

# **Al-Fatihah** [The Opening] **Makkan Period**

[1] In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

[2] Praise<sup>1</sup> be to Allah, the Lord<sup>2</sup> of the entire Universe,

[3] the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate;

[4] the Master of the Day of Recompense.

[5] You alone do we worship<sup>3</sup> and You alone do we turn to for help.

[6] Direct us on to the Straight Way, the way of those whom You have favoured,

[7] who did not incur Your wrath, who are not astray.<sup>4</sup>

*1. Al-Fatihah is actually a prayer, which God teaches to all who embark upon the study of His Book. Its position at the beginning signifies that anyone who wants to benefit from the Book should first offer this prayer to the Lord of the Universe.*

*2. The word Rabb has three connotations: (i) Lord and Master, (ii) Sustainer, Provider, Supporter, Nourisher and Guardian, and (iii) Sovereign, He Who controls and directs. God is Rabb of the Universe in all these senses.*

*3. Ibadah is also used in three senses (i) worship, prayer and adoration, (ii) submission and obedience, and (iii) bondage and servitude.*

*4. Al-Fatihah is a prayer from man to God, and the rest of the Qur'an is God's response to this prayer. Man prays to God to show him the Straight Way. In response to this prayer God offers the Qur'an as the true guidance, the "Straight Way," which man has sought and prayed for.*