

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Tafseer ul-Quran Course

Teacher - Farooq Khan

Understand Al-Qur'an The Easy Way (UK)

Ramadan 2025 - Day 7

Surah al-Fatiha - Part 3

سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

Surah Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝

You alone we worship and You alone We ask for help.

Ayah – 4

Surah Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝

You alone we worship and You alone We ask for help.

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نَسْتَعِينُ	إِيَّاكَ	وَ	نَعْبُدُ	إِيَّاكَ
we ask for help	You alone	and	we worship	You alone

Further Explanation of Ayah 4

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝

4. You alone we worship and You alone We ask for help.

- ❑ This Ayah is often translated as, ‘You Alone we worship and You Alone we ask for help.’ This translation fails to convey the entire meaning of the Ayah.
- ❑ Firstly, we need to add the missing dimension of slavery to Allah in that translation. Only ‘we worship’ is mentioned.
- ❑ In Arabic, the phrase na’budu (نَعْبُدُ) ‘we worship’, includes both slavery (عَبْدٌ) and worship - combined.
- ❑ This is important to understand because a person may appear to worship Allah, but not necessarily act like His slave. This is the case of a person who only takes from Islam what pleases him (pick and choose).

Further Explanation of Ayah 4

- ❑ A true slave is one who only does what his Master asks him to do. **That is the Master-slave relationship.**
- ❑ **This Ayah is therefore** a declaration of slavery **to none other than** Allah (swt).
- ❑ When we declare slavery to Allah, only then we truly free ourselves. **Otherwise, we are enslaved to entertainment, culture, peer-pressure, false ideologies, fashion, and so on.**
- ❑ **To be free from all that, is** by being a slave of Allah, the Creator, the Only One worthy of being enslaved to. **The only One we need to please is Allah.**

Further Explanation of Ayah 4

- The next part of the Ayah is **وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ** – ‘and You alone We ask for help’
- The word **نَسْتَعِينُ** is not merely to seek help, rather it is a type of help that you seek when you are already struggling with something, sincerely struggling, making considerable effort in and need the help desperately.
- In reality, if one is not struggling, then it may even be inappropriate for that person to seek help.
- A common example of that is, a person who complains about not being a good Muslim, complains that Allah is not helping him be one, but does not make effort to actually be one. Such a person is technically not struggling.

Further Explanation of Ayah 4

- ❑ This is not the case with the righteous of the past; they made a sincere effort and then asked for Allah's help.
- ❑ During the battle of Badar, a small number of believers first put in their efforts by going to the battlefield and then Allah sent the angels to help them.
If we understand this simple point, then it will change the way we act and seek help.
- ❑ Important to note in this phrase (وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ) is, Allah did not mention what it is that we seek help for. This absence of the subject can be interpreted in a number of ways.
- ❑ One of the reason for that may be that the One we ask help from already knows what we are struggling with - Allah is The All-knowing, The All-aware and does not need to be told what the problem is.

Further Explanation of Ayah 4

- A second reason could be that the list of things we need help with is so long that it is easier to just ask for help without listing them. This is not untrue as we have uncountable challenges in our lives that we need help with.
- A third way of interpreting this Ayah could be that this cry for help is a cry of desperation. Instead of detailing out the sort of help you need, you just scream 'Help'.
- If we put that into context in the Ayah, then this would mean that the cry for help that we direct towards Allah is for an extremely desperate situation that has rendered us almost speechless. We cannot even come up with words.

Further Explanation of Ayah 4

- All those are different ways of understanding the reality of our situation and the reason why we say to Allah, **إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ** – You alone we ask for help.
- **However**, the first thing that we would need help with is in the slavery to Allah, **and so it is the first thing mentioned after we say to Allah - إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ** - that You alone we enslave ourselves to and worship.
- Slavery to Allah is something that is in reality a challenge, **as we are always going to be tempted by Shaitan and his followers, and because** this slavery is such a difficult task, that we have to ask Allah for help with it.

Further Explanation of Ayah 4

- ❑ Slavery is the first thing we seek help with, and then we seek help in all matters; but once slavery to Allah is taken care of, everything else is taken care of.
- ❑ Once we ask Allah for help in being His successful slaves, He responds, in the next Ayah, with what we are supposed to seek.

Surah Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝

Guide us to the straight path

Ayah – 5

Surah Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ٥

5. Guide us to the straight path

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الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

الصِّرَاطَ

إِهْدِنَا

(to) the straight

the path

guide

Further Explanation of Ayah 5

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝

5. Guide us to the straight path

- ❑ Allah (swt) is directing us to ask Him to guide us to the Siraat al-Mustaqeem – the straight path.
- ❑ Note, that immediately after a declaration of seeking help from Allah, we are to seek help in guidance too. This is logical because the first act of a slave for his master would be to ask for guidance and instructions.
- ❑ To the Arabs, guidance was also a gift; for a Bedouin lost in the desert nothing is more valuable than guidance.
- ❑ Allah, by making it mandatory for us to recite this Surah in every Salah has shown us the reality of our lives in relation to guidance.

Further Explanation of Ayah 5

- ❑ We beg for guidance over and over each day because we don't own guidance. We need guidance, we are desperate and beg Allah for it.
- ❑ When we repeat this Surah in every Salah, it is as if we ask Allah for guidance at Fajar, and lest we get misguided by noon, and at Zohar we ask... and so on, all our lives.
- ❑ Many people have knowledge, but a few are guided. Knowledge is easy to obtain but guidance is only from Allah
- ❑ Whomsoever Allah guides, no one can misguide, whomsoever Allah leaves to go astray, no one can bring back to the path of guidance.
- ❑ Allah (swt) tells us that this Qur'an is a Guidance for:
هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ - for the mankind (general)
هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ - for the pious (special)

Further Explanation of Ayah 5

- As for the word 'الصِّرَاطُ' it means the straight path. Siraat is a kind of path, from A to B, without any alternate routes.
- الْمُسْتَقِيمَ - is commonly translated as straight. But it is much more than that. It is related to قَامَةٌ - which means to stand or seeking straightness. Allah is telling us to tread a path that is going straight up i.e., a spiritual journey to Him.
- Literally, this path is going up like a ladder, leaving this world. We are basically struggling against the gravity of the worldly life, on our journey to Allah. And this gravity of this world, its temptations will always be there till we die.
- So, this path is straight, but it is long, steep, difficult, heading upwards, and now we know where we have to go.

Surah Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ٥

(The) path (of) those on whom You (have) bestowed Your favours. Not (the path of) those who earned (Your) wrath on them and nor of those who go astray

Ayah – 6

Surah Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ٥

6. (The) path (of) those on whom You (have) bestowed Your favours. Not (the path of) those who earned (Your) wrath on them and nor of those who go astray.

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صِرَاطَ	الَّذِينَ	أَنْعَمْتَ	عَلَيْهِمْ
(the) path	(of) those	You (have) bestowed favours	on them

Surah Fatihah - سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ٥

6. (The) path (of) those on whom You (have) bestowed Your favours. Not (the path of) those who earned (Your) wrath on them and nor of those who go astray.

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الضَّالِّينَ	وَلَا	عَلَيْهِمْ	الْمَغْضُوبِ	غَيْرِ
those who go astray	and nor of	on them	(of) those who earned (Your) wrath	not

Further Explanation of Ayah 6

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝

(The) path (of) those on whom You (have) bestowed Your favors. Not (the path of) those who earned (Your) wrath on them and nor of those who go astray

- ❑ Now that Allah made clear to us where we have to go, Allah makes us describe the previous people who were successful in following the straight path which was a hard and difficult journey towards Allah.
- ❑ This is important even in our worldly dealings when we look up to the experiences of people who have been successful in fields that we have questions in.
- ❑ Likewise, in this Ayah we ask for the path of those people upon whom Allah has already showered His blessings.

Further Explanation of Ayah 6

- Note, this is in past tense, which subtly shows that the real role models of Islam are not the ones who are still alive, rather the ones who are gone.
- The ones who are alive are prone to the dangers of the Shaitan. We ask Allah to show us the path of those who have passed the tests.
- Also note that we say ‘أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ’ - bestowed Your favours, associating guidance with Allah again, that only Allah owns guidance and only Allah can bestow upon whom He wills and take away from whom He wills.
- غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ - Not (of) those who earned Your wrath.. The people referred to in this phrase means that these are the people upon whom anger is being hurled at.

Further Explanation of Ayah 6

- ❑ The anger is not only from Allah, but the angels are angry at them, the believers are angry at them, the previous and later generations are angry at them, to such an extent that such are the people upon whom anger is thrown.
- ❑ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ - those who earned Your wrath on them, are those who knew what was right and what was wrong, they had the knowledge and yet they chose to disobey Allah.
- ❑ Whereas, الضَّالِّينَ - 'those who go astray' - were the ones who were lost due to ignorance.
- ❑ Every one of us is therefore required to acquire the right knowledge in order to be on the straight path.
- ❑ The Quran is teaching us to not become like either of them. This is why we ask Allah (swt) for guidance and safety from being amongst the ones who are failures.

Gems from Surah al-Fatiha

- Balancing Knowledge and Action: This Surah begins by introducing us to Allah (swt). It begins with knowledge. If we have right knowledge, then it will lead to right action. Knowledge of Allah will lead us to one action on our part i.e. our decision to be slaves of Allah.
- If we do have the right actions, then we are on the straight path i.e. the path of successful people before us (people of right knowledge who turned it into right actions).
- Guidance is when we balance knowledge with action.
- As for misguidance, this can be of two types: One is when we have knowledge and no action, or action without knowledge.

Gems from this Surah

- The Surah begins with:
 - knowledge and then action,
 - then when they are both together it talks about guidance,
 - then it tells us not to be like people who have knowledge by no action,
 - then it talks about people who have action but no knowledge.
 - It is absolutely marvellous how Allah says this.

Gems from this Surah

- Symmetry: The Prophet of Allah (sas) described in the hadith Qudsi,
 - that Allah calls Surah Fatihah something that is between Him and His slave.
 - The first part is for Me, the middle is between us and the last is for My slave.
 - So, the middle part of the Surah is *iybaka na'budu wa iybaka nastaeen*. If we divide this Ayah into equal parts, the middle part is 'wa' (and), the first part is us proclaiming our worship to Allah alone, and the second part is declaring our dependence on Allah alone, again dividing the Ayah between Allah and us.

Linguistic Miracle

- A Mix of Nouns and Verbs: We will learn that nouns are permanent, and verbs are temporary.
 - The first part of the Surah is about Allah, the middle part is about Allah and us, and the last part is about us.
 - The first part contains only nominal sentences, and this part is about Allah, and it is only befitting to describe Allah in a permanent sense.
 - The last part is composed of verbal sentences, and we humans are temporary.
 - As for the middle part, that is supposed to be between us and Allah, it is both a verbal sentence and a nominal sentence.

Linguistic Miracle

- Individually Collective: This Surah is a balance between individual Eman and collective action.
 - Knowledge and personal relationship with Allah are in the heart,
 - but our actions will be with fellow Humans - collective seeking of guidance from Allah, and protection from being unsuccessful.

Main Lessons Learnt

Allah (swt) is teaching us two very important aspects in this Surah:

1. Knowledge: About Allah (swt), Islam and Eman.
2. Action: About Obeying Allah (swt), establishing the Deen and living a life full of Eman to please only Allah.

Action Plan (Dua at the end)

- ❑ Ask: Allah (swt) to guide us to follow the path of people such as Prophets and Righteous people and protect us from following the path of those whose knowledge or actions or both are wrong, ameen
- ❑ Evaluate: if your knowledge or actions are of those who earned or will earn Allah's wrath
- ❑ Plan: to learn the rest of the Qur'an with Taweel, Tajweed and Tafseer and implement every aspect of Deen in your everyday life.
- ❑ Propagate: Help others in understanding the key messages from the Qur'an and implementing them in everyday life especially your Family members.