

Is the Bismillah an actual verse of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah or Not? Imam Ibn al-'Uthaymīn

3x

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

"Bismillaah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem"

"In the name of God, the infinitely
Compassionate and Merciful."

-SERVANTOFCREATOR-

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Is the Basmalah an actual verse of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah or Not? - Imam Ibn Uthaymeen:

The scholars hold differing opinions about this issue. Some say that it is definitely a verse from al-Fātiḥah and it should be recited aloud in those prayers which are recited out-loud. They believe it is not correct unless the Basmalah is recited since it is part of the entire chapter of al-Fātiḥah. Other scholars say that it is not a verse of al-Fātiḥah, but it is a separate verse from the book of Allah. This latter opinion is the correct one and is proven by other texts as well as the context of the chapter itself.

As for the textual proof, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated a ḥadīth in which the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

: الرَّحِيمِ الرَّحْمَنُ قَالَ إِذَا ، نِصْفَيْنِ عِبْدِي وَبَيْنَ بَيْنِي الصَّلَاةَ قَسَمْتُ : تَعَالَى اللَّهُ قَالَ : لِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ
اللَّهُ قَالَ : الدِّينِ يَوْمَ مَالِكٍ : تَعَالَى اللَّهُ قَالَ الْعَالَمِينَ رَبِّ قَالَ وَإِذَا ، عَبْدِي حَمْدِي : تَعَالَى اللَّهُ قَالَ

مَجْدَنِي : نَسْتَعِينُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ بَيْنِي هَذَا : تَعَالَى اللَّهُ قَالَ قَالَ وَإِذَا ، عَبْدِي عَلَيَّ أَتَنَّى : تَعَالَى
دَاوَا ، نِصْفَيْنِ عَبْدِي وَبَيْنَ : الْمُسْتَقِيمِ الصِّرَاطِ اهْدِنَا : تَعَالَى اللَّهُ قَالَ ، إِنْ قَالَ وَإِذَا ، عَبْدِي
سَأَلَ مَا وَلِعَبْدِي ، لِعَبْدِي هَذَا قَالَ

Allah (تَعَالَى) says,

“I have divided the prayer in two parts between myself and my servant.” When the servant recites, "All praise and thanks are to Allah, the lord of all creations", Allah says, “My servant has praised me.” And when he recites, "The Most-Merciful, the Bestower of all mercy", Allah says, “My servant has honored me.” When he recites, "The owner of the Day of Recompense", Allah says, “My servant has glorified me.” When he recites, "You alone we worship and from you alone we seek help", Allah replies, “This is two parts between my servant and I.” When he recites, "Guide us to the straight path..." until the end of the chapter, Allah replies, “This is for My servant and he will have what he asks for.”

[Recorded by Muslim (no. 395)]

This is a textual proof that the *Basmalah* is not an actual verse of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah (because it was not the first statement the servant says as mentioned in this ḥadīth).

There is another authentic statement of Anas ibn Mālik (من ع لدا يضرر) in “Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim” in which he said:

I prayed behind the prophet (ﷺ), Abū Bakr, and ‘Umar and none of them used to mention “In the name of Allah, the Most-Merciful, the Bestower of all mercy” at the beginning of their recitations (of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah) nor at the end of it.

[Recorded by Muslim (no. 399)]

What is meant is that each of them used not to mention it aloud. The fact that there is a distinction between it not being recited aloud as the rest of al-Fātiḥah is recited indicates that it is not actually a part of the chapter.

As for the proof from the context of the other verses’ meanings, Sūrah al-Fātiḥah consists of seven verses as is unanimously agreed upon. If you wanted to measure out seven verses as they pertain to the topics of the chapter, you will find that the middle verse is:

نَسْتَعِينُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ

You alone we worship and from you alone we seek help. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:4]

This is the same verse about which Allah says, “This is two parts between my servant and I” in the previous ḥadīth. This is because the first verse is:

الْعَالَمِينَ رَبِّ لِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ

All praise and thanks are for Allah, the Lord of all creations. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:1]

The second verse is:

الرَّحِيمِ الرَّحْمَنِ

The Most Merciful, the Bestower of all mercy. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:2]

The third verse:

الَّذِينَ يَوْمَ مَالِكٍ

The owner of the Day of Recompense. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:3]

These three previous verses are all about the rights of Allah (his attribute, actions, etc.).

As for the verse:

نَسْتَغِيثُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ

You alone we worship, and from you alone we seek help. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:4]

This is the fourth verse and the half-way point and it too is even divided into two parts, one part for Allah (“You alone we worship...”) and one part for the servant (“...from you alone we seek help.”).

The following verses are:

الْمُسْتَقِيمِ الصِّرَاطِ اهْدِنَا

Guide us to the straight path. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:5]

This is for the servant.

عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْعَمْتَ الَّذِينَ أَطَّعُوا

The path of those upon whom You bestowed Your grace. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:6]

This is also for the servant.

الضَّالِّينَ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَغْضُوبِ غَيْرَ

Not of those who earned anger upon themselves, nor of those who are astray. [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:7]

And finally, this last verse is also for the servant.

So, three verses are for Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and they are the first three. And three verses are for the servant and they are the last three. One verse is between both the servant and his lord and it is the fourth and middle verse.

As for the proof from the context of the wordings, if we say that the *Basmalah* is a verse of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, then the seventh verse would be very long – as long as two of the other verses (thus making the last and incomparably long verse, “The path of those upon whom you bestowed your grace, not of those who earned anger, nor of those who are astray.”). But it is known that the principle of the verses being similar to each other is also regarding their length.

So, the correct opinion no doubt is that the *Basmalah* is not a verse of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah just as it is not a verse (at the beginning) of every other chapter in the Qur'an.

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