



## Al-Fātiḥahas Spiritual Therapy: A Study of the Qur'an sPsychological Miracle

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### ABSTRACT

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Surah al-Fātiḥah, known as the Umm al-Qur' ān (the Mother of the Qur'an), holds a unique position not only theologically but also psychologically. From the perspective of i' jāz nafsī, al-Fātiḥah demonstrates spiritual miracles that touch the soul, bring inner peace, and strengthen human psychological resilience. This article aims to examine the psychological dimensions of al-Fātiḥah through classical and contemporary exegesis, as well as modern psychological approaches. The method used is a literature review with descriptive-qualitative analysis, connecting Qur'anic texts with concepts of religious psychology. The findings reveal that these seven verses of al-Fātiḥah function as spiritual therapy by nurturing gratitude, hope, faith, and self-control. Its repetition in daily prayers acts as a form of spiritual conditioning that supports both individual and collective mental health. Thus, al-Fātiḥah remains relevant as a source of inner peace and psychological therapy across generations.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is universally recognized within Islamic tradition as a book of divine guidance, yet its miraculous nature (i' jāz) extends beyond theology and law. Among its various dimensions, i' jāz nafsī—the psychological miracle of the Qur'an—demonstrates how revelation penetrates the depths of human consciousness, bringing tranquility to the heart and resilience to the soul. In this regard, the Qur'an should be understood not only as a doctrinal or legal reference but also as a profound source of spiritual psychology (Shihab, 2002, p. 38). Through this dimension, the Qur'an influences both cognition and emotion, shaping human behavior by internalizing spiritual values. Revelation, therefore, establishes a direct connection between divine message and the inner self, guiding individuals toward emotional balance and stability. This perspective highlights that the Qur'an's miraculous essence encompasses not only linguistic eloquence and legal precision but also a therapeutic role that strengthens psychological well-being (al-Rāzī, 1981, pp. 160–163). Surah al-Fātiḥah, the opening chapter of the Qur'an, embodies this dimension with

exceptional clarity. Known as Ummal-Qur'ān (Mother of the Qur'an) and al-Sab' al-Mathānī (the Seven Oft-Repeated Verses), it encapsulates the essential doctrines of Islamic belief: divine mercy, cosmic justice, servitude, and guidance. Each of its verses carries theological depth while simultaneously offering psychological nourishment—cultivating gratitude, instilling serenity, reinforcing discipline, and directing life orientation (al-Ṭabarī, 1992, pp. 140–145). Given its centrality, this article seeks to examine the psychological and spiritual power of al-Fātiḥah through the lens of *i' jāz nafsī*. It specifically aims to analyze how its verses contribute to mental balance, inner peace, and collective spiritual resilience, while also showing its continuing relevance to contemporary psychological discourse.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative library research design, focusing on the analysis of Qur'anic verses, classical and contemporary exegesis, as well as secondary sources from psychology and Islamic studies. The method is descriptive-analytical, aiming to interpret how the Qur'anic concept of *i' jāz nafsī* can be understood through Surah al-Fātiḥah in relation to human psychological well-being. Primary sources include the Qur'an and tafsīr literature from both classical scholars such as al-Ṭabarī (1992) and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (1981), and contemporary works such as those by M. Quraish Shihab (2002). Secondary sources involve modern studies on psychology of religion and spirituality, including works by Pargament (1997), Koenig (2018), and Frankl (2006). The approach emphasizes two analytical dimensions. First, a theological-textual analysis, which explores exegetical interpretations of al-Fātiḥah and their relevance to the doctrine of *i' jāz nafsī*. Second, a psychological-contextual analysis, which correlates these interpretations with established concepts in psychology, such as gratitude, self-control, and resilience (Emmons & McCullough, 2004; Bowlby, 1988). This combined framework allows for a holistic understanding of how al-Fātiḥah functions as both a theological foundation and a psychological therapy across time and context. The methodology highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the study, situating the Qur'anic discourse within broader discussions of mental health and spirituality.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The findings of this study reveal that *i' jāz nafsī* in Surah al-Fātiḥah manifests through the psychological and spiritual influence embedded in its seven verses. Each verse contributes to specific aspects of mental and emotional well-being, offering a therapeutic function that transcends time and context. First, the invocation of God's mercy in the opening verse establishes a sense of hope and reassurance. By beginning with the attributes al-Raḥmān (the Most Compassionate) and al-Raḥīm (the Most Merciful), believers are reminded that divine compassion underlies the entire structure of

existence, which instills comfort and optimism (Shihab, 2002, pp. 40–42). Second, the declaration “All praise belongs to God, Lord of the worlds” cultivates gratitude as a psychological foundation. Gratitude has been shown in modern psychology to reduce stress and enhance emotional stability (Emmons & McCullough, 2004, pp. 6–8). This indicates that the Qur’anic encouragement of gratitude directly supports human psychological well-being. Third, the verse affirming God as Master of the Day of Judgment reinforces moral awareness and self-control. The consciousness of accountability generates inner discipline, motivating individuals to live meaningfully and ethically (Frankl, 2006, pp. 99–100). Fourth, the verse declaring servitude and dependence upon God—“You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help”—provides a sense of reliance and surrender that relieves existential anxiety. Such reliance parallels modern religious coping strategies, where surrender to the divine reduces stress and builds resilience (Pargament, 1997, pp. 178–180). Fifth, the supplication for guidance—“Guide us to the straight path”—expresses the believer’s continual need for direction and clarity in life. This resonates with psychological theories emphasizing the importance of life purpose as a protective factor for mental health (Koenig, 2018, pp. 212–214). Sixth, the reference to “the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor” emphasizes positive role models and communal solidarity. Such identification fosters a sense of belonging and strengthens collective resilience (Bowlby, 1988, pp. 32–33). Finally, the warning against “the path of those who incurred wrath or went astray” serves as a moral safeguard. It functions as cognitive restructuring, encouraging believers to avoid destructive behaviors and maintain spiritual balance (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141). Taken together, the seven verses of al-Fātiḥah present a comprehensive framework for spiritual psychology. They nurture gratitude, instill hope, encourage discipline, and strengthen resilience, thereby confirming the Qur’anic role as both revelation and therapy.

## Discussion

### Theological and Spiritual Dimension of al-Fātiḥah

Classical Muslim scholars consistently emphasized that al-Fātiḥah serves as both the introduction and the essence of the Qur’ān. Al-Ṭabarī (1992, pp. 140–145) divided the chapter into two distinct sections: the first part (verses 1–4) focuses on divine attributes such as mercy, lordship, and justice, while the second part (verses 5–7) highlights human servitude and supplication. This structure creates a dynamic interaction between God and humankind, demonstrating that revelation itself functions as a dialogue. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (1981, pp. 160–163) deepened this view by suggesting that al-Fātiḥah symbolizes a spiritual journey. It begins with recognition of God’s mercy, continues with acknowledgment of His sovereignty on the Day of Judgment, and culminates in the believer’s plea for guidance. This progression reflects the stages of spiritual awareness: knowledge (*ma’rifah*), devotion (*‘ibādah*), and reliance (*tawakkul*). Thus, in classical theology, al-Fātiḥah is not merely liturgical but a condensed map of faith and inner transformation. Psychological Implications of the Seven Verses Modern

psychological frameworks provide further insight into how each verse of 4. al-Fātiḥah addresses fundamental human needs.

- Verse 1: In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful → Establishes a secure foundation of hope and attachment. Bowlby's attachment theory argues that security and care are essential for psychological stability (Bowlby, 1988, pp. 32–33). The repetition of divine mercy assures believers of unconditional love.
- Verse 2: All praise belongs to God, Lord of the worlds → Encourages gratitude, which has been shown to lower stress and enhance resilience (Emmons & McCullough, 2004, pp. 6–8).
- Verse 3: The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful → Reinforces divine compassion, functioning as emotional reassurance.
- Verse 4: Master of the Day of Judgment → Strengthens moral accountability and self-regulation. Frankl (2006, pp. 99–100) highlights that meaning and responsibility are crucial for survival, especially in times of suffering.
- Verse 5: You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help → Relieves existential anxiety by fostering surrender and reliance on God. Pargament (1997, pp. 178–180) describes this as a form of religious coping.
- Verse 6: Guide us to the straight path → Emphasizes life orientation and purpose. Koenig (2018, pp. 212–214) argues that having a sense of purpose is a key protective factor for mental health. Verse 7: The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who incurred wrath or went astray → Functions as cognitive restructuring by encouraging avoidance of destructive behaviors and promoting positive role models (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141).

Through these psychological readings, it becomes evident that al-Fātiḥah serves as a holistic guide for emotional, cognitive, and spiritual well-being. Al-Fātiḥah as Spiritual Therapy Beyond theological and psychological interpretation, al-Fātiḥah plays a therapeutic role in daily religious practice. Its recitation in every unit of prayer reinforces spiritual values through repetition, a process that psychologists identify as conditioning. Schacter (2011, pp. 289–290) explains that repetition strengthens memory and internalization. In Islamic practice, this constant recitation creates what may be described as spiritual conditioning, embedding values such as gratitude, hope, and resilience into the believer's subconscious. Studies in psychology of religion also support the therapeutic role of prayer and scripture reading. For instance, Koenig (2018) and Pargament (1997) argue that religious practices enhance coping strategies, reduce anxiety, and foster emotional regulation. This indicates that al-Fātiḥah functions as both liturgical worship and psychological healing.

**Contemporary Relevance** In the context of modern life, where stress, anxiety, and depression are increasingly prevalent, the relevance of al-Fātiḥah as a source of psychological stability becomes even clearer. The chapter addresses

universal human concerns: the need for security, belonging, guidance, and resilience. Its collective dimension, emphasized by the plural “we” in verses 5–6, fosters a sense of solidarity and communal strength (Shihab, 2002, pp. 38–42). Moreover, al-Fātiḥah provides a model of mindfulness. Similar to contemporary therapeutic practices, the chapter encourages believers to remain conscious of divine presence, personal accountability, and life purpose. This mindfulness not only calms the mind but also strengthens moral orientation. Thus, al-Fātiḥah remains timelessly relevant, bridging classical theology, contemporary psychology, and the lived reality of believers in a world marked by psychological challenges.

Insights from Classical and Contemporary Tafsīr

Classical exegetes consistently interpreted al-Fātiḥah as the foundation of the Qur’ān’s guidance. Al-Ṭabarī (1992, pp. 140–145) argued that the chapter contains both praise of God and supplication from humankind, thereby representing the two pillars of faith: recognition of divine lordship and reliance upon divine guidance. He emphasized that reciting al-Fātiḥah in prayer establishes a continuous dialogue between the Creator and the believer, which itself has a transformative psychological effect. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (1981, pp. 160–165) offered a more philosophical approach, describing al-Fātiḥah as a condensed roadmap of spiritual development. For him, the repeated mention of God’s mercy (al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm) reflects that compassion precedes divine wrath, a concept that nurtures emotional security and reinforces trust in God’s justice. He also stressed that the plea for guidance (ihdinā al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm) illustrates the believer’s lifelong journey of self-improvement, highlighting the Qur’ān’s ability to influence psychological growth. Later scholars such as al-Suyūṭī (2008, p. 132) considered al-Fātiḥah to contain the essence of all Qur’ānic themes—divine unity, prophecy, afterlife, worship, and supplication. This comprehensive scope underscores its unique role in shaping both spiritual orientation and inner stability.

In contrast, contemporary commentators extend the classical insights by emphasizing the chapter’s relevance to modern human concerns. Shihab (2002, pp. 38–42) highlights the collective nature of worship in verse five (iyyāka na’budu wa iyyāka nasta’īn), noting that the use of the plural form “we” reflects Islam’s vision of faith as a communal experience. This interpretation resonates with social psychology, where collective practices are shown to enhance solidarity and mental resilience (Koenig, 2018, pp. 212–214). Furthermore, Ibn ‘Āshūr (1984, pp. 135–137) argued that the opening basmalah establishes optimism and hope, which are essential for psychological endurance. His interpretation anticipates findings in modern positive psychology, which show that optimism and gratitude significantly enhance well-being (Seligman, 2004, pp. 56–61). These insights confirm that both classical and contemporary exegesis recognize al-Fātiḥah not only as a theological foundation but also as a source of psychological nourishment. The continuity between early and modern scholarship illustrates that the Qur’ān’s psychological miracle (i’jāz nafsī) remains relevant across historical contexts, addressing universal needs of human

consciousness.

## CONCLUSION

This study has shown that Surah al-Fātiḥah exemplifies the psychological miracle (i' jāz nafsi) of the Qur' an. Through its seven concise yet profound verses, it nurtures gratitude, instills hope, reinforces self-discipline, and provides both individual and communal guidance. Classical exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī (1992) and al-Rāzī (1981) emphasized its role as a dialogue between God and humanity as well as a roadmap of spiritual development. Later scholars like al-Suyūṭī (2008) described it as a summary of the entire Qur' an, while Ibn ' Āshūr (1984) highlighted its capacity to cultivate optimism and resilience. Contemporary commentators, notably Shihab (2002), expanded this framework by stressing its social and psychological relevance, especially the collective dimension of worship expressed in the plural " we worship " and " we seek help." These interpretations harmonize with modern psychological research, which demonstrates the benefits of gratitude, optimism, secure attachment, and communal solidarity for mental health (Emmons & McCullough, 2004; Bowlby, 1988; Koenig, 2018). Furthermore, the recitation of al-Fātiḥah in every unit of prayer functions as a form of spiritual conditioning. By repeating these verses regularly, believers continuously internalize their spiritual and psychological values, much like the reinforcement techniques recognized in cognitive psychology (Schacter, 2011). In conclusion, al-Fātiḥah is more than the opening chapter of the Qur' an – it is both revelation and therapy. It addresses timeless human needs by offering theological orientation, psychological resilience, and spiritual peace. Its enduring relevance underscores the Qur' an's role as a source of healing and guidance for the inner self, transcending historical and cultural boundaries.

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