

Conclusion

It is sincerely hoped that the discreet reader has learned and benefitted from this book, and that it has brought him closer to His Maker, the One Who created him for one and only reason: to worship Him, and only Him. To be sure, whoever bases his belief in the Almighty on solid foundations will be the winner in this life and in the life to come, and the most solid of all foundations is one built on knowledge and conviction, not on ignorance, nor on taking things for granted.

One authentic *adath* says, “For everything there is a *zakat*, and the *zakat* of knowledge is its dissemination.’ The reader who reads this book ought not keep what he/she has learned to himself/herself but share it with others, believers or non-believers. It will then enhance the conviction of the believers and plant the seed of *iman* in the hearts of the unbelievers. Who knows? Maybe one day that seed will grow. It is the Almighty Who permits its growth, and He does so at the right time, the time which He chooses. Pass this book on to a relative or a friend.

Translate it into another language. Let on-line computer services benefit from it. Make photocopies of some of its contents and distribute them to others. Write a dissertation or a thesis utilizing its text material. Extract excerpts from it for inclusion in your newsletter or magazine, book or booklet. Or write one like it or better. All these options are yours; so, do not sit idle. Move to action, and let the Almighty use you as His tool for disseminating useful knowledge. Insha-Allah you will be rewarded by the Almighty in the life of this world and in the Hereafter, *Allahomma Ameen*.

Do you, dear reader, think that you have a choice whether to disseminate the knowledge included in this book with others or not? If you think that you do, read the following statement made by one of the great grandsons of the Messenger of Allah, namely Imam Mousa ibn Ja’far, who quotes his forefathers citing the Messenger of Allah saying,

One who reneges from his oath of allegiance, or who promotes what misleads people, or who hides some knowledge with him, or who confines some wealth with him unjustly, or who knowingly aids an oppressor in committing oppression while being fully aware of his oppression, is outside the folds of Islam.

This tradition is recorded on p. 67, Vol. 2, of al-Majlisi's *Bihar al-Anwar*. It clearly demonstrates that one who hides knowledge is on the same level with one who deliberately assists oppressors and tyrants. We, therefore, should spare no means to share what we know with others, with those who listen and who follow the best of what they listen to. Earn rewards by bringing the servants of Allah closer to their Creator Who made and sustained them, Who will try them and place them either in His Paradise or in His hell. If acts of worship are based on shallow conviction, they are as good as nothing. Strengthen your brethren's conviction through this book. They will surely appreciate it and, above all, Allah, too, will.

If the reader appreciates the time and effort exerted in writing this book, I, the author, kindly request him/her to recite Surat al-Fatia for the soul of my father, the late *qari* al-Hajj u'ma 'Abbas al-Jibouri who died in 1991 of diabetes, and for the soul of my mother who died in 2003, and for the souls of all believing men and women, the living and the dead. If you do so, rest assured that your rewards will be the Most Generous of all those who reward, with Allah Almighty Who appreciates even the smallest of good deeds. Why do I request the kind reader to recite Surat al-Fatiha for my father? Well, this is the least a son can do for his deceased father who worked very hard to raise him as a good Muslim. My father was a *qari* of the Holy Qur'an who refused to read any other book besides the Qur'an as long as he lived, a man who never intentionally hurt anyone all his life. Not only will my parents receive blessings when you recite Surat al-Fatiha for their souls, but you, too, dear reader, will get your rewards as well. How will you be rewarded? Well, read on! Here is a glimpse of what you will *Insha-Allah* receive:

On p. 88, Vol. 1, of *Mujma' al-Bayan fa Tafsar al-Qur'an*, al-Tibrisi cites a tradition through a chain of narrator wherein the Prophet of Islam is quoted saying, "Whoever recites Srat al-Fatia will be rewarded as though he had read two thirds of the Holy Qur'an and will be (in addition to that) given rewards as though he gave charity to each and every believing man and woman.' Just imagine how generous the Almighty is! Ubayy ibn Ka'b is cited in the same reference saying, "I once recited Surat al-Fatiha in the presence of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny, who said to me, 'I swear by the One Who controls my life, Allah never revealed any chapter in the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, or (even) in the Qur'an like it.

It is the mother of the Book, and it is the seven oft-repeated verses. It is divided between Allah and His servant, and His servant will get whatever he asks Him for.¹⁴ The Messenger of Allah said once to Jabir ibn Abdullah al-ansari, one of his greatest *ahaba*, may Allah be pleased with all his good *ahaba*, "O Jabir! Shall I teach you the merits of a Sura which Allah revealed in His Book?" Jabir said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah! May both my parents be sacrificed for your sake! Please do!"

The Messenger of Allah taught him Sirat al-Hamd, the "Mother of the Book," then said to him, "Shall I tell you something about it?" "Yes, O Messenger of Allah," Jabir responded, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for your sake!" The Messenger of Allah said, "It cures everything except death." Imam Ja'far al-adiq is quoted on the same page as saying, "Anyone who is not cured by the Book's Fatiha cannot be cured by anything else." The Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu alib has said,

The Messenger of Allah has said, “Allah, the Exalted One, the Sublime, said to me: ‘(O Muhammad!) We have bestowed upon you seven oft-repeated verses and the Great Qur’an (verse 87 of Surat al-Hijr); so, express your appreciation for it by reciting the Book’s Fatiha,’ thus comparing it to the entire Qur’an.’ Surat al-Fatiha is the most precious of the treasures of the ‘*Arsh*’.

Allah specifically chose Muhammad to be honoured by it without having done so to any of His prophets with the exception of prophet Sulayman (Solomon) who was granted (only this verse) of it: *Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem* (verse 30 of Chapter 27, Surat al-Naml); don’t you see how He narrates about Balqees¹ saying, “O Chiefs (of Yemen’s tribes)! Surely an honourable letter has been delivered to me; it is from Solomon, and it is: In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful...’ (27:29–30)?

So whoever recites it sincerely believing that he/she is following in the footsteps of Muhammad and his progeny, abiding by its injunctions, believing in its apparent as well as hidden meanings, Allah will give him for each of its letters a good deed better than all this world and everything in it of wealth and good things. And whoever listens to someone reciting it will receive a third of the rewards the reciter receives; so, let each one of you accumulate of such available goodness, for it surely is a great gain. Do not let it pass you by, for then you will have a great sigh in your heart about it.’²

Rewards of reciting Surat al-Fatiha are also recorded on p. 132 of *Thawab al-A’mal wa Iqab al-A’mal* cited above. “Abu Abdullah’ Imam Ja’far al-adiq has said, “Whoever recites Surat al-Baqara and Surat al-Fatia, they will both shade him like two clouds on the Day of Judgment. And if the reader wishes to read more about the merits of the *Basmala* (*Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem*), he is referred to pp. 70–71 of my book *Fast of the Month of Ramaan: Philosophy and Ahkam* published by Ansariyan (P.O. Box 37185/187, Qum, Islamic Republic of Iran). As for the merits of Surat al-Fatiha, I would like to quote for you here what is published on pp. 71–73 of the same book:

Al-ibrisi, in his exegesis *Mujma’ul-Bayan fa Tafsar al-Qur’an*, provides nine names for the first chapter of the Holy Qur’an, namely Surat al-Fatiha:

- 1) *al-Fatiha*, the one that opens, for it is like a gate: when opened, it leads one to the Book of Allah;
- 2) *al-Hamd*, the praise, for its verses are clearly praising the Almighty;
- 3) *Ummul-Kitab*, the mother of the Book, for its status is superior to all other chapters of the Holy Qur’an, or like the war standard: it is always in the forefront;
- 4) *al-Sab’*, the seven verses, for it is comprised of seven verses and the only one whose verses are seven. There is no room here to further elaborate on the merits of the number 7 especially since most readers of this book are already aware of such merits;
- 5) *al-Mathana*, the oft-repeated Chapter, for no other Chapter of the Holy Qur’an is repeated as often as this one;

6) *al-Kafiya*, the chapter that suffices and that has no substitute; you simply cannot replace its recitation with that of any other chapter of the Holy Qur'an in the first two *rek'ats* of the prayers, whereas it can substitute others;

7) *al-Asas*, the basis or foundation or bed-rock, a connotation of its being the foundation upon which the Holy Qur'an stands just as the Basmala ("Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Raheem") is the foundation of the Fatiha;

8) *al-Shifa'*, the healing, due to the fact that the Messenger of Allah has said that the Fatiha heals from all ailments except death, and

9) *al-alat*, the prayers, or the basic requirement of the daily prayers, one without the recitation of which no prayer can be accepted. The Prophet has quoted the Almighty saying, "The prayers have been divided between Me and My servant: one half for Me, and one for him;" so when one recites it and says, "Alamdu lillahi Rabbil-'alameen," the Almighty says, "My servant has praised Me."

And when he says, "Arramanir-Raam," the Almighty says, "My servant has praised Me." And when he says, "Maliki Yawmid-Dan," Allah says, "My servant has exalted Me." And when he says, "Iyyaka Na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'an," Allah will say, "This is a covenant between Me and My servant, and My servant shall be granted the fulfillment of his pleas." Then if he finishes reciting the Fatiha to the end, Allah will again confirm His promise by saying, "This is for [the benefit of] My servant, and My servant will be granted the answer to his wishes."

The Messenger of Allah is quoted by Abu Ali al-Fal ibn al-Hassan ibn al-Fal al-ibrisi, may Allah have mercy on his soul, saying that one who recites al-Fatiha will be regarded by the Almighty as though he recited two-thirds of the Holy Qur'an and as though he gave by way of charity to each and every believing man and woman. "By the One in Whose hand my soul is," the Prophet continues, "Allah Almighty did not reveal in the Torah, the Gospel, or the Psalms any chapter like it; it is the Mother of the Book and al-Sab' al-Mathani (the oft-repeated seven verses), and it is divided between Allah and His servant, and His servant shall get whatever he asks; it is the best Sura in the Book of the most Exalted One, and it is a healing from every ailment except poison, which is death." He is also quoted by al-Kaf'ami as saying, "He (Allah) bestowed it upon me as His blessing, making it equivalent to the Holy Qur'an, saying,

'And We have granted you al-Sab' al-Mathani and the Great Qur'an (Surat al-Hijr, verse 87).'

It is the most precious among the treasures of the 'Arsh.' Indeed, Allah, the most Sublime, has chosen Muhammad alone to be honoured by it without doing so to any other Prophet or Messenger of His with the exception of Solomon (Solomon) who was granted the *Basmala*. One who recites it, being fully convinced of his following in the footsteps of Muhammad and his Progeny, adhering to its injunctions, believing in its outward and inward meanings, will be granted by Allah for each of its letters a blessing better than what all there is in the world of wealth and good things, and whoever listens to someone

reciting it will receive one third of the rewards due to its reciter.

You, reader, is the best judge of this book, and I hereby solicit your comments and suggestions with regard to this book as well as to my two other books: my autobiography titled *Memoirs of a Shi'a Missionary in America: Two Decades of Da'wah*, and *Fast of the Month of Ramaan: Philosophy and Ahkam*. Many readers of my *Memoirs* wrote me saying that they thought that their text ought to be turned into a documentary film! Perhaps after I die, someone will make a documentary of my life! Fat chance! Anyway, as for my book on the fast, I have been overwhelmed by the flood of letters from readers all over the world expressing appreciation of the effort invested in writing this book which is quite different from any other dealing with the same subject-matter. It is hoped that their response to this book will not be any less.

There is no doubt that you, dear reader, know that it is very costly to print books, and philanthropists in the Muslim world are rare species. Once you find one, you will find out that he is willing to spend money on anything except a book! This is very sad, very tragic, very shameful. Islam spread through a Book, the Holy Qur'an. That was all the early generations of Muslims needed besides the presence of the Messenger of Allah is very costly to print books, and philanthropists in the Muslim world are rare species. Once you find one, you will find out that he is willing to spend money on anything except a book!

This is very sad, very tragic, very shameful. Islam spread through a Book, the Holy Qur'an. That was all the early generations of Muslims needed besides the presence of the Messenger of Allah. But times have changed; we do not have the presence of the Messenger of Allah in our midst to ask him whenever we need to know, and his Sunnah has suffered acutely of alteration, addition, deletion, custom-designing and tailoring to fit the needs of the powerful politicians of the times, so much so that it is now very hard to find the pristine truth among all the numerous different views and interpretations.

This is why the reader has to spend more effort to get to know the truth; nobody is going to hand it to you on a golden platter. You have to work hard to acquire it. "Easy come, easy go." Yet readers who would like to earn a place in Paradise through their dissemination of Islamic knowledge, such as the knowledge included in this book, are very much needed and are advised in earnest to send their contributions to the Publisher of this book in order to help him print more copies of it and make them available to those who cannot afford to purchase them. Some readers erroneously surmise that book publishers are wealthy people who make a lot of money selling books, but, alas, this applies **only** to non-Muslim publishers.

After all, Allah will judge our actions according to our intentions, and if you help promote a book seeking the Pleasure of Allah, rest assured that you will be richly rewarded both in the life of this world and in the hereafter. It remains to see how strong you are against the temptations of Satan who will try his best, and his worst, to dissuade you from doing so. He very well knows that nothing in the world stands between him and corrupting the minds of Muslims more than accurate knowledge about Allah and the

men of Allah. May Allah Ta'ala include us among the latter, *Allahomma Ameen*.

May Allah Ta'ala accept our humble effort; may He forgive our sins and shortcomings; may He take our hands and guide us to what He loves and prefers, *Allahomma Ameen, Wassalamo Alaikom wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*.

1. Balqees Queen of Saba' (Sheba) belonged to the Arab tribe of imyar which for centuries has been residing in Yemen. Her people used to worship the sun and the moon and other stars, and some of the ruins of the temples she had built for them can still be seen in Saba'. Sulayman, on the other hand, was headquartered in Jerusalem (Ur-O-Shalom, the city of peace, as it is called in Hebrew; the Arabs used to refer to it as Eilya). The place where Balqees met Sulayman, that is to say, his palace, had been built in the 10th century B.C. Reference to the grandeur of this palace exists in the Holy Qur'an in 27:44: Its glass-covered floor was so smooth, Balqees thought she was in front of a lake. Damascus, a very ancient city not far from Jerusalem, had by then established a reputation for its glass industry. Damascus in 940 B.C. (around the same period of time when Sulayman was ruling in Jerusalem) was the city capital of the Aramaeans, the nations that spoke Aramaic, mother-tongue of Prophet Jesus Christ. This is why Syria used to be called the land of Aram, the land of the Aramaeans. Aram was one of the sons of Abraham, Prophet Ibrahim. Aramaic is still spoken in a town in Syria even today.

2. al-abari, Tarikh, Vol. 1, p. 88.

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