

## ***Proofs of monotheism in Sura: Al-Faatihah*** ***- A Rhetorical Study-***

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Received: 29-03-2026 Accepted: 21-05-2026 Published: 01-06-2026

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### **Abstract:**

This article examines a pivotal question concerning the ultimate purpose of creation, as articulated in the greatest Surah revealed in the Quran : the concept of Monotheism (Tawhid) in Surah Al-Fatiha. Muslim scholars have consistently devoted profound attention to this noble Surah and its central theme, giving them precedence over all others. This attention stems from the abundant evidences reflecting Divine love for both the Surah and its core message, as well as the unique virtues granted to them—virtues that remain unparalleled.

But who checks what was written for this purpose, he would find out either excessively concise to the point of insufficiency or unduly prolix and tedious. Many are further marked by fragmented discussions and scattered insights. Consequently, a systematic dual-aspect study: legal and creedal aspect represented in the study of monotheism (Tawhid), which is ALLAH's right over his servants; and linguistic rhetorical aspect invoking the rules of Arabic Rhetoric and mechanism of discourse analysis laid down by the scholars of Semantics that were found to study this unique inclusive Surah.

**Keywords:** proofs, monotheism (Tawhid), Srah ELFATIHA, Holy Quran, Arabic rhetoric

### **1. Introduction**

All praise is due to ALLAH, Lord of all worlds, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement. Complete and perfect blessings and peace be upon the one whom ALLAH sent as a mercy to all worlds, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family, companions, and brethren until the Day of Judgement. To proceed:

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Indeed, ALLAH Almighty made the nation (ummah) of Muḥammad ﷺ the best nation brought forth for mankind, and He revealed to it the noblest of His Books — containing the truest of reports and the most decisive of commands and legislations — which is replete with wisdom. And despite the fact that this magnificent Book contains a number of lengthy sūrahs, each exceeding two hundred verses, and is filled with rulings, narratives, reports, subtleties, and secrets, ALLAH (Glorified be He) made the greatest sūrah of this noble, glorious Quran a concise surah of only seven verses, wherein is summarised all that is elaborated throughout the entire Quran — indeed, all other Divine Books as well — in terms of the fundamentals and branches of religion (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2019, vol. 1, p. 15). This is among the greatest signs of the miraculous nature of the Quran and the most unparalleled majestic styles of its clarity and conciseness, not in Arabic nor in any other language Surah Al-Faatihah. ALLAH named the 'Al-Faatihah' (the Opening) *'because it initiates the Muṣḥaf, prayers; for it is the opening of the Quran's suraḥs in writing and recitation, and everything that follows of its suraḥs comes after it'*(**al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 1, p. 105**). *'It has also been said that it was named so because praise (ḥamd) is the opening of all speech'* **EL RAZI 1420, 1/156**— and it may be added as a specification of the first reason, an elaboration of its meaning. It should also be noted that four other suraḥs in the Quran open with praise (ḥamd),<sup>1</sup> so Surah Al-Faatihah must possess a virtue or virtues beyond this, arising from the fact that it is Al-Faatihah — the very opening — and that it is the greatest of the Quran's Surah, as authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ, as the many and varied proofs demonstrate. Indeed, even if the only indication of the surah's nobility were the selection of this surah to open the noble Muṣḥaf — which is the greatest of the revealed Books — and that ALLAH made it a pillar (rukn) of ṣalāh (prayer), which is the greatest of deeds before ALLAH after Tawheed, to be recited in every rak'ah (unit of prayer), that alone would suffice to demonstrate its honour and its lofty station before ALLAH, Blessed and Exalted — not to mention the unique stylistic features and wondrous thematic distinctions that set it apart from all other Quranic suraḥs and indeed from all speech ever uttered. **'The proofs Of Tawheed - monotheism- in surah EL-FATIHA'** is our title, we achieved as below:

- Introduction

(<sup>1</sup>) Sūrat al-An'ām, Sūrat al-Kahf, Sūrat Saba', and Sūrat Fāṭir.

- Definition of Tawheed and an Exposition of Its Categories
- Definition of EL-FATIHA and Most nam/es and Merits,
- The proofs Of Tawheed -monotheisme- in surah EL-FATIHA
- external indicators
- ✓ external Conceptual indicators
- ✓ external Verbal indicators
- internal indicators
- ✓ indicators in the words
- ✓ indicators in syntactic structure
- conclusion

## 2. Definition of Tawheed and an Exposition of Its Categories

### 2.1. Definition of Tawheed

The word Tawheed is derived from the root w-ḥ-d, signifying singularity and individuality. The verb waḥḥadahu (to declare something one) means to make it singular, i.e. to render it one (wāḥid) — and its meaning is *'uniqueness and individual singleness'* (Ibn Fāris, 1972, 6, p. 90; al-Fīrūzābādī, 2005, p. 324). As for its technical definition, it is: *'the singling out of ALLAH, Glorified be He, with what is exclusively His — of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), Divinity (Ulūhiyyah), Names, and Attributes'* (Ibn 'Uthaymīn, 1424 AH, vol. 1, p. 11).

### 2.2. Categories of monotheism

As for the tripartite division, chosen by the scholars, contains 3 categories of Tawheed:

**2.2.1. Tawheed al-Rubūbiyyah (:Oneness of Lordship):** *'Singling out ALLAH, Mighty and Majestic, in creation, sovereignty, and governance'* (Ibn 'Uthaymīn, 1424 AH, vol. 1, p. 12). It is derived from the word Rabb (Lord), which in Arabic conveys the meaning of *'nurturing and attending to a thing'* (Ibn Fāris, 1972, vol. 2, p. 381). Al-Rāghib said: *'In origin, al-Tarbiyah: bringing a thing from one state to another until it reaches its full completion'* (al-Rāghib, 1412 AH, p. 336).

**2.2.2. Tawheed al-Ulūhiyyah (Oneness of Worship):** *Also called Tawheed al-'Ibādah (worship) from two perspectives — when attributed to ALLAH, it is called Tawheed al-Ulūhiyyah; when attributed to creation, it is called Tawheed al-'Ibādah. It is 'singling out ALLAH, Mighty and Majestic, in worship'* (Ibn 'Uthaymīn, 1424 AH, vol. 1, p. 14).

**2.2.3. Tawheed al-Asmā' wa-l-Şifāt** (Names and Attributes): Its meaning and the position of Islamic scholars on it are made clear by the words of Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, may ALLAH have mercy upon him: *'The way agreed upon by the Salaf of the community and its imāms is to describe ALLAH with what His Prophet ﷺ described Him with and with what He described Himself with — in negation and affirmation: affirming for Him what He affirmed for Himself and negating from Him what He negated from Himself. Without takyīf (asking how), without tamhīl (likening to creation), without taḥrīf (distortion), and without ta'īl (denial)'* (al-Safārīnī, 1982, vol. 1, p. 221).

### 3. An Introduction to Surah Al-Faatihah: Its Most Famous Names and Merits

Surah Al-Faatihah is a Makkansūrah according to the majority of scholars, and they have cited proofs to that effect. One proof related to this sūrah's identification is:

— That it consists of seven verses by unanimous scholarly consensus. This proof is drawn from ALLAH's words: ['And We have certainly given you seven of the often-repeated (verses) and the great Quran'] [al-Ḥijr: 87]. The Prophet ﷺ interpreted the 'seven al-mathānī' in this verse as Surah Al-Faatihah. The connection between this verse of Surah al-Ḥijr — itself unanimously a Makkansūrah — and something that preceded its revelation proves that Surah Al-Faatihah is Makkan, since it speaks of an earlier matter, which must therefore be Makkan a fortiori.

#### 3.1 The Names of Surah Al-Faatihah

The multiplenames of Surah Al-Faatihah, reflecting its honour and the abundance of its virtues.

— **Fātiḥat al-Kitāb** (The Opening of the Book): The two Shaykhs (Bukhārī and Muslim) reported in their Ṣaḥīḥs from 'Ubādah ibn al-Şāmit, may ALLAH be pleased with him, that the Messenger of ALLAH ﷺ said: 'There is no prayer for one who does not recite the Opening of the Book (Fātiḥat al-Kitāb).' (al-Bukhārī, 1993, vol. 1, p. 263; Muslim, 1955, vol. 1, p. 295).

— **Umm al-Kitāb** (The Mother of the Book): Bukhārī reported from Umm al-Mu'minīn 'Ā'ishah, may ALLAH be pleased with her, who said: 'The Prophet ﷺ would not perform a ṣalāh before the time of Ṣubḥ (dawn prayer) without reciting Umm al-Kitāb.' (al-Bukhārī, 1993, vol. 1, p. 393).

— **Umm al-Quran** (The Mother of the Quran): Al-Bukhārī reported in his Ṣaḥīḥ that the Messenger of ALLAH ﷺ said: '[It is] the Mother of the Quran,

the seven oft-repeated (verses), and the great Quran.' (al-Bukhārī, 1993, vol. 4, p. 1738).

— **Al-Quran al-‘Aẓīm** (The Great Quran) and al-Sab‘ al-Mathānī (The Seven Often-Repeated): Their proof is the foregoing ḥadīth and the ḥadīth of AbūSa‘īd ibn al-Mu‘allā mentioned earlier.

— **Al-Ṣalāh** (The Prayer): In the ḥadīth reported by Muslim and others, the Messenger of ALLAH ﷺ said: 'Indeed ALLAH Almighty says: I have divided the prayer (al-ṣalāh) between Myself and My servant into two halves, and My servant shall have what he asks.' (Muslim, 1955, vol. 1, p. 297).

### 3.2 The Merits of Surah Al-Faatihah

Surah Al-Faatihah possesses numerous merits, the most important of which are the following five:

1. It is the greatest sūrah in the Quran.
2. It is the opening of the Quran and its first surah.
3. It encompasses all of the knowledge of the Quran and of other Divine Books. Al-Qurṭubī, may ALLAH have mercy upon him, said: *'It was called Umm al-Quran because it is the beginning of the Quran and it contains a compendium of all its knowledge'* (al-Qurṭubī, 1964, vol. 1, p. 112).
4. Muslim reported in his Ṣaḥīḥ from Ibn ‘Abbās, may ALLAH be pleased with both of them, who said: 'While Jibrīl was sitting with the Prophet ﷺ, he heard a sound from above. Jibrīl raised his gaze and said: This is a gate of heaven that has been opened today; it had never been opened before. An angel descended through it and came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: **Rejoice in two lights given to you that were not given to any prophet before you: the Opening of the Book and the concluding verses of Surah al-Baqarah. You will not recite a single letter of them without being given what they contain.'** (Muslim, 1955, vol. 1, p. 554).

5. There is no ṣalāh for one who does not recite it, as was narrated in the ḥadīth of ‘Ubādah mentioned above.

## 4. The proofs of Tawḥīd in Surah Al-Faatihah

### 4.1 External proofs

It is meant what lies outside the wording of Surah Al-Faatihah yet is intimately connected with it. As mentioned in the introduction to this article, they are of two types: conceptual and verbal.

### 4.1.1 External Conceptual proofs

These are non-verbal proofs, the most important of which have already been mentioned — including the fact that Surah Al-Faatihah is the greatest of the Quran's surahs, its opening and mother, encompassing all the knowledge and wisdom it contains, all its subtleties and secrets. A gate of heaven was opened, never opened before, on the occasion of its revelation, and ALLAH made it a ruqyah (healing invocation), a cure from physical and spiritual ailments, and the prayer (ṣalāh) is not valid without it... All of these noble virtues and distinguished qualities point to the singular status of this surah — that nothing resembles it. This is entirely consistent

with the question of Tawheed, which is the most important and greatest secret of existence and creation. Some of the Salaf said aptly: *'Al-Faatihah is the secret of the Quran, and its secret is this word: (You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help) [Al-Faatihah: 5].'* (Ibn Kathīr, 1999, vol. 1, p. 134).

### 4.1.2 External Verbal Proofs

By these is meant what is not part of the wording of the noble surah itself, but is connected to its verbal dimension — such as the names of this surah for example. They point to the question of Divine Unity from several angles:

— Most of its names come in the singular form, except for the name 'al-Sab' al-Mathānī' (The Seven Often-Repeated), which contains the blessed number seven — a number that ALLAH has made an exalted secret: *'C is odd (witr) and He loves what is odd.'* (al-Bukhārī, 1993, vol. 5, p. 2354; Muslim, 1955, vol. 4, p. 2062).

This number is counted among the great secrets of Lordship and Divinity: the heavens are seven, the earths are seven, the gates of Hell are seven, the days of the week are seven, the circuits of ṭawāf (circumambulation) are seven, and likewise the circuits of sa'y (walking between al-Ṣafā and al-Marwah) — and other matters that ALLAH has set at seven, containing within them challenges to creation and an exclusivity of knowledge and power and wisdom that is plain; for how many matters has the Almighty, Glorified and Exalted, kept to Himself — which are signs of the perfection of His attributes from every angle — and the dependence of everything upon Him from every angle as well.

Among what may be counted as proofs of Divine Unity through the names of Surah Al-Faatihah is what the most famous and widely used of these names

— Al-Faatihah — guides toward in its fullness. It is derived from al-fath (opening), and is one of the attributes of the perfect Lordship of our Lord, Blessed and Exalted — among His Beautiful Names being 'al-Fattāh' (the Opener). The fact that the opening here is unrestricted by a specific object conveys the generality of all that is fitting to be opened by the Lord of Might and Majesty — whether opening of lands, or opening of the blessings of heaven and earth, or other matters — and this is confirmed by the Lord, Mighty and Majestic, with several emphatic expressions in His saying: **(Whatever of mercy, Allah may grant to mankind, none can withhold it, and whatever He may withhold, none can grant it thereafter. And He is the Almighty, the Allwise.) Fatir :2**

Also counted among these external verbal proofs is the prescribed seeking of refuge (isti'ādah) before reciting the entire Quran, including Surah Al-Faatihah — even if this is not among its particular features. For the isti'ādah embodies a pure act of Tawheed, in which the servant seeks refuge with his Lord and Master to protect him from the whisperings of the accursed Shayṭān and his evils.

Similarly, the Basmalah (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ) — **'In the name of ALLAH, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful'**<sup>2</sup> is among these proofs, and its testimonies to Tawheed are even more numerous and more manifest:

— In it is the bā' of seeking aid (isti'ānah): {بِسْمِ اللَّهِ} {*In the name of ALLAH*} — which is the secret of the Quran, as was mentioned earlier, corresponding to {إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} {*We ask You for help*}. This bā' also conveys accompaniment (muṣāḥabah), which guides toward sincerity of worship for ALLAH — indicating the necessity of the servant's disassociation from all power and strength save ALLAH's, in all of his acts from beginning to end, not only at the start of an action.

— In it is the greatest of ALLAH's names in signifying the reality of Divine Unity: 'ALLAH' — which is agreed upon by many scholars to be the Greatest Name (al-Ism al-A'zam), the Name by which if ALLAH is asked, He gives, and if supplicated, He responds. Its indication of Divine Unity is too manifest to require elaboration.

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<sup>2</sup>Whether the Basmalah is a verse of Sūrat Al-Faatihah is a matter of scholarly disagreement; the correct view is that it is not. However, if it is considered a verse thereof, it becomes a direct indicator of Tawheed, making it all the more deserving of treatment in the second type of indicators (internal indicators), which will be discussed in the following section.

— In the Basmalah is the Name 'al-Raḥmān' (the All-Merciful), which may not be applied to other than Him, Glorified be He, whether used definitively or indefinitely.

— As for the Name 'al-Raḥīm' (the Ever-Merciful), its indication of Tawheed is also clear, even though it is permissible to apply it to others. For it is a proper name denoting the One possessing special mercy, and the most exclusive of its types — guiding creation, nurturing them in faith — belongs to none other than ALLAH Almighty, as indicated in the texts of guidance that are negated of others, including His saying: *{Virely!You(O Muhammad SAW guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided)}*KASSAS :56

of guidance that are negated of others, including His saying: *{Virely!You(O Muhammad SAW guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided}* KASSAS :56

*(and you (O MuhammadSAW) cannot guide the blind from their straying)*  
EL RUM:53

4.2.Now I turn to the core of the subject: the proofs of Tawheed embedded in the wording of the Opening of the Glorious Book. I have chosen to divide them into two categories:

— **Proofs at the level of individual words (mufradāt) of the surah.**

— **Proofs at the level of its syntactic structures (tarākīb).**

Before presenting these proofs, let me cite a valuable observation by the eminent scholar Ibn al-Qayyim, may ALLAH have mercy upon him, showing how abundant the testimonies of Tawheed are in the Book of ALLAH — to the point that he counted every verse of the Quran as a proof of Tawheed. He said: *The majority of the Quran's sūrahs — indeed every sūrah therein — contains Tawheed, bears witness to it, and calls to it. Indeed we say comprehensively: every verse in the Quran is Tawheed. For the Quran is either a report about ALLAH, His names, attributes, and acts — which is the knowledge-based, informational Tawheed (al-Tawheed al-'Ilmī al-Khabarī); or a call to His worship alone without partner — which is the volitional, purposive Tawheed (al-Tawheed al-Irādī al-Ṭalabī); or commands and prohibitions and obligations of obedience — which are the rights and perfections of Tawheed; or information about the honouring of those who affirm Tawheed in this world and the Hereafter — which is the reward of Tawheed; or information about those who commit shirk and their fate in this*

*world and their punishment in the Hereafter — which is the fate of those who depart from Tawheed. So all of the Quran is Tawheed: {All the praises and thanks be to Allah} is Tawheed; {the Lord of the mankind jinns and all that exists} is Tawheed; {the Most beneficent the Most Meciful} is Tawheed; {The Only Ruling judge of the Day of Ressurrection} is Tawheed; {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ} is Tawheed; {وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} is Tawheed; {أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ} is Tawheed — containing the invocation of guidance to the path of the people of Tawheed; {صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ} is those of Tawheed; {غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ} are those who departed from Tawheed.' (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2019, vol. 4, p. 449).*

The purpose of citing this valuable passage is to clarify that in this research we did not intend to gather every single indicator in Surah Al-Faatihah related to Tawheed; rather, we confined ourselves to gathering the explicit indicators on one hand, and those with a particular relationship to the rhetorical study on the other — restricting ourselves to what is well-established from the statements of scholars of rhetoric and language, and setting aside disputed matters and opinions contrary to the established norm.

#### **4.2.1 Indicators of Tawheed at the Level of Individual Words of Surah Al-Faatihah**

Ibn Fāris said: *'The letters fā', rā', and dāl form a sound root pointing to a concept of oneness; from it is al-fard, meaning the odd-one (witr)' (Ibn Fāris, 1972, vol. 4, p. 500).* In technical terminology, a mufrad (individual word) is *'that whose pronunciation does not indicate part of its meaning' (al-Jurjānī, 1983, p. 223).* It may be a noun, a verb, or a particle used for a meaning. These three categories of individual words all occur in Surah Al-Faatihah, and we shall present them in the following lines, restricting ourselves to what has a bearing on the topic of this article — that is, indicating the Oneness of ALLAH Almighty and His singularity in the meanings of Lordship, Divinity, Names, and Attributes.

#### **A. Particles in Surah Al-Faatihah and Their Indication of Tawheed**

**First:** The Definite Article (lām al-ta'rif)

**Second:** Prepositions (ḥurūf al-jarr) — specifically the lām and 'alā (the latter occurring twice)

**Third and Fourth:** The conjunction wāw (and) and the particle of address kāf — discussion of these is deferred to the end of this research in the section on structural indicators.

## B. Nouns in Surah Al-Faatihah and Their Indication of Tawheed

Surah Al-Faatihah contains approximately twenty nouns,<sup>3c 1)</sup> and this large number of nouns — as opposed to only four verbs and a small number of particles — makes it unmistakably clear through the surah's content that the indicative function of these nouns points to the question of Tawheed. This is because nominal sentences and repeated nouns convey meanings of constancy and continuity — unlike verbal sentences which indicate the occurrence or renewal of an action — and so this surah affirms the constancy, continuity, and eternalness of: *'the Divinity of ALLAH, Blessed and Exalted, His Lordship, His mercy, and His sovereignty; these four being the foremost and most important matters, and the most perfect [attributes] necessarily entailing all the attributes of His perfection'* (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2019, vol. 1, p. 50). Reflect on that.

To avoid repetition that would lengthen the article, we defer discussion of some nouns to the section on structural indicators, and restrict ourselves here to the following nouns:

**Al-Hamd (Praise):** The nominal character of this word in this context conveys — as was stated earlier — that ALLAH, Mighty and Majestic, has never ceased to be praised and is worthy of praise in every time and place and in every circumstance, even at the moment of the descent of His wrath and punishment upon His enemies. ALLAH Almighty said: *{so the people who did wrong were cut off, and all the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the mankind. Jinns and all that exists}* EL ENAAM 45 And He praised Himself for creating creation: *{All the praises and thanks be to Allah Who creates heavens and earth}* EL ENAAM 1 And He praised Himself repeatedly for the revelation of Books and legislations: : *{All the praises and thanks be to Allah Who revealed the Curan}* EL KAHF 1 And He praised Himself and commanded His servants to praise Him for His Oneness and absolute independence, and the perfection of His freedom from need of all creation: *{All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has not begotten a son and Who as no partner in His dominion, nor he is low to have a Wali, And magnify Him with all the magnificence, Allah is the Most Great}* EL ISRAA111 And the praise of ALLAH, Exalted in Might and Majesty, shall persist perpetually and eternally — and the last of the events of the Day of

<sup>3</sup>Including nouns of the doer (ism al-fā' il) and the noun of the one acted upon (ism al-maf' ūl), even though these are not purely nouns in the pure sense.

Judgement will be that the Lord of Might and Majesty is praised for the perfection of His Lordship over all creation, where He says in the last verse of Surah al-Zumar 75 : *{It will be judged between them with truth ,and they will not be wronged }.*

**ALLAH (الله):** Its indication of Tawheed is the greatest and clearest. It is a proper name for the Magnificent Lord, Majestic and Exalted — and the scholars, foremost among them ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, said about it: *'the One possessing Divinity (Ulūhiyyah) and Lordship over all creation'* (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 1, p. 121). Most scholars hold that this is the Greatest Name (al-Isma al-A‘zam) of ALLAH. Therefore, its indication of Divine Unity is too clear to require elaboration.

**The Lord of mankind, jinns and all what exists:** Both words in this genitive construction (idāfah) carry an additional indication of Tawheed beyond what the construction itself conveys. Al-Rabb (the Lord) is *'the Master who has no like, to Whom alone belongs the management of the affair and dominion, and who rectifies the matter of His creation through what He bestows upon them of His graces'* (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 1, p. 143).

As for (الْعَالَمِينَ) (all worlds), its indication of the Oneness of ALLAH Almighty comes from two angles:

The first and most evident is that ALLAH is the Lord of all worlds — and 'al-‘ālamūn' is the plural of ‘ālam, meaning everything other than ALLAH, Blessed and Exalted.

The second angle is an answer to the question: why were they called by this name? The answer is that they are a sign (‘alāmah) indicating ALLAH — one infers His existence from His creation, as He said:

*{and from among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon}*. FUSILAT 37

*{and from among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon}* EL ROM 22 IBN OTHEIMIN 2003 196

(This word was read in two ways: Mālik (possessor) and Malik (king) — both are Beautiful Names of ALLAH. Together they convey a third, additional meaning: the perfection of both sovereignty and ownership — an absolute perfection that none other than ALLAH, Mighty and Majestic, deserves. For if a person were a king yet owned nothing in his kingdom, this would not be a virtue but a deficiency and a sign of weakness — as is the case with weak or dominated kings. Likewise, many people possess considerable wealth,

servants, and vehicles, but seek sovereignty over others without being able to attain it.

It should be noted that this dual reading of the noble word contains the indicators of all three categories of Tawheed: Tawheed al-Rubūbiyyah is indicated by the name Mālik; Tawheed al-Ulūhiyyah is indicated by Malik, since the king commands and prohibits, and the nature of kingship demands obedience in commands and prohibitions; Tawheed al-Asmā' wa-l-Ṣifāt is indicated by both names together, as well as by the other four Beautiful Names mentioned: ALLAH, al-Rabb, al-Raḥmān, and al-Raḥīm.

( **the Straight Path**)Its indication of Tawheed comes from several angles, perhaps the most important of which are the following five:

The first: that al-ṣirāṭ is a path; and a path must by necessity have a destination, and the path whose guidance the servant seeks is one leading to ALLAH, Blessed and Exalted, and to His pleasure.

The second: that this ṣirāṭ is mentioned in the singular form — and this style is consistent throughout the Book and the Sunnah: the path of truth is mentioned in the singular to indicate its unity and oneness, while the paths of falsehood are mentioned in the plural to indicate their multiplicity and the dispersion of their people: *{He brings them out from darkness into light}*/EL BAKARA 257

*{And virely, this is My straight Path , so follow it, and follow not other paths, for they will separate you away from His path }.* EL ANAAM 153

Ibn al-Qayyim said: *'The straight path is singular, mentioned with two forms of definite article — with al- and defined by the genitive construction — which conveys its specification and exclusivity and that it is one path... As for the paths of those incurring wrath and the misguided, ALLAH gathers them in the plural and never mentions them in the singular.'* (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2019, vol. 1, p. 21).

(مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ)This word was read in two ways: Mālik (possessor) and Malik (king) — both are Beautiful Names of ALLAH. Together they convey a third, additional meaning: the perfection of both sovereignty and ownership — an absolute perfection that none other than ALLAH, Mighty and Majestic, deserves. For if a person were a king yet owned nothing in his kingdom, this would not be a virtue but a deficiency and a sign of weakness — as is the case with weak or dominated kings. Likewise, many people possess considerable

wealth, servants, and vehicles, but seek sovereignty over others without being able to attain it.

It should be noted that this dual reading of the noble word contains the indicators of all three categories of Tawheed: Tawheed al-Rubūbiyyah is indicated by the name Mālik; Tawheed al-Ulūhiyyah is indicated by Malik, since the king commands and prohibits, and the nature of kingship demands obedience in commands and prohibitions; Tawheed al-Asmā' wa-l-Ṣifāt is indicated by both names together, as well as by the other four Beautiful Names mentioned: ALLAH, al-Rabb, al-Raḥmān, and al-Raḥīm.

( **the Straight Path**)Its indication of Tawheed comes from several angles, perhaps the most important of which are the following five:

The first: that al-ṣirāṭ is a path; and a path must by necessity have a destination, and the path whose guidance the servant seeks is one leading to ALLAH, Blessed and Exalted, and to His pleasure.

The second: that this ṣirāṭ is mentioned in the singular form — and this style is consistent throughout the Book and the Sunnah: the path of truth is mentioned in the singular to indicate its unity and oneness, while the paths of falsehood are mentioned in the plural to indicate their multiplicity and the dispersion of their people: *{He brings them out from darkness into light}* EL BAKARA 257

*{And virely, this is My straight Path , so follow it, and follow not other paths, for they will separate you away from His path }.* EL ANAAM 153

Ibn al-Qayyim said: *'The straight path is singular, mentioned with two forms of definite article — with al- and defined by the genitive construction — which conveys its specification and exclusivity and that it is one path... As for the paths of those incurring wrath and the misguided, ALLAH gathers them in the plural and never mentions them in the singular.'* (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2019, vol. 1, p. 21).

The third: the description of the ṣirāṭ as straight (mustaqīm); 'the entire community of scholars of interpretation is agreed that the straight path is the clear way that has no crookedness' (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, vol. 1, p. 170). The straightness of this path contains in its very essence an indication of the reality of Tawheed — for the mustaqīm path must by necessity lead to one destination, as stated above; and its being straight and close instills in the servant a sense of urgency, making him seek it, aspire to know it, and draw close to it. Likewise, it produces a fear and awe of deviating from the path and thereby missing the destination and suffering a manifest loss.

The fourth: that this *ṣirāṭ* must by necessity be wide and spacious. Ibn al-Qayyim said: *'Its capacity for all who pass through it necessitates its spaciousness'* (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2019, vol. 1, p. 15). This spaciousness fills the servant's heart with hope for salvation and eagerness to reach it — befitting his knowledge and faith in ALLAH's first words in the surah: (الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمِ) (الْفَاتِحَةُ: 3)

The fifth: the designation of the path of truth and guidance as '*ṣirāṭ*' rather than other synonymous names — which many scholars note alludes to the *ṣirāṭ* (bridge) laid over Hellfire on the Day of Judgement. Whoever was not guided to the straight path of Surah Al-Faatihah in this life and did not find guidance therein shall not be able to cross the *ṣirāṭ* stretched over Hell — and refuge is sought in ALLAH from it.

The way this matter indicates the reality of Tawheed is that on that grievous Day, the causes and lineages of people are severed and avail nothing — none shall benefit the servant on that day except his Lord, and the righteous deeds he performed in this life drawing him close to ALLAH.

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### C. Verbs in Surah Al-Faatihah and Their Indication of Tawheed

The verbs mentioned in Sūrah Al-Faatihah are these

four: *naʿbudu* (we worship), *nastaʿīnu* (we seek help), *ihdinā* (guide us), and *anʿamta* (You blessed). All of them testify to the station of Tawheed. However, we shall attempt briefly to explore aspects of their indication of this great station beyond what relates to their root meanings:

The first question to address concerning the form of these verbs is: why do the first three come in the plural form, and the fourth in the singular?

The answer is that the singular form in { *Ŷou have bestowed Your Grace* } is clearly and manifestly indicative of the reality of Tawheed and of the Lord's exclusive possession of all forms of blessing — general and specific — over all creation. ALLAH said: { *and whatever of blessings and good things you have it is from ALLAH* } EL NAHL 53

As for the other three verbs, they are in the plural for rhetorical purposes all of which relate to sincerity of Tawheed for ALLAH, Lord of all worlds. Ibn al-

Qayyim said: *'The use of the plural pronoun in both places — referring to {You alone we worship, and You Alone we ask for help} and {Guide us to the Straight Path }— is most excellent and most majestic. For this is a station of servitude and dependence upon the Lord, an acknowledgement of need for His worship, help, and guidance. So it comes in the plural form — meaning: we, the community of Your servants, acknowledge servitude to You — just as a servant would say to an exalted king: we are your servants, your possessions, and under your obedience, and we do not disobey your command This is better and weightier before the king than if he said: I alone am your servant and possession'* (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1440 AH, vol. 2, p. 451).

The second question about the form of the verbs is: regarding the tenses used:

The verb 'an'ama' (You blessed) came in the past tense — containing an affirmation of the doctrine of resurrection (Ba'th), a refutation of the doctrine of the Qadariyyah who deny divine foreknowledge, and an exposition of the perfection of ALLAH's knowledge and the perfection of His wisdom and mercy — that His foreknowledge, Glorified be He, encompasses the measures of all creation, and that whatever good befalls the servant is a bounty from Him, while whatever evil befalls him is from himself and from Shaytān, and ALLAH is exalted above wrongdoing and futility: **{He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while they will be questioned}** EL ANBIYA 23

As for the verbs **{نَعْبُدُ}** (we worship) and **{نَسْتَعِينُ}** (we ask for help), the imperfect tense (muḍāri') in each conveys the meaning of renewal and continuity in performing these two acts — which are in reality one single act, the very secret of creation and the purpose of existence: the worship of the True One (al-Ḥaqq), Glorified be He. This form, beyond its declaration of servitude to ALLAH and its stripping away of all forms of shirk, also contains guidance toward guarding Tawheed and protecting its sanctum from deficiencies and contradictions. The intimate friend of the All-Merciful (Khalīl al-Rahmān — Prophet Ibrāhīm) sensed this meaning and supplicated his Lord saying: **{O my Lord, make thius city \*MAKKAH\* one of peace and security, and keep me and my sons away from worshippingidols}** ABRAHAM 35

The verb **{قَدِينَا}** (guide us) remains — and we have chosen to defer discussion of it to the section on structural indicators, where it is more appropriate and fitting. We shall address two aspects of its form: one relating to the style of this sentence — the only inshā'ī (expressive, non-declarative) sentence in Surah Al-Faatihah — and the other relating to the ellipsis of the second

complement of this verb, since ellipsis (ḥadhf) properly belongs to structures rather than individual words.

4.2.2 Indicators of Tawheed in the Syntactic Structures of Surah Al-Faatihah and the Eloquence of Its Composition Surah Al-Faatihah contains numerous rhetorical styles, the most important of which are those that serve the question of Tawheed, establish it with Shar‘ī proofs and rational arguments, and use elevated expository structures. Among the most important of these styles, we shall present seven, arranging them not according to priority — since many of these are of equal eminence and it is impossible to determine which should precede the other — but according to their sequence in books of rhetoric, given that these themes are closely aligned in importance.

The seven themes are: declarative and expressive speech (khabar wa-inshā’); mention and ellipsis (dhikr wa-ḥadhf); fronting and deferral (taqdīm-wa-ta’khīr); definiteness and indefiniteness (ta’rīf-wa-tankīr); shift of address (iltifāt); conjunction and disjunction (faṣl-wa-waṣl); and amplification (itnāb).

### **First Theme: Declarative and Expressive Speech (al-Khabar wa-l-Inshā’)**

It should be noted that all the sentences in Surah Al-Faatihah are declarative (khabariyyah), with the exception of ALLAH's command to His servants to say: {*Guide us to the Straight Path 6* }

This is the greatest supplication a servant can direct to his Lord — containing his happiness in religion and in this life and the Hereafter. Therefore, from ALLAH's gentleness with His servants, His instruction of them, and His mercy upon them, He commanded them to preface this great supplication with praise as a means of seeking acceptance thereof and a response thereto. The indication of this on Tawheed is evident. We may add that all the declarative speech in Surah Al-Faatihah is exposition of the sovereignty of the Lord, Mighty and Majestic, and His singularity in His creation and command (His qadar and His sharī‘ah) — for He, Glorified be He, is the commander and prohibitor, the one who brings forward and defers, the one who raises and lowers, the giver and withholder. As for His servants — they are in submission to His decree, their forelocks in His hand, having no control over their affairs; hence, when they wished to be a means of causing something, their mode was the expressive supplication addressed from a gathered collective to the Singular Self-Sufficient: {*Guide us to the Straight Path* } **ELFATIHA 6**

This contains: the singularity of the one asking, the singularity of what is asked, and the singularity of what guidance is sought toward. Ibn al-Qayyim

said in his poem (al-Nūniyyah): *Be one in one, at a single time, on a single path / Until faith and truth and the clear way become plain to you.*

## **Second Theme: Mention and Ellipsis (al-Dhikr wa-l-Ḥadhf)**

The surface meaning of this heading — and wherever it appears in books of rhetoric — is that a speaker is eloquent through mentioning the words of his speech just as he can be eloquent through omitting what there is good cause to omit. Mention is indeed the original norm, since *'every word in speech is naturally accompanied by mention to convey the intended meaning; otherwise the speech would be opaque and obscure, and the intention would not be apparent.'* (al-Hāshimī, n.d., p. 101).

However, one who reflects upon the states of people and the sayings of the eloquent among them, and who looks carefully at the words of the rhetoricians on this mode of expression, will find that they value ellipsis more than mention. Ellipsis demands greater linguistic skill, stimulates the recipient's mind more, and is that which — as 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, may ALLAH have mercy upon him, said — is *'a subtle device, delicate in its reach, wondrous in its nature, resembling magic; for you see in it that leaving mention is more eloquent than mention, and silence more productive of benefit than speech, and you find yourself most articulate when you do not speak and most illuminating when you do not explain — and this is a matter you may deny until you reflect upon it and reject it until you examine it.'* (al-Jurjānī, 1992, vol. 1, p. 146).

The purposes of ellipsis in Arabic rhetoric are many, but the most famous and most frequent is conveying generality. This purpose is most commonly achieved through the ellipsis of the complements of a verb. We have identified approximately ten instances thereof, all of which indicate the reality of Divine Unity clearly and explicitly:

1. In ALLAH's saying: *{All praises and thaks due to ALLAH, the Lord of mankind, jinns and all that exists}* — there are three ellipses, two of which are the ellipsis of the complements of the verbal noun acting as a verb ('al-ḥamd'): praise for what? For His acts? For His names and attributes? For His commands and prohibitions? For His blessings and favours? The ellipsis of the complement of this word conveys its generality, encompassing all that is fitting to be its complement.

2. Praise is due to ALLAH — at night or by day? In ease or in hardship? At home or travelling? In all of that — in all of that. And none is praised in that except the Lord of Might and Majesty.

3. The ellipsis in ALLAH's saying 'Lord of all worlds' (Rabb al-‘Ālamīn) is the ellipsis of the type of Lordship — is it general or particular Lordship? This ellipsis indicates both: that He possesses both the general and the particular Lordship. The general is 'His creation of all creatures, provision for them, and guidance of them toward what serves their interests and keeps them in existence in this world. The particular is His nurturing of His allies (awliyā’) through faith, granting them success therein, perfecting it for them, and repelling from them all that diverts and hinders them from Him.' (al-Sa‘dī, 2000, p. 39).

4. Al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm — He is merciful to whom? And when is He merciful? And in what is He merciful? These are general matters — though they are specifically conditioned by Shar‘ī texts which collectively indicate that the names al-Raḥmān and al-Raḥīm and their like — such as al-Ghafūr (the Forgiving) and al-‘Afuww (the Pardoner) — when used with the ellipsis of their complement, convey generality indicating the perfection of the Lord's will and His perfect wisdom and perfect mercy — placing His mercy where it is fitting, without diminishing His treasures of sovereignty through the mercy He extends to whomever He wills of His creation.

Among the texts that particularise these generalities is ALLAH's saying: ***{and my mercy embraces all things, that I shall ordain for those who are Muttqun and give Zakat; and those who believe in Our proofs, those who follow the Prophet who can neither read nor write}*** EL AARAF 156-157 also He says: ***{He punishes whom He will, and shows mercu to whom He will, and to Him you will be returned}*** EL ANKABOUT 21

The generality of His mercy is a proof of His Oneness and Greatness, that He has no partner in that and no equal, and none other than ALLAH, Mighty and Majestic, deserves it. And the withholding of His mercy from those who are unworthy of it is another proof of this meaning to whoever reflects.

5. The fifth position of ellipsis is in ALLAH's saying: 'we seek help' (nasta‘īnu) — the verb of seeking help (isti‘ānah) is normally transitivised with a preposition indicating: in what? — in obeying Him, in refraining from His disobedience, in riding, in alighting, in sitting, in standing — we seek ALLAH's help in everything and at every moment. What further confirms the indication of this style on the question of Tawheed is what we shall discuss: the fronting of the first object of both acts of worship and help-seeking — the word 'iyyāka' — and its function as the strongest device of restriction (qaṣr) in Arabic.

6. In ALLAH's saying {أَهْدِنَا}: the ellipsis of the second complement — either the preposition 'ilā' (to) or 'fi' (in) — and the non-mention of either of them, conveys the generality of the word's signification encompassing both: *'guidance to the path: adherence to the religion of Islam and the abandonment of all other religions. And guidance in the path: encompassing guidance to all religious details in knowledge and practice. This supplication is among the most comprehensive and beneficial supplications for the servant; hence it is obligatory for a person to make this supplication in every rak'ah of his prayer, due to his pressing need for it.'* (al-Sa'dī, 2000, p. 39).

7. 'You blessed them' (an'amta' alayhim) — blessed them with what? With manifest and concealed blessings: **{If you count the blessings of ALLAH, you will never count them}**

As for the style of ellipsis in **{those who earned Your anger}** and **{nor of those who went astray}**, its proper discussion is in the fifth theme — the shift of address (iltifāt) — so we defer it there.

### **Third Theme: Fronting and Deferral (al-Taqdīm wa-l-Ta'khīr)**

Perhaps the most famous indicator of the reality of Tawheed in Surah Al-Faatihah — indeed one of the most famous proofs of Divine Unity in the entire Quran — is the fronting of the object before its governing verb twice in ALLAH's saying: **{You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help}** Fronting what should be deferred is one of the strongest devices of restriction (qaṣr) in Arabic. There are also other positions in Surah Al-Faatihah where the device of fronting and deferral indicates the reality of Tawheed, and the perfection of the Lord's attributes, Mighty and Majestic, and the perfection of His Greatness and Majesty — the most important of which are the following three:

— The fronting of Divinity before Lordship in **{All praises and thanks due to ALLAH, the Lord of mankind, jinns and all that exists}**. Beyond observing the order of composition and achieving appropriate rhyme endings, this conveys additional meanings, the most important being:

\* An exposition of the tremendous status of Divinity (Ulūhiyyah) for ALLAH — that it is the purpose for which creation was created, Messengers were sent, Books were revealed, legislations were enacted, and jihad against the disbelievers was prescribed, and other matters.

\* An exposition of the station of the name 'ALLAH' before our Lord, Mighty and Majestic — this structure may be evidence cited by those who

hold that it is the Greatest Name of ALLAH, derived from the fact that it is the first of all ALLAH's names in the first and greatest surah of the Quran. Moreover, advocates of this view commonly note that it is the name followed by all other names, while it itself follows none — as in: 'ALLAH, Lord of all worlds, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful, Master/King of the Day of Judgement.' Similar sequences appear in many instances throughout the Quran, including the ends of Surah al-Hashr.

\* The reason for the Lord's exclusive right to Divinity being His exclusive Lordship — and this argument, i.e. inferring Divine Unity (Ulūhiyyah) from Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), is the greatest and most frequently occurring type of proof in the Quran.

— The fronting of al-Raḥmān before al-Raḥīm in *{the most Beneficent, the Most Merciful}*. Among what follows from this fronting is evidencing the right of the Noble Lord to be fronted over all others, and nurturing us through this fronting. The witness to the fact that al-Raḥmān takes precedence over al-Raḥīm despite both being Beautiful Names of the Lord is that '*al-Raḥmān and al-Raḥīm convey the connection of mercy to its recipient: the first [al-Raḥmān] indicates the attribute subsisting in Him (Glorified be He), and the second [al-Raḥīm] indicates that He has mercy upon His creation through His mercy. Hence the first is for description, and the second for action; the first indicates that mercy is His attribute, and the second that He is merciful to His creation through His mercy.*' (Ibn al-Qayyim, 1440 AH, vol. 1, p. 42).

— The fronting of worship before seeking help in :*{You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help}*. There are many purposes therein mentioned by the scholars of exegesis and rhetoric, the most important of which is the indication of the station of worship before ALLAH and that it is the end purpose of creation and the foremost matter above all else.

— The fronting of those who have been blessed (al-mun'am'alayhim) before those who incurred wrath and the misguided at the end of the surah — many purposes lie therein, among them: the fronting of His favour over His justice, corresponding to the fronting of *{the most Beneficent, the Most Merciful}* before *{The lord Of the day of judgment}*; and the fronting of hope over fear. A textual evidence for this style is: *{who prostrates himself oor standing in prayer during the hours of the night, fearing the hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord}* EL ZUMUR 9 , Note how when the speech is about the believer — as guidance to act with the utmost caution and avoid self-regard — fear is mentioned before hope, while mercy is attributed

to the Lord (Glorified be He), and caution is attributed to the Hereafter; an expression of gentleness toward the believing servant, and an abundant pouring of compassion and mercy upon him.

— Among the fronting conveying the priority of ALLAH's right over the right of all others, and beginning with His right before the servant's right: the divine qudusīḥādīth — which is among the greatest virtues of Surah Al-Faatihah — in which ALLAH says: 'I have divided the prayer (al-ṣalāh) between Myself and My servant into two halves, and My servant shall have what he asks. When the servant says: in **{All praises and thaks due to ALLAH, the Lord of mankind, jinns and all that exists}**, ALLAH Almighty says: My servant has praised Me. When he says: **{the most Beneficent, the Most Merciful}**, ALLAH says: My servant has extolled Me. When he says: **{The lord Of the day of judgment}**, ALLAH says: My servant has glorified Me. When he says: **{You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help}**, ALLAH says: This is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall have what he asks. When he says: **{Guide us to the Straight Way, the Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your grace, not the Way of those who earned Your anger nor of those who went astray}**, ALLAH says: This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what he asks.' (Muslim, 1955, vol. 1, p. 296).

Reflect upon how three and a half verses at the beginning are entirely praise and glorification of ALLAH, and proclamation of the singularity of servitude to Him — Then come three and a half verses for the servant, entirely supplication and petition to ALLAH. In this ḥādīth among the indicators of Tawheed: that all of Surah Al-Faatihah is Tawheed, and ALLAH taught His servants to give precedence to His right over the right of anyone else, whoever they may be.

On the subject of the verses of praise and glorification of ALLAH, Blessed and Exalted, we should note what scholars have mentioned about Surah Al-Faatihah's encompassing all three categories of Tawheed together — saying that they are gathered in: **{All praises and thaks due to ALLAH, the Lord of mankind, jinns and all that exists, the most Beneficent, the Most Merciful}** ALLAH is the proper name of Divinity; Rabb al-ʿĀlamīn is Lordship; and al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm are Names and Attributes. Indeed, it may be said that every verse of this noble surah is a guidance toward all three categories of Tawheed without the need for the second verse. For in the first verse are mentioned two proofs — ALLAH and al-Rabb — explicitly indicating Divinity and Lordship, and in it are the most beautiful names of Divinity and Lordship.

It could be said that every single verse of this surah englobes the three Tawheed categories:

As for {مَلِكٌ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ} {*The lord Of the day of judgment*} — in both readings it contains the names al-Mālik and al-Malik, the first pointing to Divinity and the other to Lordship.

And {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ}: {*You alone we worship* is Divinity; {وَأِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} } {*and You alone we ask for help*} is Lordship; and the style of address is a higher station and a more glorious proximity than the style of third-person narration, even with the mention of some Beautiful Names.

As for {أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ} {*Guide us to the Straight Way* } and what follows: general guidance is a proof of Lordship, and special guidance is a proof of Divinity, and they contain many attributes of guidance, inspiration, wrath, and the attributes of perfection to which the straight path points — such as knowledge, wisdom, mercy, power, will, and others.

#### Fourth Theme: Definiteness and Indefiniteness (al-Ta' rīfwa-l-Tankīr)

There is no indefinite word in Surah Al-Faatihah; all are definite — either with the definite article al- or through the genitive construction (iḍāfah). And ALLAH Almighty is the most definitively recognised (a'rafu al-ma'ārif), the Singular One (Glorified be He), in the inclination of hearts and souls toward Him — though among these hearts there are those who recognise and act upon their recognition, and those who recognise yet turn away, and so ALLAH turns away from them.

In the definiteness of the name ALLAH, Mālik, and Malik through their genitive construction with 'the Day of Judgement' is an allusion to the passing away of all other ownerships and sovereignties, and His singularity in sovereignty on that awesome Day. Aḥmad reported in his Musnad with a ḥasan chain from Jābir who said: '*ALLAH shall gather all servants, and a caller will call out: Who is the King today? And no one responds. Then He will say: It is ALLAH, the One, the Subjugator.*' (al-Bukhārī, 1993, vol. 6, p. 2719).

In the definiteness of al-Ṣirāṭ there is also a definiteness with the definite article, signifying the uniqueness of this path and the One to whom it leads, and the One who showed this path to His servants and commanded them to walk it.

Likewise, in its definiteness through the genitive construction in {صِرَاطٌ الَّذِيْنَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ} {*The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your grace* } is

a clear indication of Tawheed through the magnanimity of the One who blessed those on it through guiding them to it and making them steadfast upon it. This meaning becomes clearer in the discussion of the Fifth Theme: the Shift of Address (al-Iltifāt).

### **Fifth Theme: The Shift of Address (al-Iltifāt)**

This style is perhaps the most eloquent of the rhetorical devices appearing in this magnificent surah and the most indicative of the reality of Divine Unity — and this expectation is built upon the following two proofs:

— First: the grandeur of the style of iltifāt in general, and in this surah in particular. The rhetoricians and exegetes have engaged with this style since antiquity, some calling it 'the courage of Arabic' (shajā' at al-'arabiyyah) — for employing this art requires a courageous speaker who commands the language fully, shifting between third person to second person or the reverse, from address to presence or the reverse, from third person to presence or the reverse, and other forms.

— The second proof is derived from the fact that one style of iltifāt in Surah Al-Faatihah is related to the highest level of al-Iḥsān (excellence in worship), corresponding to the highest station of excellence: the station of witnessing (al-mushāhadah), known to ALLAH.

Two cases of iltifāt appear in Surah Al-Faatihah, among the most eloquent in the Quran:

The first is in {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ}: ***You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help***: the speech shifts from the style of third person to the style of direct address. Al-Sa'd al-Taftāzānī said: *'The original mode of address is to a present witness; and it may shift to other modes to render the absent as if present for a purpose, such as in the statement: {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ}: ***You alone we worship***...' Consider — and this is the position of the majority of rhetoricians — how the Prophet ﷺ commanded: ***'El IHSAN: Worship ALLAH as if you see Him; and if you do not see Him, then He sees you.'*** (al-Bukhārī, 1993, 1, p. 27; Muslim, 1955, vol. 1, p. 36).*

Then return with me to the three verses that preceded this noble verse, which scholars say encompassed the three pillars of servitude: love (maḥabbah), hope (rajā'), and fear (khawf): {الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ} ***All praises and thaks due to ALLAH, the Lord of mankind, jinns and all that exists*** } stirs love in the heart; {الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ} ***the most Beneficent, the Most Merciful*** } fills the heart

with yearning and hope in ALLAH's pardon and generosity and His acceptance of their deeds; and {مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ} *{the Lord of the day of judgment}*

instils awe and fear of non-acceptance of deeds or inability to persist in them. Love motivates compliance with commands; fear yields avoidance of prohibitions; and hope sustains the servant's journey without cutting off hope of the generosity of the All-Merciful, the Forgiving.

The mention of these three stations first is like the pillars upon which a house is built — begun and strengthened and fixed. Once the servant has laid these foundations in his heart, and their fruits begin to appear upon his tongue and limbs, and their lights burn away all the impurities dwelling in his heart, his tongue, or some of his limbs — he becomes worthy of entering upon his Lord and Master, addressing Him with the second-person pronoun, turning toward Him with complete-heartedness. Whoever is deficient in love, fear, or hope — let alone all three — finds himself barred from the purity of this intimate conversation and its sweetness in proportion to his deficiency in these great stations.

So upon you — O Muslim — especially when standing before your Lord in prayer, particularly the obligatory prayers: strive to internalise the meanings of these three verses — all of which are praise and glorification of ALLAH and exaltation and veneration — and ascend from the station of Islam and faith to the station of Iḥsān, from distance to closeness. Otherwise you will have missed the greatest thing in prayer — you will have missed its spirit and its sweetest element.

The second iltifāt in Surah Al-Faatihah is in:

*{ the Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your grace, not the Way of those who earned Your anger nor of those who went astray }* **ELFATIHA 7** reflect on how our Lord nurtures us and teaches us how to address Him intimately and how to speak about Him — when He mentioned blessing (ni'mah), He attributed it to Himself, and when the speech is about wrath (ghaḍab) and misguidance (ḍalāl), the verb is not attributed to a subject. This is the established pattern of the Quran and the Prophet's Sunnah in this domain, the prophet said: *{All the goodness is on Your Hands, and the evil is not attributed to You}* **Muslim 1955, 1/534** . Ibn al-Qayyim said: *'The established pattern in the Quran is that acts of goodness, mercy, and generosity are attributed to ALLAH, Glorified and Exalted... And when He comes to acts of justice, requital, and punishment: the doer (fā'il) is omitted in the address, and the verb is built for the object of the action (maf'ūl), as an*

expression of etiquette... From this is our verse: for when He mentioned blessing, He attributed it to Himself and said: {أَتَعْمَلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ} {**those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace**}, and when He mentioned wrath, He omitted the doer and built the verb for the object: {الْمَعْصُوبِينَ عَلَيْهِمْ} {**those who earned Your anger**} A similar case is the saying of Ibrāhīm, the Intimate Friend of ALLAH (Khalīl al-Rahmān) ﷺ {الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ} {**Who created me and then guided me**} and {وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ} {**And it is He who feeds me and gives me drink**} and {وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ} {**And when I am ill, it is He who cures me**}: he attributed creation, guidance, and the goodness of feeding and giving to drink to ALLAH, and when it came to mention illness: {وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ} (And when I am ill) he did not say {**He made me ill**} and said: {فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ} {**it is He who cures me**}(Ibn al-Qayyim, 1440 A-420).

Furthermore—and Allah Knows Best—we may discern another semantic dimension of the rhetorical device of shift (iltifat) in this noble verse, which bears an explicit connection to a core tenet of Monotheism (tawhid): the principle of loyalty and disavowal (al-wala' wa-al-bara'). This principle is predicated upon the love of Allah the Almighty, and the love, alliance, and support of His allies (awliya'), as well as the hatred of the enemies of Allah the Almighty, and the total disavowal (bara'ah) of them, their polytheism (shirk), and their falsehood. The correlation between this stylistic device and this momentous principle is manifested in the omission of the agent (hadhf al-fa'il) in the statement of the Almighty: «ghayri al-maghdūbi 'alayhim» (not of those who have evoked [Your] anger). While the Prophet ﷺ clarified that "those who have evoked anger" refers to the Jews, scholars have interpreted this clarification as non-exclusive; rather, anyone who resembles the Jews in the effective cause ('illah) of acquiring this description receives a share of this wrath. However, what may remain obscure to many who read this noble verse is that the entity to whom the act of anger is attributed is not Allah—Blessed and Exalted be He—alone; rather, it encompasses Him alongside everyone who possesses a protective zeal (ghayrah) for the sanctity of Monotheism (janāb al-tawhīd) among the people of true Islam. They all express wrath toward whomever Allah the Almighty is angry with, detest whom Allah detests, and love and ally with those whom He, Glory be to Him, has proclaimed to be the locus of His love and alliance (wilāyah). This semantic expansion (al-ittisā') within the verse is precisely generated by the omission of the agent (hadhf al-fa'il) in the Almighty's words: «ghayri al-maghdūbi 'alayhim». And Allah Knows Best.

## Sixth Theme: Conjunction and Disjunction (al-Faṣḷwa-l-Waṣḷ)

*'Knowledge of this — that is, knowing where sentences belong and where conjunction ('atf) and disjunction (isti'nāf) should rightly occur — is difficult in its path, not attained by the correct answer except by one who has received an abundant share of rhetoric, is endowed with the perception of the beauties of speech, has been granted a portion of knowledge of the taste of language. Hence the rhetoricians made it the definition of rhetoric; one of them said when asked about it: it is the knowledge of conjunction and disjunction.'* (al-Hāshimī, n.d., p. 179).

In Surah Al-Faatihah there are two conjunctions, both with the particle wāw (and), and in both cases the reason for conjunction is the complete unity of the two conjoined sentences: {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} {**You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help**}; and {غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ} {**not the Way of those who earned Your anger nor of those who went astray**}.

The first conjunction between '**You alone we worship**' and '**You alone we seek help from**' conveys this complete union between the two acts — as was noted earlier — indicating the complete dependence of the servant upon his Lord in all circumstances, and that the achievement of any sought objective — whether religious or worldly — is not possible without ALLAH's assistance.

As for the conjunction at the end of the last verse between those who incurred wrath and the misguided: beyond indicating that the Jews and those like them are worse in state and more wretched in outcome than the Christians and their likes — except those whom ALLAH guides to the straight path — it also affirms the sincere believer's eagerness that ALLAH guide him aright and that whoever departs from this straight path will be all the more eager to separate from him; knowing that all paths to ALLAH are closed except His straight path — which is the path of the Book and the Sunnah as established by the mutawātir texts and the converging proofs.

As for the rest of the sentences in this surah, all are disjoined from one another — either because each later sentence is a confirmation of the preceding one, or a substitute for it, or an explanation of it (what rhetorical convention terms 'kamāl al-ittiṣāl' — complete connection); as is the case with the first five verses and the seventh verse as well.

Or they are disjoined because there is complete disconnection (kamāl al-inqiṭā') between the two sentences — one being declarative and the other expressive (inshā'iyah); as in {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} {**You alone we worship**

*and You alone we ask for help* } followed by {أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ} {*Guide us to the Straight Way*}.

Perhaps the style of disjunction between the first five verses of Surah Al-Faatihah establishes — or at least reinforces — the reality of Tawheed; for if it were said (outside the Quran): 'praise belongs to ALLAH, Lord of all worlds, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful...' the marvellous composition and the lofty connection between these noble verses would not have been achieved, nor would the reality of Divine Unity have been made manifest. And the most important objective and the most noble sought matter would have been lost — which is the praise of ALLAH for the perfection of His Essence and the perfection of His Attributes.

Similarly, we discern an allusion to the question of Tawheed in the disjunction between {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} and {أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ}. The reason for disjunction in terms of language and grammar is the complete disconnection and structural contrast between the two verses — one being declarative and the other expressive. But do you not see that this disjunction conveys the sense that the servant's worship and help-seeking, however great his effort in them and however much he possesses of knowledge and apparent means of success — if ALLAH does not grant him guidance from His own presence and take him by the hand to His straight path — his worship will come to naught. He will be among those whose striving in this worldly life is lost while they thought they were doing well in deeds, surely ALLAH possesses the absolute knowledge.

### **Seventh Theme: Amplification (al-Iṭnāb)**

Amplification (al-iṭnāb) is *'the augmentation of the wording beyond the meaning for a benefit — or: conveying a meaning with an expression exceeding the customary standard of eloquent speakers, for the benefit of reinforcing and confirming it.'* (al-Hāshimī, n.d., p. 201). Amplification has many forms in Arabic rhetoric; we select three forms appearing in Surah Al-Faatihah, all of which testify to the station of Tawheed: The First Form: The Specific Following the General ('atf al-khāṣṣ' alā al-'āmm): In {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ} {*You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help*} — seeking help (isti'ānah) is an act of worship, and its conjunction upon worship is of the type: the specific following the general; as in: (حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى) {*Guard strictly the five prayers especially the middle prayer*} ELBAKARA 238

The middle prayer is among the prayers commanded to be maintained in the first part of the verse, yet ALLAH singles it out after the general

command. When the Arabs wish to emphasise the importance of something, or the honour of its station, or the severity of its danger, or other such qualities, they single it out with explicit mention after the general. Al-Qazwīnī said in al-Īdāh: *'As for the mention of the specific after the general — to alert to its virtue... as in ALLAH's saying: مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ* □ *{whoever is an enemy to ALLAH, His angels, His Messengers, JIBrael and Mikael} EL-BAKARA 98 and His saying: وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ* □ *{Let arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoying AL-Maruf and forbidden El Monkar} EL IMRAN 104* (al-Qazwīnī, n.d., vol. 3, p. 200).

In truth, the mention of seeking help after worship — though it contains the exposition of the virtue of seeking help and the emphasis on its importance — also and more so exposes the honour of servitude and the complete dependence of the servant upon his Lord, and the freedom of ALLAH from all His creation. It is as if it says: strive in My worship and do well in My service, and do not rely upon your own strength nor seek independence from My help; for I am the One who commands you to worship Me, and I am the One who helps you in that, so seek My help.

The Second Form: Repetition (al-Tikrār): There are two witnesses to this in Surah Al-Faatihah — or rather the same verse just mentioned — where the Lord, Blessed and Exalted, repeats the detached pronoun: 'iyyāka' twice. This is among the most eloquent and most magnificent forms of amplification, containing an emphasis on the meaning and an acknowledgement after acknowledgement that ALLAH is the sole object of worship and the One solely sought, Exalted and Majestic, upon Whom all trust is placed. In it also, alongside acknowledgement and emphasis, is the realisation of the pleasure of intimate conversation (munājāh) and the sweetness of addressing the Lord of Generosity. For it is known that when a lover mentions his beloved, the very remembrance brings him sweetness and intimacy — so imagine the repetition of the pronoun of address to the King of kings, Exalted in His heights.

The second witness: the repetition of the word 'al-ṣirāt' (the path), and in it the emphasis on its importance and uniqueness and other qualities mentioned above.

The Third Form: Clarification after Ambiguity (al-Īdāḥba' da al-Ibhām), as the rhetoricians call it. Its occasion in Surah Al-Faatihah is: (اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6) *Guide us to the*

***StaightWay.not the Way of those who earned Your anger nor of those who went astray*}.EL-FATIHA 7**

The seventh verse clarified what was meant by the straight path. It would have sufficed for the basic meaning to say: 'Guide us to the path of those upon whom You bestowed favour...' But He (Glorified be He) — to magnify and dignify this path and stimulate the souls of His servants toward knowing it — presented the straight path in a summary and ambiguous manner, then clarified it in detail and exposition in the second verse — as He clarified it in summary in Al-Faatihah and in detail in Surah al-Nisā' where He said: *وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ* (النساء: 69) *{and who obeys ALLAH and the Messenger, they will be in the company of those on whom ALLAH has bestowed His Grace, of the prophets, the SIDDIKINS \* who believe the prophet\*, the Martyrs and the righteous, and how excellent these companions are, } EI NISSA 69*

The author of al-Īdāh said: '*...for when the meaning is presented in a general and ambiguous manner, the soul yearns to know it in detail; when cast in that way, the soul of the listener turns toward what comes after with anticipation — enabling it to settle in the soul more fully, for the pleasure of knowing it... or to strengthen the meaning and give it its due weight... or to magnify and exalt the matter.*' (al-Qazwīnī, n.d., vol. 3, p. 196). These three purposes all serve the fundamental question for which this noble surah — and all Quranic surahs, and all the Divine Books — was revealed: namely, the Tawheed of ALLAH as due from His servants.

## **5. Conclusion:**

In conclusion to our study of the **Proofs of Tawheed** in Surah Al-Faatihah, we summarise the most important findings we believe we have reached:

— Surah Al-Faatihah contains numerous and varied proofs of the Oneness of ALLAH Almighty and His exclusive right to be singled out in Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), Divinity (Ulūhiyyah), Names, and Attributes. These proofs number in the dozens at minimum. In this study, we restricted ourselves to those with a particular connection to the rhetorical study.

— After thorough examination, the collected proofs could be classified into two categories: external proofs — i.e., those outside Surah Al-Faatihah yet intimately connected to it; and internal proofs — i.e., derived from the wording and structures of this noble surah itself.

— The external proofs are divided into two types: external conceptual indicators, the most important of which are that Surah Al-Faatihah is the greatest and foremost surah of the Quran and its mother; that a gate of heaven that had never been opened before was opened for its revelation; that ṣalāh is invalid without it; that it is a ruqyah and a cure from physical and spiritual ailments; and others.

And external verbal indicators, the most important of which are its numerous names pointing to Tawheed — especially the most famous of them, 'Al-Faatihah,' which clearly alludes to the fact that all keys of good are in His hand alone. Among these indicators is also that its verses are seven — hence it is named al-Sab‘ al-Mathānī — and in this number are cosmic and legislative secrets that ALLAH has kept exclusively to Himself.

— The internal proofs are likewise divided into two categories: those pertaining to the individual words (mufradāt) of Surah Al-Faatihah, and those pertaining to its syntactic structures (tarākīb).

— The proofs at the level of individual words were subdivided into those pertaining to particles, those pertaining to nouns, and those pertaining to the verbs mentioned in the surah.

— The most prominent rhetorical areas for which we found textual evidence in Surah Al-Faatihah are the following seven: declarative and expressive speech; mention and ellipsis; fronting and deferral; definiteness and indefiniteness; shift of address (iltifāt); conjunction and disjunction; and amplification (iṭnāb).

— We endeavoured — seeking ALLAH's help — to derive as many indicators as possible falling within these themes and to demonstrate for the reader their manner of indicating the greatest question of Tawheed, guided by the statements of the imāms of exegesis and scholars of rhetoric accessible to us who served this glorious surah — the greatest surah of the Quran.

Whatever is correct in this work is by the success and aid of ALLAH Almighty; whatever is erroneous or mistaken is from myself and from Shayṭān. I ask ALLAH to pardon it, to make this work purely for His noble countenance, to benefit us through the Quran, and to raise us by it — for He, Glorified be He, is the Generous, the Munificent. May ALLAH send blessings upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and all his companions. And our final call is that all praise is due to ALLAH, Lord of all worlds.

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