

Surah al-Fatihah — line by line

Seven verses, said at least seventeen times a day. The first three praise, the fourth is the hinge, the last three ask.



1 • In the name of Allah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.” Counted here as the first verse of the surah; the schools differ over whether it is one.

Qur'an 1:1 • fiqh: the schools differ

2 • All praise

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.” Praise before request — and the first half of the reply quoted below.

Qur'an 1:2

3 • The two mercies

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.” Named again, immediately, before anything is asked of Him.

Qur'an 1:3

4 • Owner of that Day

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

“Sovereign of the Day of Recompense.” Mercy and reckoning set side by side in two lines.

Qur'an 1:4

5 • The hinge

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

“It is You we worship and You we ask for help.” The surah turns here from speaking about Him to speaking to Him.

Qur'an 1:5

6 • The one request

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

“Guide us to the straight path.” Of everything that could be asked seventeen times a day, this is what is asked.

Qur'an 1:6

7 • Which path

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

“The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour, not of those who earned anger, nor of those who went astray.”

Three groups, one road.

Qur'an 1:7

No prayer without it

“Whoever does not recite al-Fatihah in his prayer, his prayer is invalid.” And he ﷺ told Abu Sa'id he would teach him the greatest surah in the Qur'an — then named it, as the seven oft-repeated verses.

Sahih al-Bukhari 756 • 4474

A reply, line by line

Allah said: I have divided the prayer between Me and My servant in two halves. When he says “all praise is due to Allah”, Allah says: My servant has praised Me — and so on, to the end.

Sahih Muslim, Kitab as-Salah