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The Revelation of Al-Fatihah: A Tafsir-Based Analysis of Its Context, Themes and Societal Impact

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Abstract

Al-Fatihah, known as "The Opening," is the first chapter of the Quran and serves as a cornerstone of Islamic worship and theology. Revealed in Mecca during a time of significant struggle against polytheism and social injustice, this chapter emphasizes the oneness of God (Tawhid) and addresses the challenges faced by early Muslims. Its recitation fosters unity and identity among believers, reinforcing communal bonds in a divided society. The study aims to explore the revelation, theme, and societal impact of al-Fatihah through a library-based tafsir approach. Primary sources such as al-Qurtubi's al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān, Ibn Kathīr's Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīm, Ibn al-Qayyim's Madārij al-Sālikīn, and contemporary tafsir by al-Sa'dī and Ibn 'Uthaymīn are analyzed alongside modern scholarship. The context of Al-Fatihah's revelation highlights its role in providing spiritual clarity and moral guidance. The chapter's themes of mercy, resilience, and divine guidance offer hope to believers, emphasizing the importance of a direct relationship with Allah. Its recitation in daily prayers reinforces Muslim identity across culture and context. By filling the gap in existing research on the historical and theological context of its revelation, this study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the enduring role in shaping Muslims' spirit and communal life. This article aims to enhance understanding of Al-Fatihah's historical context and enduring significance in shaping the faith and practices of Muslims.

Keywords: *Al-Fatihah; Contemporary Tafseer; Revelation.*

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Introduction

Al-Fatihah, known with many names such as the opening chapter, exceptional in form and use, holds a special place in the hearts of all Muslims [1]. It serves as the foundational text in the Qur'ān, summarising important themes of guidance, worship, and the relationship between humanity and the divine. Its unfolding is important not only for its spiritual implications but also for its educational and linguistic richness. It serves not only in the holy text, but also as a fundamental prayer in Islamic practice and a core life guideline that is explained in more detail in the following surah. Known also as Umm al-Kitāb (Mother of the Book) and al-Sab' al-Mathānī (the Seven Oft-Repeated Verses), it is both a summary of the Qur'anic worldview and a constant reminder of the believer's relationship with Allah. Preceding many long and great surahs after it, Allah prepared many wisdom and reasons with it. Through this article, the researcher will study it to gain a deeper understanding and increase faith and trust in Allah. This article will explore the revelation, meaning, and themes of Al-Fatihah, and shed light on its role in the daily lives of Muslims.

There are three issues that can be raised. First, the context of the revelation of Surah al-Fatihah. Second, an explanation of the meaning and themes contained in Surah al-Fatihah. Third, the impact of al-Fatihah on muslim society. Several studies have examined Al-Fatihah. Similarly, the article from Mohamed Ibrahim Hassan Othman and friends focuses on uncovering and analysing al-Fatihah in linguistic and semantic coherence [2]. The article from Asep Muksin and friends explored the elements in al-Fatihah that have great potential as an effective psychological and spiritual therapy method for reducing stress [3]. The article from Nida Husna Abdul Malik highlights the relevance of al-Fatihah in the concept of living religion. It encourages the application of religious values to address contemporary challenges and promotes interfaith understanding in increasingly diverse societies [4]. The article from Asa Nur Fadhilah and Andri Nirwana A.N., underscores the tafsir of al-Fatihah as a context of prayer and its impact on daily life and spiritual connections [5]. The datas above shows that the topic that examines integrated causes of the descent of al-Fatihah and contemporary problems can be said to be still four. Therefore, this paper is here to complement the shortcomings of previous research. This paper then tries to explain the revelation of Surah al-Fatihah in depth. This study contributes specifically and actually in providing an in-depth understanding of the study of Qur'anic interpretation among academics and Islamic society.

Method

This study of Qur'anic exegesis requires a methodology that balances respect for inherent tradition with sensitivity to contemporary concern. In addressing Surah al-Fatihah, this research adopts a qualitative library research approach, relying primarily on textual analysis of both classical and contemporary sources. In particular, the focus of the study refers to primary and secondary data sources. The methodology is structured around three key dimensions: analytic, descriptive, source selection, and analytical framework. Analytic description for the revelation and historical content. This study utilizes both primary data sources, refer to the book al-Qurtubī's *al-Jāmi' li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, Ibn Kathīr's *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīm*, Ibn Qayyim's *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, al-Suyūṭī's *al-Itqān fi 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, al-Sa'dī's *Taysīr al-Karīm al-Rahmān*, and Ibn 'Uthaymīn's *Tafsīr al-Fātiḥah wa al-Baqarah*. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained through literature related to the theme studied. Furthermore, all data that has been presented will be analyzed with these analytical frameworks in two overlapping approaches: *Tafsīr Taḥlīlī* (verse-by-verse analysis), in which each verse of al-Fatihah is examined for its linguistic and theological thematic significance. *Tafsīr Mawḍū'ī* (thematic analysis) is treated as a thematic whole with emphasis on its core motifs of tawḥīd, mercy, worship, and guidance. The thematic method allows the surah to be interpreted as a concise summary in the Islamic creed. Societal impact, according to bringing the understanding of the exegesis to the action in daily life.

Result and Discussion

Al-Fatihah was revealed in Mecca, a time marked by the early struggles of the Muslim community against polytheism and social injustice. The early Muslims faced immense challenges as they opposed the prevalent polytheistic beliefs of Meccan society. Al-Fatihah's emphasis on the oneness of God (Tawḥīd) directly addresses this context, reinforcing the foundational Islamic belief that God is singular and unique. It served not only as a theological assertion but also as a rallying cry for believers amidst a society steeped in idolatry. Social injustice, the socio-economic conditions of Mecca were marked by inequality and exploitation, particularly against the marginalized (weak, low-power people in society). Al-Fatihah's call for divine guidance and mercy can be seen as a response to the injustices faced by the early community, offering them hope and a spiritual framework to navigate their struggles [6].

The Revelation of al-Fatihah

Al-Suyūṭī cites traditions suggesting that al-Fatihah was the first complete surah revealed. Ibnu Abbas is reported to have said that the surah was revealed in Mecca, making it among the earliest revelations. According to the science of the Quran, Al-Fatihah was revealed in sections, with the entire chapter completed by the time of the Prophet's migration to Medina. This gradual approach allowed the chapter to address the evolving needs of the early Muslim community, responding to their immediate concerns and providing a coherent spiritual guide [7].

The designation of al-Fatihah as Makiyyah, which means that the surah was revealed before Rasulullah Shallallahu 'alaihi wasallam's migration to Medina. Classified as a Makiyyah surah, Al-Fatihah reflects the themes prevalent in Mecca, focusing on monotheism, guidance, and community identity. This classification further underscores its role in shaping the early Islamic narrative and its significance in the context of Meccan society. It provides early muslims with a concise doctrinal creed, recited repeatedly in prayer, that their identity amidst an environment dominated by polytheism and social and political hostility [8].

Meaning and Themes of Al-Fatihah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Sovereign of the Day of Recompense.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

It is You we worship and You we ask for help.

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the straight path

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray

Al-Fatihah is mutawatir mentioned with 7 verses. There are different opinions about the 7th verse of Surah al-Fatihah. Is the basmalah included in Surah al-Fatihah? Al-Qurtubi mentioned in *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* that there are 3 opinions:

- a. Basmalah is not a verse in al-Fatihah, it is only a separator between one surah and another. It's Malikiyyah, Hanafiyah, Hanabilah, Qurtubi, and Ibn Jarir's opinion. Qurtubi explains in the narrations and critical analysis. Consequently, the first verse starts from *Alhamdu lillahi Rabbil 'aalameen*, start reading aloud in this verse while praying. The 6th verse is *Siraatal-lazeena an'amta 'alaihim*, and the 7th is *ghayril-maghdoobi 'alaihim wa lad-daaalleen*.
- b. Basmalah is the first verse of all surahs, according to Ibnul Mubarak's opinion. Consequently, reading Basmalah loudly before reading the entire surah while praying
- c. Basmalah is the first verse of Surah al-Fatihah, Syafi'iyah's opinion. Consequently, one starts reading aloud in basmalah while praying[8].

This legal discussion reflects the centrality of al-Fatihah in determining prayer validity.

Al-Fatihah is brief yet rich in meaning [9]. It consists of seven verses, which explain the heart of the Qur'an, the core of Islam: Invocation of Allah's Mercy and Compassion. The chapter opens with praise for Allah, the Lord of all worlds, emphasizing His attributes of mercy and compassion. The repetition of these attributes underscores the importance of divine mercy in Islam [10],[11]. It serves as a reminder of His compassionate nature, inviting believers to seek His forgiveness. The invocations of Allah's Mercy before asking in their prayer and invocation explain the perfection of their faith. Classical exegetes highlight the linguistic richness of *alhamdu*, encompassing praise, gratitude, and acknowledgment.

In his exegesis, al-Tabarī emphasizes the philological roots of key terms and their usage in Arabic poetry. He distinguishes between (*al-hamdu*) comprehensive praise and (*al-shukr*) gratitude for specific favor [12],[13]. His exegetical concern for grounding Qur'anic language in pre-Islamic linguistic heritage [14],[15].

Acknowledgment of Sovereignty: The phrase "Master of the Day of Judgment" highlights Allah's ultimate authority and control over the universe, reminding believers of the accountability they will face. In another explanation, Allah is the Master of all days, every single day in destiny. every day of destiny. This phrase explains the perfection of a believer's fear, which corresponds to the

perfection of his faith in Allah. This is followed by his pledge, "To Thee only do we worship, and to Thee only do we seek help", the perfect servitude of humility, submission, and obedience [16].

Guidance and worship: The Surah's instruction to seek guidance on the "straight path" reflects the human desire for divine guidance in life. This path is associated with righteousness and adherence to Allah's will. It's the great invocation, asking for divine help. It's also the guide for asking for determination on the straight path and asking to be shown another path of goodness. Allah teaches us the etiquette of prayer and supplication by praising Allah before making a request. Ask Allah for anything with full confidence that all requests will be granted. Always ask and rely on Allah for all matters great and small.

Righteousness in contrast to those who go astray: The mention of those who have earned Allah's wrath and those who have gone astray serves as a warning against deviation from the faith. Allah emphasises His power over the human heart, easily misleading or saving its owner. There is only one way to be saved from the wrath of Allah: ask the owner of the heart to be established in the truth. Emphasising the importance of remaining steadfast in faith and practice.

Al-Fatihah expounds on several important themes, the first of which is monotheism (tauhid). Al-Fatihah emphasizes the oneness of Allah, a fundamental concept in Islam. The opening verses establish a direct relationship between the believer and Allah. By eliminating intermediaries, it shows the closeness of the relationship and the best way to maintain that relationship by always seeking and pleading with Allah. In the way that Allah has taught, without deviating from and violating the rules. Purifying worship and surrendering to Allah alone, in a pledge that is always repeated, and understanding the consequences of the pledge. In terms of revelation, as is typical of the Suras revealed before the Hijrah, most of the topics are tawhid. In Surah Al-Fatihah, the main theme is monotheism, the deeds of Allah, the worship of humans and jinn, and the names and attributes of Allah. The nature of the believer and the consequences of faith, as well as the consequences of disobeying and violating Allah's religion.

Divine Mercy and Compassion, the repetition of Allah's merciful attributes (Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim) is part of tawhid. It serves to remind Muslims of Allah's infinite compassion. It gives hope to continue to improve oneself, one's relationship with Allah, and with human beings, even if one has committed many sins. It gives hope to stop committing sins and return to Allah's decree. Always allowing oneself after all the bad things have happened. Repairing the relationship with God after disobedience and committing to keep

trying to improve. The theme also encourages people to embody compassion in their interactions with others, fostering a sense of community and empathy.

Guidance and Truth, Al-Fatihah for guidance, reflects the human need for guidance and advice in life. It emphasises the importance of seeking knowledge and understanding to align one's actions with the divine will. The incessant supplications and requests are indicative of Allah's great power. Only through submission and supplication to Allah will He fulfil His will. The 'straight path' represents the path of righteousness, which emphasises ethical behaviour and moral integrity. Of all the supplications to Allah, it commands us to ask Him for guidance and direction. He emphasises that this is the most important thing in the lives of believers and the greatest request of their lives. In other words, Allah teaches us to ask Him for anything, no matter how big or how impossible it may seem at the time. This shows that nothing is impossible for Allah. This is also part of Tawheed, relating to the actions of the servant.

Ibn Kathīr frames al-Fatihah as a dialogue between Allah and His servant, citing the hadis qudsi: " I have divided the prayer between Myself and My servant into two halves.. " His exegesis emphasizes narrational reports and the surah's role in prayer. *Iyyāka na'budu* represents exclusive devotion to Allah, while *ihdinā al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* represents continuous need for divine guidance [17]. Al-Sa'dī presents al-Fatihah as an all-encompassing summary of the Quran. He interprets *iyṯāka na'budu wa iyyāka nasta'in* as the 'secret' of the surah, highlighting the balance between servitude and reliance. His exegesis is accessible, aiming to provide moral and spiritual lessons for lay readers [18].

Accountability and the Hereafter, Al-Fatihah instills a sense of accountability in believers. It serves as a reminder that actions in this life have consequences in the afterlife, encouraging mindfulness and responsible living. This invocation serves several critical purposes: awareness of consequences. By acknowledging God as the ultimate authority on the Day of Judgment, believers are reminded that their actions in this life are not without repercussions. This creates a framework where ethical behavior and righteous conduct are paramount, as they will be evaluated in the afterlife. Moral responsibility, the emphasis on accountability, encourages individuals to live mindfully and responsibly. It instills a sense of vigilance, prompting believers to reflect on their choices and the impact of their actions on themselves and others. Motivation for good deeds, the prospect of facing divine judgment, serves as a powerful motivator for positive behavior. Believers are encouraged to engage in acts of charity, kindness, and justice, knowing that these actions contribute to their standing on the Day of Judgment. Spiritual reflection, this invocation invites believers to engage in self-reflection and spiritual growth. It encourages them to assess their lives in light of their faith, fostering a deeper connection with Allah

and a commitment to living according to Islamic principles. Hope and fear, the duality of hope for divine mercy and fear of judgment, reinforce a balanced approach to faith. Believers are inspired to strive for goodness while remaining aware of the consequences of wrongdoing [19].

From the beginning to its conclusion, al-Fatihah contained the ingenuity in word selection, and the splendor in moving from a style to a style of meaning and structure, which had the greatest impact in awakening souls and winning hearts [20],[21]. In the context of Quranic recitation, the concept of waqf and ibtida' assume paramount significance in preserving both the structural integrity and semantic essence of the text [22]. The aforementioned rationale renders the process of translating al-Fatihah arduous and frequently culminates in inaccuracies, thereby engendering a diminution of its semantic substance in the translation [23],[24]. The translation of these terms is essential for spiritual activities and cognitive development, as well as for the impact of Muslim identity and contemporary communal contribution [25],[26],[27]. Critical reflexivity concerning chronology and reading strategies has prompted scholars to favor interpretive paradigms that attend to text-internal networks as opposed to positivist diachrony in isolation [28].

Ibn 'Uthaymīn elaborates on the pedagogical function of al-Fatihah, stressing its role in daily supplication for guidance. He warns against complacency; even the believer constantly requires divine direction. His exegesis underlines practical application, connecting the surah to modern challenges such as moral relativism, secularism, and personal struggles of faith [29].

Table 1. Tafsir Comparison between Classic and Contemporary

Aspect	Classical Tafsir	Contemporary Tafsir
Primary concern	Linguistic precision, legal debates, narrational authority	Accessibility, pedagogy, moral, and spiritual application
Basmalah	Juristic controversy over verse status	Spiritual invocation, less focus on legality
Iyyāka na'budu	Executive servitude, theological precision	Servitude and reliance as lifestyle pedagogy
Ihdinā al-ṣirāṭ	Path: Islam, Qur'an, Sunnah	Continuous plea for guidance in modern Life
Tone	Scholarly, technical	Motivational, practical

Underlining the discussion aspect in exegeting al-Fatihah. Classical exegetes operated within a scholarly milieu where precision of language and law was paramount. Modern exegeses, addressing broader lay audiences, prioritize clarity and ethical application [30]. Both converge on the centrality of worship and guidance as the essence of al-Fatihah [31].

The Impact of al-Fatihah on Muslim Society

a. Ritual and Worship

Al-Fatihah's recitation in every unit of the Muslim prayer (Salah) underscores its foundational role in Islamic worship. This consistent inclusion highlights several key aspects; central to worship, as the opening chapter of the Quran, Al-Fatihah is essential for Muslims' daily prayers, serving as a direct communication with Allah. Its recitation frames the entire prayer experience, setting a tone of devotion and reverence. Connection with Allah, the act of reciting Al-Fatihah fosters a personal relationship with the Divine. By seeking guidance and mercy through this chapter, believers reinforce their reliance on Allah, cultivating a sense of spirituality and mindfulness. Spiritual reflection, the themes of Al-Fatihah encourage introspection and reflection on one's actions and intentions. This ritual practice promotes a deeper understanding of faith and reinforces the commitment to living according to Islamic principles. Structured worship, the incorporation of Al-Fatihah into daily rituals, provides a structured framework for worship, helping Muslims maintain consistency in their spiritual practices [32]. This structure is vital for nurturing one's faith and ensuring regular remembrance of Allah.

The recitation of Al-Fatihah in daily prayers plays a crucial role in fostering unity among Muslims in prayer. Al-Fatihah is recited in every unit of the Muslim prayer (Salah), making it a universal component of worship. This shared practice reinforces a collective identity among Muslims, regardless of cultural or geographical differences. Statement of Faith, reciting Al-Fatihah together, Muslims express a unified belief in the core tenets of Islam, such as the oneness of Allah and the importance of seeking guidance. This communal affirmation strengthens their spiritual connection and reinforces their commitment to shared values. Bonding through worship, the act of praying together, particularly in congregational settings like mosques, fosters a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. This shared experience cultivates feelings of belonging and solidarity within the Islamic community (Ummah). Emphasis on equality, al-Fatihah promotes the idea that all Muslims, regardless of status or background, stand equal before Allah. This notion encourages inclusivity and mutual respect among believers, further solidifying communal ties. Al-Fatihah includes prayers for guidance and mercy, which resonate deeply within the

community. As Muslims collectively seek divine assistance and support, they reinforce their dependence on one another and on Allah. It serves as a reminder of shared beliefs and practices, helping to maintain a sense of identity and purpose among diverse Muslim communities. Qur'an as a view of life and as a way of life [33].

b. Educational Role

Al-Fātihah often constitutes the first Qur'anic chapter memorized by Muslim children. Its simplicity in length contrasts with its depth of meaning, making it pedagogically suitable for early education. Through learning and reciting al-Fātihah, children internalize central Islamic beliefs: divine unity, mercy, accountability, servitude, and guidance [34]. Contemporary exegetes like Ibn 'Uthaymīn emphasize its role as a curriculum in miniature, embedding essential theological and ethical values from the earliest stages of learning [35]. Develop the vision and mission for Islamic education management. The philosophical and ethical value in al-Fatihah can guide educational institutions. Combine spiritual values like divine guidance, servitude, and the straight path to support a balanced approach to educational leadership, enriching Islamic education management [36],[37]. Faith is highlighted as the foundation of Islamic education, influencing all educational aspects [38]. Al-Fatihah is used pedagogically to teach doctrine, law, and ethics in educational research on Islamic values [39]. The education can direct an integrative and applicable framework of Islamic values, spirituality, have noble morals, and be intellectually intelligent [40].

c. Ethical and Psychological Dimension

Modern psychology of religion highlights the role of repetitive sacred text in cultivating resilience and reducing anxiety. Studies have shown that recitation of al-Fatihah can function as a therapeutic practice, offering emotional stability amid stress [41]. The verse *ihdinā al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* resonates with believers facing moral confusion or existential uncertainty, providing a recurring anchor in times of crisis. Al-Fatihah bridges spiritual devotion and psychological well-being [42]. Effectively reduced the level of depression of autoimmune survivors [43].

d. Unity and Identity

In the early years of Islam, during a period marked by division and conflict, Al-Fatihah emerged as a powerful unifying force. Collective supplication, the chapter's emphasis on seeking guidance and mercy collectively fosters a sense of solidarity among believers. reciting it together, Muslims express

shared hopes and aspirations, reinforcing their communal identity. A sense of belonging, al-Fatihah cultivates a feeling of belonging within the Muslim community (Ummah). It serves as a reminder that despite individual differences, all Muslims are united in their worship and devotion to Allah. Resilience against adversity, the early Muslim community faced significant external pressures, including persecution and marginalization. Al-Fatihah's role in daily prayers provided a source of strength, helping believers to withstand challenges by fostering unity and mutual support. Cultural identity, as a communal prayer, Al-Fatihah transcends cultural and linguistic barriers, allowing Muslims from diverse backgrounds to connect. This shared recitation reinforces a collective Islamic identity, promoting cohesion within the global community. Foundation for social cohesion, the communal aspect of Al-Fatihah encourages social interaction, case-based learning strategies, and the creation of an integrated Muslims ecosystem [44]. By participating in shared prayer, believers develop bonds that strengthen community ties and foster a supportive environment [45].

e. Contemporary Relevance

Characterized by globalization, secular ideologies, and moral pluralism, al-Fatihah retains its relevance as a spiritual compass. Contemporary exegetes like al-Sa'dī interpret the surah as a practical guide for everyday life. Reliance on divine mercy in times of uncertainty, acknowledgment of ultimate accountability in a secularized world, and constant pursuit of guidance amid ideological diversity.

Thus, al-Fatihah not only preserves its liturgical and theological importance but also adapts to the new social and intellectual contexts, addressing the perennial human need for meaning, direction, and community [46].

Comparative analysis of Makkiyah Surahs: al-Fatihah and al-'Aşr

While al-Fatihah has often been analyzed in isolation, its comparison with other Makkah surahs yields important insight into the thematic architecture of the Quran. Among these, Surah al-'Aşr stands out as an instructive parallel. Both surahs are short in length yet dense in meaning, offering concise summaries of the Qur'anic message during the formative Mecca period.

As discussed earlier, al-Fatihah emphasizes four central themes: divine sovereignty and mercy (rubūbiyyah and raḥmah), eschatological justice (Mālik yawm al-Dīn), servitude and reliance (iyyāka na'budu wa iyyāka nasta'in), and the perpetual plea for guidance (ihdinā al-şirāṭ al-mustaqīm). Its structure reflects a dialogical orientation, positioning the worshipper in direct address to Allah. Al-Fatihah thus represents the vertical dimension of Islamic religiosity, the believer's relationship with the Divine.

In contrast, Surah al-Aṣr situates its message within the temporal and social domain. Beginning with a Divine oath by time, it frames human existence within the inevitability of loss. Except for those who embody four salvific principles: faith (īmān), righteous action (‘amal ṣālih), exhortation to truth (tawāṣī bi al-haqq), and exhortation to patience (tawāṣī bi al-ṣabr). Al-Aṣr explains that time is a valuable resource that should be used wisely. Its value connects to modern management practices, emphasizing their relevance in contemporary issues [47]. As Imam al-Shāfi’ī famously remarked, if humanity were to reflect solely upon this surah, it would suffice as guidance. Al-Aṣr thereby highlights the horizontal dimension of Islamic religiosity, human responsibility within time, society, and ethical conduct.

Surah Al-Aṣr is the most comprehensive surah of the Holy Qur’an that is composed of only three verses, yet the strongest one in its influence and themes [48],[49]. It found the harmony sound in consonants and vowels. Most verses end with the vowel sound /i/, with occurrences of other sounds as well. The phonological effect on both sound harmony and meaning. The beauty of the Qur’an’s sound enhances listeners' psychological experience and conveys deeper meaning [50].

Table 2. Comparison between Surahs

Aspect	al-Fātiḥah	al-Aṣr
Length	7 verses	3 verses
Orientation	Vertical relation, between the worshipper and Allah	Horizontal relation, between human and Allah’s gift
Focus	Creed, supplication, divine attributes	Faith, responsibility, social ethics, and temporal awareness
Function	Liturgical pillar of prayer	Ethical manifesto of human salvation
Keywords	Worship, mercy, guidance	Faith, righteous deeds, truth, and patience

Where al-Fātiḥah grounds the believer in faith and supplication, al-Aṣr grounds the believer in praxis and communal responsibility. Together, they reflect the Quran's dual emphasis, inward orientation toward Allah and outward orientation toward humanity.

The juxtaposition of these two Makiyyah surahs underscores the Qur’an’s holistic pedagogy. *Al-Fātiḥah* establishes a theological and devotional foundation, while *al-Aṣr* emphasizes the ethical and social enactment of that foundation [51],[52]. This duality demonstrates that faith in Islam is never merely contemplative but necessarily embodied in action, patience, and solidarity.

In the contemporary context, the integration of al-Fātiḥah and al-Aṣr offers a framework for addressing modern crises of meaning. Al-Fātiḥah

provides spiritual anchorage, while al-Aṣr mandates ethical responsibility and resilience within time-bound human existence.

Conclusion

Al-Fatihah, known as "The Opening," is the first chapter of the Quran and holds a cherished position in Islamic worship and theology. This foundational text encapsulates essential themes of guidance, worship, and the relationship between humanity and the divine. Revealed in Mecca during a time of significant struggle against polytheism and social injustice, Al-Fatihah addresses the pressing challenges faced by early Muslims, reinforcing the foundational belief in the oneness of God (Tawhid). Its recitation became a source of unity and identity among believers, fostering a collective spiritual bond in a society marked by division and persecution. This article explores the context of Al-Fatihah's revelation, highlighting its importance in providing spiritual clarity and moral guidance to a community feeling lost and oppressed. The chapter's themes of mercy, resilience, and divine guidance offer hope to believers, reminding them of their reliance on God amidst adversity. Furthermore, Al-Fatihah's role as a pillar of prayer underscores its significance in connecting believers with the Divine, making it central to daily worship practices. The study delves into the meaning and themes of Al-Fatihah, including its invocation of Allah's mercy, acknowledgment of sovereignty on the Day of Judgment, and the quest for guidance on the straight path. These themes emphasize the importance of ethical behavior, accountability, and the necessity of a direct relationship with God, free from intermediaries.

Classical exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Qurṭubī approached the surah with scholarly precision, focusing on linguistic, theological, and juristic concerns. Their analyses reflect the intellectual priorities of their times, preserving the surah's textual integrity and doctrinal richness. Contemporary exegetes like al-Sa'dī and Ibn 'Uthaymīn, while rooted in the same tradition, recalibrated their emphasis toward pedagogy, accessibility, and practical spirituality. This shift illustrates how tafsīr evolves in response to the needs of its audience, without departing from the surah's central message.

Additionally, the article examines the impact of Al-Fatihah on Muslim society, particularly its role in ritual worship and its contribution to fostering unity and identity among Muslims. The chapter serves as a communal statement of faith that transcends cultural and linguistic barriers, reinforcing a collective Islamic identity. By participating in the recitation of Al-Fatihah, Muslims cultivate a sense of belonging and solidarity, which is crucial during times of

adversity. Overall, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Al-Fatihah, its historical context, and its enduring significance in Islamic spirituality and community life. By addressing the gaps in existing research, this article contributes to a deeper appreciation of Al-Fatihah's role in shaping the faith and practices of Muslims, both in the past and present.

Author Contributions

Nusaibah: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. **Sanuri:** Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

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Conflict of Interest

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