. Teaching, learning by heart, understanding and reciting the suurah are all acts of worship, which are rewardable. One needs to be aware of what one is doing in worship.

Teaching Al-Faatihah is considered a source of rewards even after the death of the teacher. Consider how often the learners will recite it and then teach it to others. The teacher's account after death keeps receiving multiple rewards.

The earlier the children are taught Al-Faatihah, the better. The early teaching is good for training the organs of speech to articulate the Arabic sounds correctly. The suurah contains a number of consonants that are not found in English: the (ح) is repeated five times, the (ع) five times, the (غ) two times, the (ط) one time, the (ص) two times and the (ض) two times. Stressing accurate articulation earlier accustoms the speech organs to producing the Arabic sounds accurately and fluently.

It would be very helpful to train the learner on pronouncing the letters representing the problem consonants. It would be also helpful to provide the learner with additional training on useful words and sentences containing the problem consonants, e. g. "Assalaamu **ع**laikum wa ra**ح**matullaahi wa barakaatuh" and "**ع**abaa **ح**al**ع**air" (Good morning), "Lou sama**ح**t" (If you please/Please), "Min fa**ض**lik" (Please? If you please), "**ق**ul" (Say), **ق**ur'aan (Qur'an), etc.

We normally teach our children to recite suurahs (1), (112), (113), (114) as well as Aayat Al-Kursi. The suurahs contain a number of problem sounds. Let us teach the children as early as possible. Let babies listen; they will not object. Later, help them say whatever they can. Correct pronunciation is a priority from the beginning, otherwise correcting later becomes more problematic; it is more difficult to unlearn.



Let us not forget the advantages of selecting what is teachable and learnable. In other words, the learner's needs and conditions have to be considered, and so does the art of teaching and educating. Let teaching and learning be a sweet memorable experience. Purified intentions and praying to Allah for help and rewards are a must. "They are the best, those that learn the Qur'an and teach it."

Baaraka Allaahu lana wa lakum.

Suurat Al-Faatihah:

Transliteration	Al-Faatihah in Arabic
(1) bismil-laahir-rahmaanir-raheem(i),	(١) بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
(2) alhamdu lil-laahi rabbil-ḥaalameen(ar),	(٢) الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
(3) arrahmaanir-raheem(i),	(٣) الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
(4) maaliki yawmid-deen(i),	(٤) مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
(5) iyyaaka naḥ'budu, wa-iyyaaka nastaḥeen(u),	(٥) إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
(6) ihdinaS-SiraaTal mustaqeem(a),	(٦) اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
(7) SiraaTal-ladeena anḥamta ḥalayhim, ghayril-maghDuubi ḥalayhim, wa-laD-Daaaalleen/	صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ (7)

Read carefully, then answer the Questions.

Transliteration:

/(1) bismil-laahir-rahmaanir-raheem(i), (2) alhamdu lil-laahi rabbil-ḥaalameen(ar), (3) arrahmaanir-raheem(i), (4) maaliki yawmid-deen(i), (5) iyyaaka naḥ'budu, wa-iyyaaka nastaḥeen(u), (6) ihdinaS-SiraaTal mustaqeem(a), (7) SiraaTal-ladeena anḥamta ḥalayhim, ghayril-maghDuubi ḥalayhim, wa-laD-Daaaalleen /

Translation of Meanings:

"(1) In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. (2) Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, (3) the Beneficent, the Merciful, (4) Sovereign of the Day of Judgment; (5) You alone we worship; You alone we ask for help. (6) Guide us to the straight path; (7) the path of those whom You have favored; not the path of those who earn Your anger nor of those who are astray."

Questions:**[1] Match the transliteration with the meanings in English.**

[] In the name of Allah	1- <i>wa-yyaaka nastaʿeen</i>
[] the Beneficent, the Merciful	2- <i>maaliki yawmid-deen</i>
[] Praise be to Allah,	3- <i>ghayril-maghDuubi ʿalayhim</i>
[] Lord of the Worlds,	4- <i>arraḥmaanir-raḥeem</i>
[] Sovereign of the Judgment Day	5- <i>ihdinaS-SiraaTal mustaqeem</i>
[] You alone we worship	6- <i>alḥamdu lil-laahi</i>
[] and You alone we ask for help	7- <i>yyaaka naʿbudu,</i>
[] Guide us to the straight path	8- <i>bisml-laahi</i>
[] the path of those whom You have favored	9- <i>walaD-Daaaalleen</i>
[] not the path of those who earn Your anger	10- <i>rabbil-ʿaalameen</i>
[] nor those who are astray.	11- <i>SiraaTal-laḍeena anʿamta ʿalayhim</i>

Answer the following questions.**[A] General:**

1- How many times does the Muslim recite Suurat Al-Faatihah in Salaat Al-Fajr?

.....

2- How many times does the Muslim recite it in Salaat Al-Zuhr?

.....

3- How many times does the Muslim recite it in Salaat Al-Maghrib?

.....

4- How many times does the Muslim recite it in the 5 daily salawaat?

.....



[B] Questions on verses 1-4:

1- Suurat Al-Faatihah expresses praise of Allah? What does it say?

.....

2- What should Allah be praised for?

.....

3- Does praising Allah benefit Him? [Yes – No]

4- If Allah is not praised, is He harmed? [Yes – No]

5- Does the Muslim benefit from praising Allah? [Yes – No]

6- Does Allah reward the Muslim for the praise? [Yes – No]

7- Say some words of praise you may know.

.....

8- Verses 1-4 mention some of Allah's Attributes. What are they?

.....

9- What does Allah do that makes Him *rabb-al'aalameen*? He

.....

10- Guess what the word *al'aalameen* (worlds) refers to.

.....

11- Who is the King of the Day of Judgment?

.....

12- What will happen to the disbelievers that Day?

.....

13- What will happen to the believers that do good?

.....

14- Will Allah forgive anyone that Day? [Yes - No]

15- Will anyone get any help from relatives and friends that Day? [Yes - No]



[C] Questions on verses 5-7:

1- The verses express submission to Allah? Which words?

.....

2- The verses express reliance on Allah? Which words?

.....

3- The last two verses are a prayer. What is the prayer for? For

.....

4- Describe the Straight Path in your own words. You may begin with: It is the path that / which

.....

Example:

The Straight Path (*aSSiraaT almustaqeem*) is the path that leads to Paradise.

The Straight Path (*aSSiraaT almustaqeem*) is the path that does not lead to Hell.

.....

.....

[D] More questions on the Straight Path:

1- Where does the Straight Path take one to? To

.....

2- If one refuses to take the Straight Path, where does one end up? In

.....

3- Is the Straight Path the path of those that believe or disbelieve in Allah? [Yes – No]

4- Is the Straight Path the path of those who disobey Allah? [Yes – No]

5- Is the Straight Path the path of those who displease Allah? [Yes – No]

6- If you believe in Allah and do good, are you on the Straight Path? [Yes – No]

7- If you follow the Qur'an, are you on the Straight Path? [Yes – No]



8- If you follow the example of Prophet Mohammad, are you on the Straight path? [Yes – No]

9- Can you think of some beliefs that put you on the Straight Path?

.....

10- Can you think of some acts that keep you on the Straight Path?

.....

[E] Questions on those that evoke Allah's anger and those that go astray:

1- What is the worst thing that could earn Allah's anger?

.....

2- Can you think of things that would evoke Allah's anger?

.....

3- Does Allah like people to go astray? [Yes – No]

4- Does He give the stray chances to join the Straight Path? [Yes – No]

5- If you follow Allah's Guidance, will you go astray? [Yes – No]

6- What is Allah's Guidance?

.....

[F] Which of the following pleases Allah, and which evokes His anger?

Choose [P] for what pleases Him and [Dis] for what displeases Him.

1- [P / Dis] Salaah on time.

2- [P / Dis] Killing innocent people.

3- [P / Dis] Helping the poor and the needy.

4- [P / Dis] Denying Him.

5- [P / Dis] Injustice and aggression.

6- [P / Dis] Hating people because they have a different skin colour or accent.



- 7- [P / Dis] Treating parents badly.
- 8- [P / Dis] Being good to relatives and neighbours.
- 9- [P / Dis] Usury (lending people money with interest).
- 10- [P / Dis] Slandering and backbiting others.

[G] One Hadith on Al-Faatihah:

According to the Hadith, Al-Faatihah is shared between the worshipper and Allah. It goes as follows:

Worshipper: Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Allah: My worshipper has praised Me.

Worshipper: The Beneficent, the Merciful.

Allah: My worshipper has glorified Me.

Worshipper: Sovereign of the Day of Judgment.

Allah: My worshipper has entrusted his / her affairs to Me.

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

Allah: This is between Me and My worshipper, and he /she will get what he /she has asked for.

Worshipper: Guide us to the Straight Path, the path of those whom you have favoured, not of those who have earned your anger, nor those who are astray.

Allah: This is what My worshipper is asking for, and it will be granted.

Since Al-Faatihah is shared between Allah and the worshipper, what should the Muslim do?

- 1- [Yes / No] Learn and teach it well?
- 2- [Yes / No] Recite it as fast as possible?
- 3- [Yes / No] Expect no response from Allah?
- 4- [Yes / No] Reflect on each verse?
- 5- [Yes / No] Mean what one recites?
- 6- [Yes / No] Not think of Allah listening to the recitation?

