



IMAAN BUILDER 2: EMPLOYING AL-FAATIHAH AS THE BASIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF IMAAN

Introduction

All Praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him, seek His aid and His Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever Allaah misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah, alone, without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

To proceed: This is Imaan Builder 2: Shaikh ul-Islam Muhammad bin 'Abdul-Wahhaab's Brief Commentary on al-Faatihah

IMAAAN BUILDER 2: UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPTS IN SURAH AL-FATIHAH

Stated the Shaikh of Islaam, Muhammad bin ‘Abdul-Wahhaab:

[1] All praise is due to Allaah, Lord of all the Worlds.

[2] The Most Merciful, Every Merciful [His servants].

[3] Master of the Day of Judgement.

These three verses contain three matters:

In the **first verse** is the love of Allaah, who is the bestower of bounties and favours. And the bestower is loved to the extent of his bestowal of favours. Love itself is of four types:

a) Love entailing Shirk, and they are those about whom Allaah said, “And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allâh as rivals (to Allâh). They love them as they love Allâh...” up until He said, “...And they will never get out of the Fire.” (Baqarah 2:165-167). **b)** Loving falsehood and its people, and hating truth and its people, and this is a characteristic of the hypocrites. **c)** Natural love, and this is the love of wealth, offspring. And when it does not divert one from obedience to Allaah and nor assist in falling into the prohibitions of Allaah, then it is permissible. **d)** Loving the people of Tawheed, and hating the people of Shirk, and this is the strongest of the handholds of Imaan, and the greatest of that which Allaah is worshipped by.

In the second verse there is hope (rajaa’). And in the third verse there is fear (khawf). “**You alone do we worship**”, meaning I worship You O Lord with what has preceded of these three, that is with Love of you, Hope in you, and Fear of you. Hence, these three are pillars (arkaan) of worship, and directing them to other than Allaah is Shirk. Also in these three verses is a refutation of the one who adhered to only one of the three, such as the one who worships with Love only, or Hope only, or Fear only. And whoever directed a single one of them to other than Allaah, then he has committed Shirk. And amongst the benefits they (the verses) contain is that they refute all the groups who are attached to only one of these (three qualities), such as the one who worshipped Allaah, the Exalted, out of love alone. Likewise, the one who worshipped Allaah, the Exalted, out of hope alone and similarly, the one who worshipped Allaah, the Exalted, out of fear alone, like the Khawaarij.

[4] You alone do we worship and in You alone do we seek aid.

This contains the Tawheed of Uloohiyyah¹, and Tawheed of Ruboobiyyah².

¹ That is Allaah’s being singled out with all forms of worship, those of the heart, the tongue and the limbs.

² Which is Allaah’s being singled out with creatorship (khalq), ownership (mulk) and regulation (tadbeer) of the whole of creation.

[5] Guide us to the Straight Path.

This contains a refutation of the Innovators.

[6] The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace.

[7] Not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians).

And as for the last two verses, then they contain the following benefits:

- a) A mention of the states (conditions) of people
- b) Allaah divided them into three groups: 1) those who are favoured 2) those upon whom is anger 3) those who are astray.
- c) Those upon whom is anger are the ones who have knowledge but no action.
- d) Those who are astray are those given to worship, but without knowledge.
- e) Even though these verses were revealed in connection with the Jews and the Christians, they are applicable to everyone who is described with what has preceded.
- f) And as for the third group, they are those who are described with both knowledge and action, and they are the ones who are favoured.

And [the Surah] also contain the following benefits:

- a) Negating power and might from oneself, since he is the one favoured upon (hence, he is not the owner of power and might)
- b) Perfect knowledge of Allaah
- c) Negation of deficiencies from Him, the Blessed
- d) The servant's knowledge of his Lord and of his own self, since if there is a Rabb (Lord), then there is a marboob (slave) by necessity. And when there is one who shows mercy (raahim) then there is one who is shown mercy (marhoom) by necessity. And when there is an owner (maalik), then there is one who is owned (mamlook) by necessity. And when there is a servant (abd), then there is one that is worshipped (ma'bood) by necessity. And when there is a guide (haad), then there is one who is guided (mahdee) by necessity. And when there is one who bestows favours (mun'im), then there is one who is favoured. And when there is one upon whom is anger (maghdoob), then there is one who becomes angry.

Hence, this Surah contains both Uloohiyyah and Ruboobiyyah, the negation of all shortcomings from Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, and it also contains the knowledge of worship (Ibaadah) and its pillars. And Allaah knows best.”³

End of the Shaikh's words.

³ Refer to Majmoo'at ut-Tawheed, pp.19-20.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

1. Since, al-Faatihah is recited in every prayer, and is also the “Essence of the Qur’an” (Umm ul-Qur’aan), then what it contains of benefits, can be utilised to develop, maintain and reinforce Imaan.

2. The Surah contains the following matters (which should be enumerated and memorised):

- a. A mention of the pillars of worship – Love, Fear and Hope (the actions of the heart)
- b. A mention of the Names and Attributes (Allaah, Rabb, Rahmaan, Raheem Malik) which are the basis of all the other Names and Attributes (ref. Ibn al-Qayyim in al-Madaarij).
- c. A mention of both Uloohiyyah and Ruboobiyyah
- d. A mention of what is for Allaah and what is for the Servant
- e. A mention of what refutes the Innovators within Islaam, and thus emphasis upon the Sunnah and the way of the Salaf
- f. A mention of the pillars of guidance – Ilm and ‘Amal (Knowledge and Action)
- g. A mention of the various states of people with respect to knowledge and action

3. Ibn al-Qayyim said, in his book “as-Salaat, wa Hukm Taarikihaa”:

And when he says: All praise is due to *Allaah* the Rabb of all the Worlds, he pauses for a short while waiting for the response of his Lord: “My servant has praised Me.” Then when he says: The Most Gracious the Most Merciful, he waits for the response: “My servant has extolled Me” and when he says: Master of the Day of Judgement, he waits for the response: “My servant has glorified Me.”

It is the delight of his heart, the pleasure of his eye and the joy of his soul that his Lord says about him: “My servant” three times. By *Allaah!* If the fumes of desire and the darkneses of the soul were not upon the hearts, they would have flown out of happiness and joy that their Lord, Maker and Diety says: “My servant has praised Me, My servant has extolled Me and My servant has glorified Me.”

Then there would have been space in his heart to witness (the reality) of the three names which are the basis of all the Beautiful Names and these are: *Allaah*, ar-Rabb and ar-Rahmaan...

...When he says: Master of the Day of Judgement, he witnesses the glory which befits none but the the King, the Truth, the Manifest. So he witnesses a very powerful and compelling King, to Whom the whole creation has yielded, to Whom the faces are humbled, to Whom the the creation humbles itself, and to Whom every possessor of power and honour submits. He witnesses with his heart a King (Who is) upon the Throne of the Heaven...

...And then he says: You alone do we worship and from You alone do we seek help, in which lies the secret of the creation and the affair, of the world and the hereafter, and which contains the loftiest of goals and the most excellent of means (of approach to *Allaah*). The loftiest of goals is enslavement to *Allaah* and the most excellent of means is His help and assistance. There is no diety deserving of worship in truth except He and there is no helper in His worship besides Him. Therefore, His worship is the greatest of goals and His aid is the loftiest of means...

...And these words contain the two types of Tawheed and they are Tawheed ur-Ruboobiyyah and Tawheed ul-Uloohiyyah. Devotion to *Allaah* is comprised in His names ar-Rabb and *Allaah*, so he is worshipped on account of His Uloohiyyah, help is sought from Him on account of His Ruboobiyyah and He guides to the Straight Path on account of His Mercy. The first part of the surah therefore, mentions His names *Allaah*, ar-Rabb and ar-Rahmaan for the purpose of the one who seeks His worship, help and guidance. He is alone in being able to bestow all of that. There is no one who can aid others in *Allaah's* worship besides *Allaah* and none can guide (to the Straight Path) except Him.

Then the caller realises with the speech of *Allaah*: Guide us to the Straight Path, his extreme need for this (guidance). He is never in need of any other thing as much as he is for this guidance. He is need of it in every moment and at every glance of the eye...

...Then *Allaah* makes it clear that the people of this Guidance are those who have been specified with His favour, not those upon whom is His anger, and they are the ones who know the Truth but do not follow it and not of those who are astray, and they are those who worship *Allaah* without knowledge. Both of these groups share with each other in speaking about His creation, His command and His Names and Attributes without knowledge. The path of those upon whom is His favour and blessing is different from that of the people of falsehood with respect to knowledge and action.

When he finishes from this praise, supplication and tawheed he has been ordered to end it with 'aameen' which is a seal to (to his supplication) and with which the aameen of the angels in the sky coincides. This aameen is from the beautification of the prayer, just like the raising of the hands is a beautification of the prayer, a following of the sunnah, veneration of the command of *Allaah*, worship by the hands and a sign of the transition from one pillar (of the prayer) to another."

4. When a servant wishes to renew and invigorate his Imaan, then let him pay attention to the meanings of this Surah, both in the prayer and outside of it, and let him contemplate upon them, during the times of the day and night.

5. The Surah contains a refutation of the Innovations, and the Innovators and the Sects, and is an affirmation of the correctness of the Sunnah and its People, who guide themselves by way of the Salaf, in all ages, locations and circumstances.

6. The Surah alludes to the state of a Muslim with respect to knowledge and action. So he could be acting upon other than knowledge, and hence be away from the Sunnah, acting

upon other than it, speaking with other than it, in lesser or greater amounts. Or he could be hard-hearted not acting upon what he knows, following lusts and desires, in greater or lesser amounts. And all the people fall into a spectrum in between these two states, and hence have something of action upon ignorance and something of action in opposition to knowledge. And only those are exempted who are favoured by Allaah, in knowledge and action – and they are the People of the Sunnah.

7. From another angle, the Surah contains **Tawheed**, **Ittibaa'**, and **Tazkiyah**.

We ask Allaah, the one who accepts from the Muttaqeen, that He nourishes us all with an abundance of love, fear and hope, and that He helps us to cultivate and preserve the actions upon which our entrance to Paradise and safety from the Fire lies – by way of granting us success in attaining the realisation of the greatness of this Surah. Ameen.

Prayers and peace upon the Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and whoever follows his way until the Hour is established.