

# The opening chapter of the Quran

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**The opening chapter, Al-Fatihah** (The Opening), of the Quran serves as a preface. It comprises only six short verses.

The first verse is: "All praise is due to God, the Lord of the Universe." This is the gist of the Quran. The basic message of the Quran is that man must be grateful to God.

The second verse calls God "the Beneficent, the Merciful." These are also words of acknowledgement. When man discovers the fact that the whole world is so favourable to him that it seems that it was created solely for him, he is compelled to believe that the Creator is not simply a creator: he is a benevolent creator in the complete sense of the word.

The third verse of this chapter refers to God as "Lord of the Day of Judgement." This expression is a natural part of man's belief about God.

When God created man, and provided him with so

many good things, it was but natural that man should become accountable to his Creator.

The fourth verse of this chapter reads, "You alone we worship, and to You alone we turn for help." This is the real response by man to his Creator. Man must worship. When man tries to acknowledge his Lord he automatically bows before Him, that is, he surrenders.

The fifth verse of this chapter reads, "Guide us to the straight path." This is also an automatic response from man to his God. Man's grasp of reality tells him that the greatest blessing that he may ask from God is right guidance.

The sixth verse of this chapter reads, "The path of those You have blessed; not of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor of those who have gone astray."

This verse is an elaboration of the above verses of the chapter.

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