

CHAPTER II

BASMALAH DISCOURSE AND PERSPECTIVE

A. The Definition of *Basmalah*

In terms of etymology, *Bismi-allāhi-al-rahmāni-al-rahīmi* sentence consists of three words, namely *bi ismi* (by name), *Allāh* and *al- Rahmān al-Rahīm*.¹

Cyril Glasse in ‘Encyclopedia of Islam’ defines *basmalah* as a sentence: “*Bismi Allāh al-Rahmān al-Rahīm* (in the name of Allah the merciful and the almighty)². He further explained that *basmalah* usually spoken by Muslims many times in a day as a prelude to doing any acts of virtue³.

Indonesian dictionary defines *basmalah* briefly with ‘*bismillāh*’, with the name of Allah used to say if someone will do something⁴. Meanwhile, in ‘Encyclopedia of Islam in Indonesia’ mentioned that *basmalah* is the designation for ‘*Bismillāh*’ (in the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful).

Basmalah is also defined in ‘The Encyclopedia of Islam’ as the formula ‘*bi ismi allāhi al-rahmāni al-rahīmi*’ also called *tasmiyah* (to pronounce the [divine] Name)⁵. Common translation: “In the name of God, the Clement, the Merciful”; R. Blachere’s translation: “In the name of God, the Merciful Benefactor⁶

From the *basmalah* definition above, briefly it can be concluded that *basmalah* is another name of *bismillāh* which is the name for *Bismi-allāhi-al-*

¹ Usin S. Artyasa, *Ingin Hidup Sukses dan Berkah? Awali dengan Basmalah!*, Ruang Kata, Bandung, 2012, p.126.

² Cyril Grasse, *Ensiklopedi Islam (singkat)*, PT Raja Grafindo Persada, Jakarta, 2nd edition, 1999, p.54

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, Balai Pustaka, Jakarta, 3rd edition, 2005, p.157.

⁵ *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, new edition, Luzac&co, London, 1960, p.1084.

⁶ R. Blachere, *Le Coran*, Paris, 1947, p. 142-144.

rahmāni-al-rahīmi sentence. *Basmalah* is usually spoken by Muslims in starting everything.

Further explained that *basmalah* is the identity that differs between Muslims and non-Muslims, because at the first time *basmalah* just spoken with ‘*bismillāh*’, without any additional *al-rahmān* and *al-rahīm*⁷. *Qurāish* people are used to saying *bismillāh*, so basically they have known God before the coming of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. But God in their view is often associated with idols like *Lattā*, *Uzza*, *Manāt* and *Hubbal* which is very different from the God as taught by the Prophet ﷺ.

With the additional *al-rahmān* and *al-rahīm* then God is no longer attributed to the idols but attributed to Allah, the one, that is no partner for him. The additional *al-rahmān* and *al-rahīm* also make *basmalah* as a glorious sentence, and *basmalah* is one of the highest *dhikr* in the realm of Islam because in *basmalah* is pronounced God's name with following other great names, *al-Rahmān* and *al-Rahīm*⁸.

Greatness *basmalah* also confirmed by Imām ‘Alī bin Abi Ṭālib ؑ that everything contained in *al-Qur’ān* is summarized in *al-Fātiḥah* and all that contained in *al-Fātiḥah* is summarized in *basmalah*.

The formula occurs twice in the text of *al-Qur’ān*: In its complete form in *Sūrah al-Naml* [27]: 30, where it opens Solomon’s letter to the queen of Sheba: “*Verily, It is from Sulaimān (Solomon), and verily, it (reads): In the name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*”, on a second occasion, in its abridged form in *sūrah* [11]: 43: “*(Noah) said: Ascend into the Ark! May its voyaging and its anchorage be in the name of God*”. Finally in its complete form, it begins each of the Qur’anic *Sūrahs*, with the exception of *sūrah* [9].⁹

⁷ Usin S. Artyasa, *Op. Cit.*, p. 124.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 245.

⁹ *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, new edition, Luzac&co, London, 1960, p.1084

B. *Basmalah* in Islamic Perspective

1. *Basmalah* in *Ulūm al-Qur'ān* Perspective

In *al-Qur'ān*, *basmalah* is an inseparable part because he was a part of *al-Qur'a>n*. Prophet teaches that the entire contents of *al-Qur'ān* which totaled 114 *sūrah* except *sūrah al-Taubah*, all written by starting with *basmalah* as it is written in *sūrah al-Naml*. Therefore, the first *Muṣḥaf* of which was written by a committee headed by Za'id ibn Thabit **a** on Khalīfah Abū Bakr **a** command, all the *sūrahs* in it are written starting with *basmalah* as the Prophet **n** commands. In the preparation of the Ottoman Manuscripts, Khalīfah Uthmān ibn 'Affān **a** also ordered the preparation of manuscripts committee to follow the commands of the Prophet which include *basmalah* on every *sūrah* of *al-Qur'ān* except *sūrah al-Taubah*.¹⁰

Many statements of the scholars who say that the phrase *Bismillah* before known with complete structure, Muslims usually say things *Bismika Allāhumma* (by thy name, O God), and then replace it with the word "*Bismillahi*" (the name of Allah), after it dropped the word of God which reads:

¹¹ قل ادعواالله اوادعواالرحمن...

Meaning: "Say (O Muhammad **n**: 'Invoke Allah or invoke the Most Gracious (Allah) *ar-Rahmān* "

Of the verse then they say *basmalah* with the phrase "*Bismillāhi al-Rahmāni*". When *sūrah al-Naml* down, then they get to know more *basmalah* sentences according to *sūrah al-Naml* verse 30:

¹² إنه من سليمان و إنه بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم.

¹⁰ Hamka (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah), *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, PT Pembimbing Masa, Jakarta, no year, p.59

¹¹ Q.S. al-Isra' [17]: 110.

¹² Q.S. al-Naml [27]: 30.

Meaning: “Verily, It is from Sulaimān (Solomon), and verily, it (reads): In the name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful”

According to Maḥmūd Shaḥṭūṭ, it does not matter whether it was true that *basmalah* gradually recognized as the above description, the important thing is that religion told the Muslims to read *basmalah*, and religion called on Muslims to read *basmalah* at any time there is important work about to begin as listed in various *hadith*.¹³

Associated with *basmalah*, in his commentary, Shaikh Muḥammad ‘Abdūh says that *al-Qur’ān* is our leader and example. *Basmalah* that led teaches us that a job should begin with *basmalah*. However, *al-Qur’ān* tells us to say *basmalah* complete and intact. That is, we do not just mention one name of Allah ■ to seek His blessings and ask for his help.¹⁴

Seen from *qir’ah*, *basmalah* has many variations. Scholars agreed that reading *basmalah* simply by uttering the phrase ‘*Bismi*’ is flawed or bad. But if pronounced ‘*bismillāh*’ is considered sufficient, and the most perfect is ‘*Bismi-Allāh-al-rahmāni-al-rahīmi*’.

In reading the word *jalalah* in *basmalah*, the scholars agreed that the letter ‘*lam*’ in word ‘*Allāh*’ should be read thin (*tarqīq*), as the letter ‘*mīm*’ previously is read *kasrah*. This is in contrast with the ‘*lam*’ *jalalah* that the previous *sūrah* is read *ḍammah* or *fathah*.¹⁵

This verse is the first verse of *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* verses which is included in the *Makiyah* category, as revealed in the majority of the book of commentary¹⁶. But some are still disputed to see the reality and the

¹³ Maḥmūd Shaḥṭūṭ, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, trans., Penerbit CV.Diponegoro, Bandung, 1989, p.42.

¹⁴ Usin S. Artyasa, *Ingin Hidup Sukses dan Berkah? Awali dengan Basmalah!*, Ruang Kata, Bandung, 2012, p.126.

¹⁵ Abu Jundulloh Ababil, *Quantum Basmalah: Mengungkap Fakta Menakjubkan Kehebatan Basmalah dalam Berbagai Sudut Pandang*, Penerbit Yayasan PP. al-Furqon, Madiun, 2013, p.125-126.

¹⁶ This is revealed by a group of scholars belonging to the category of *Tafsīr bi al-ma’thūr* such as Al-Tha’labī, *Tafsīr al-Tha’labī* (Beirut; Dār al-Ihya’ wa al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1st edition,1997), p.161. Al-Baghawi *Ma’ālimu al-Tanzīl* (Maktabah Shāmilah) I:49. Ibn ‘Uṭaiyyah *al-Muhar al-Wajīz fi Tafsīr al-*

terminology of *Makiyyah* and *madaniyyah*, in the context of definitive, also questioned whether *basmalah* includes part of *al-Fātiḥah* or not¹⁷. And perhaps it is reasonable, as revealed by Shaikh Zamakhsharī that part of *al-Fātiḥah* are down in Makkah and other parts are down in Madinah¹⁸. Ibn Kathir also said the same thing in his *tafsir* that *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* is included in *Makiyyah* category as agreed by Ibn ‘Abbās, Qatadah, and Abū al-‘Aliyah. Whereas another opinion from Abū Hurairah, Mujahid, ‘Aṭa’ bin Yasīr, and al-Zuhrī said that *al-Fātiḥah* is down in Madinah¹⁹.

In the view of Ibn Mas‘ūd, as written by Abū Su‘ūd²⁰, that basically *basmalah* is not included as the verse of *al-Qur’ān*, which then this opinion is also held by the Ḥanafī and Mālīkī *madhhab*. This opinion is very well known and then used as the basis of law, especially in prayer. But on the contrary, continued Abū Su‘ūd, according to experts *qirā’ah* of Madinah, Basrah, Sham, dan their *Fuqaha’*, *basmalah* is a separate paragraph which also became part of the verses of *al-Qur’ān*.

But in spite of these differences, he explained that this verse is an integral part of *al-Qur’ān* itself, so that the majority of scholars make the verse as the most important part when doing the activity, including the activity of reading *al-Qur’ān*.

Kitāb al-‘Azīz (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1st edition, 2001), I:65. Ibn Kathīr *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm* (Maktabah Aulad li al-Turāth), I:151. Al-Razi, *Mafātiḥ al-Gha’ib* (Riyadh: Maktabah Muṣṭafa al-Baz, 1997), 20. Al-Baidhawī, *Anwār al-Tanzīl* (Maktabah Shamīlah), I:13. Abū Su‘ūd *Tafsīr Abū Su‘ūd* (Maktabah Riyadh al-Ḥadīth, 1st edition), I: p.11 etc.

¹⁷ Most scholars in this case there is a difference as to whether *Basmalah* is part of *al-Fātiḥah* or not, and whether it includes *Madaniyyah* or *Makiyyah* category.

¹⁸ He also alluded to this problem in initiating *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* interpretation. Read Zamakhsharī; *al-Kashāf*. Maktabah al-Abikan: Riyadh, 1st edition, 1998, I: p.99

¹⁹ Anwar Mujahidin, *Pemurnian Tafsir Surat Al-Fatihah (Analisis Struktural Terhadap Pemikiran Ibn Katsir Dalam Karyanya Tafsir Al-Qur’an Al-Adzim)*, Suka Press, Yogyakarta, 2013, p.45.

²⁰ Abū Su‘ūd, *Irshād al-‘Aqli al-Salīm Ilā Mazāyā al-kitāb al-Karīm*, Maktabah Riyāḍ al-Ḥadīth, Riyadh, 1st edition, I: p.9-11

‘Alī al-Ṣabūnī said that *basmalah* is the best expression in open or start any form of activity of both world and hereafter²¹. Besides this verse is unique if it compared to some other verses. The uniqueness lies in several things like sentence structure is used, the choice of words, the relationship between one sentence with another sentence, the plurality of meanings of each word, connotative of each word, as well as a comprehensive contents include the entire contents of *al-Qur’ān*.

As for the relation with *asbāb al-Nuzūl* or causes the revelation of this verse, there is a difference of opinion, which each relate to a particular event. According to Abū Zamanin, the fundamental reason for the revelation of this verse is closely related to the events of writing the sentence, when the verse 110 of *sūrah al-Isra’* [17] is derived. Then also when verse 30 of *sūrah al-Naml* [27] was derived, and they write the sentence *basmalah*.²²

2. The Virtue of *Basmalah*

The Prophet’s command to initiate all actions with *basmalah* shows how great *basmalah* sentence. Someone who does not initiate actions with *basmalah* then he just rely on himself and none of the restrictions into control of himself. But for those who start every job with *basmalah* then it means God has been involved in it, so they are more stable in the act and there are always reminded when there is something wrong in their actions.

Ibn Kathīr while explaining the *basmalah* virtues, he was quoting some *riwāyah*, one of which is narrated from Imām Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ḥatīm by path of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān **a** *isnād* that the Prophet **n** was asked about *Bismi-Allah-al-rahmāni-al-rahīmi*. Then he said "he is one of the names of God, the distance between him and the great name

²¹ ‘Alī al-Ṣobunī, *Rawa’i al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyah, Jakarta, 2001, p.32.

²² Ibn Abī Zamānin, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīz*, vol.I, al-Farūq al-Ḥadīthiyah, Kairo, 1st edition, 2002, p.117

it is just like the distance between the black and white part of the eye, such as nearby”²³.

He re-quotes a history of al-Nasa'i in *al-Yaum wa al-Lailah* and Ibn Mardawaih in his commentary, from hadīth of Khālid al Hadha, Abū Malih bin Usamah bin Amīr, from his father, he said, "I ride on the vehicle of Prophet ﷺ, because of a fall, I said 'wretched devil!' then he said, do not say so because the devil will be big as a house, but say *bismillah*, it will shrink as it flies, it is because of the influence of *basmalah* blessing."²⁴

Although *basmalah* just a short sentence, but it has extraordinary virtues so that it would not be exhaustively researched. Here are some *basmalah* primacy, in the perspective of jurisprudence and Sufism.

a) Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*)

Jurisprudence is the scientific discipline that examine the legal position of a *mukallaḥ* act, which involves mandatory, *nadb*, *ibāḥah*, unlawful, or *karāḥah*. In this context, *basmalah* has a very close relationship.

- 1) *Basmalah* is wājib or must be read, when someone would slaughter an animal, sacrifice, shooting or throwing darts when hunting, or when releasing animal hunters to capture prey.
- 2) *Basmalah* is *sunnah* to be read when reading *sūrah* after *al-Fātiḥah* in prayer, either greeting prayers read aloud or faint. It is as the opinion of Abū Ḥanīfah, later corroborated by Ibn al-Hamam and al-Halabī. However, according to Abū Yūsuf, *basmalah* is not included *sunnah* or *mustaḥab*. Although it thus, scholars agreed that it is not *makrūh*. Also a *sunnah* to read *basmalah* when writing or reading books or any positive activity.

²³ Anwar Mujahidin, *Op. Cit.*, p.58.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.58-59.

- 3) *Makrūh* to read *basmalah* when eating foods that doubtful, or when smoking cigarettes. Also *makrūh* read *basmalah* when reading *sūrah* al-Taubah, but according to the al-Ramī, *sunnah* to read *basmalah* when it was in the middle. Meanwhile, according to Ibn Ḥajar, *ḥarām* to read *basmalah* at the beginning of *sūrah* al-Taubah and *makrūh* when in the middle.
- 4) *Mubāh* to read *basmalah* when starting to walk, sit, or stand.
- 5) *Basmalah* is *ḥarām* to read when doing unlawful acts, may even cause the infidels (*kāfir*). *Basmalah* is also *ḥarām* to be read perfectly when *junūb* or are menstruating, unless the intention is not to read *al-Qur'ān*, but only in order to get a blessing (*tabarruk*) or intend *dhikr*²⁵.

Basmalah primacy in view of jurisprudence is very appeared to advocate any Muslim to start any good work by reading *basmalah*. It is based on a *ḥadīth* of Abū Hurairah **a** narrated by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Rahawī **d**:

كل أمر ذي بال لا يبدأ فيه بيسم الله أقطع

With the consideration that the study of jurisprudence is associated with ‘*amaliyyah*, then no one seems to say that *basmalah* has a very important position in jurisprudence because with *basmalah*, all actions initiated.

b) *Mysticism (Taṣawwuf)*

As readings are highly recommended by the Prophet **n** to be read at the beginning of every deed done, then of course it is very influential in the tradition of Sufism. In this case, what is interesting is delivered by

²⁵ Ibid, p.46-47.

one contemporary scholar of Sufism, namely Shaikh Muḥammad Nadhīm ‘Adīl al-Ḥaqqanī **d** about *basmalah*.

Without saying *Bismi-Allāhi al-raḥmāni-al-raḥīmi* something goes to be bad, like headless. Not saying *Basmalah* will make you with Satan, not with God. Who said *Bismi-Allāhi al-raḥmāni-al-raḥīmi* means said, O God, I beseech Thee to be with Thee! Because every crisis that exists today is because people have forgotten to say *Basmalah*, and therefore they forget God. Whatever they do will succeed. And the angels curse those who abandon God.

Before discussing further how *basmalah* interpreted by scholars of Sufism, we first point out what it means to Sufism. Mulyadhi Kartanegara briefly define Sufism as one branch of Islam that emphasizes the dimension or aspect of Islamic spiritual²⁶. Agreed with the definition Nahrowi Tohir adding that Sufism in relation to religious understanding, he emphasizes aspects of esoteric than exoteric aspect, emphasized the spiritual interpretation than *ẓāhir* interpretation. Meanwhile, in relation to human, Sufism emphasizes spiritual rather than the physical aspect, and in life, Sufism prefers afterlife than mortal world²⁷.

From the above, it is understood that in terms of interpreting the verses of *al-Qur’ān*, the mystic interpretation emphasized inward than *ẓāhir* interpretation. Similarly, when the Sufis interpret *basmalah*, they also prefer to interpret the esoteric rather than the exoteric interpretation.

When interpreting *basmalah*, al-Tustarī, one of *ṣufī* interpreter wrote:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال أبو بكر : سئل سهل عن معنى : { بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ } فقال :

²⁶ Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Menyelami Lubuk Tasawuf*, Penerbit Erlangga, Jakarta, 2006, p.2.

²⁷ Moenir Nahrowi Tohir, *Menjelajahi Eksistensi Tasawuf, Meniti Jalan Menuju Tuhan*, Penerbit As-Salam Sejahtera, Jakarta, 2012, p.1.

الباء بهاء الله عزَّ وجلَّ : والسین سناء الله عزَّ وجلَّ . والمیم مجد الله عزَّ وجلَّ .
والله : هو الاسم الأعظم الذي حوى الأسماء كلها ، وبين الألف واللام منه
حرف مكنى غيب من غيب إلى غيب ، وسر من سر إلى سر ، وحقيقة من
حقيقة إلى حقيقة . لا ينال فهمه إلاً الطاهر من الأدناس ، الآخذ من الحلال
قواماً ضرورة الإيمان .

والرحمن : اسم فيه خاصية من الحرف المكنى بين الألف واللام .
والرحيم : هو العاطف على عباده بالرزق في الفرع والابتداء في الأصل رحمة
لسابق علمه القديم .

قال أبو بكر : أي بنسيم روح الله اخترع من ملكه ما شاء رحمة لأنه رحيم .
وقال علي بن أبي طالب : « الرحمن الرحيم » اسمان رقيقان أحدهما أرقُّ من
الآخر ، فنفى الله تعالى بهما القنوط عن المؤمنين من عباده .

Abū Bakr [al-Sijzī] reported that Sahl was asked about the meaning of [God's words], In the name of God the Compassionate (*al-Raḥmān*), the Merciful (*al-Raḥīm*)²⁸. He replied:

The 'bā' stands for 'bahā' Allāh' (the magnificence of God, Mighty and Majestic is He), the 'sīn' stands for 'sanā' Allāh' (the resplendence of God), and the 'mīm' stands for 'majd Allāh' (the Glory of God), Mighty and Majestic is He.²⁹ Allāh is the Greatest Name, which contains all His names. Between its 'Alif' and 'Lām' there is a cryptic letter, something of an unseen from an unseen to an unseen, a secret from a secret to a secret, a reality from a reality to a reality, of which no one can attain an understanding except those who are pure of all blemishes, and who take what is permissible according to what is stipulated by their faith. *Al-Raḥmān* is a name which contains a quality from the aforementioned cryptic letter between the *Alif* and *Lām*. *Al-*

²⁸ Al-Tustari placed *basmalah*, as the first verse of the first *sūrah*. The inclusion of the *basmalah* as a verse of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* is obligatory according to the Shāfi'ī opinion, while more generally it is thought not to be incorrect to begin any *sūrah* with the *Basmalah* except *Sūrah al-Taubah*. Since the verses in the text are not numbered, it is not possible for us to know whether or not Tustarī considered it to be one of the verses of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*. In any case, it was customary for exegetes to devote a separate section to their commentary on the *Basmalah*.

²⁹ These being the three consonants forming the construct *bi ismi* meaning 'in the name of'.

Raḥīm is the One who inclines to His servants in kindness by providing for them, this being a ramification (*farʿ*) [of the significance of this name], while in origin it is His initiation (*ibtidāʿ*) [of all things], as a mercy (*raḥmah*), related to His pre-eternal knowledge.³⁰

Abū Bakr added:

In other words, through the zephyr of His grace, God originated whatever He willed in the kingdom of creation, out of mercy because He is the Merciful. ‘Alī b. Abū Ṭālib **a** said: ‘*Al-Raḥmān* and *al-Raḥīm* are two names of compassion, one of which [signifies] greater compassion than the other;³¹ by them God, Exalted is He, has expelled despair (*qunūṭ*) from the believers among His servants.

One of several *ṣūfī* saints who have the work of interpretation is Ibn al-‘Arabī. According to Ibn al-‘Arabī in his mystical book of *Tafsīr*, ‘*Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*’, when describing *basmalah* he asserted,

That by (calling) *Asma’ Allāh*, then Allāh’s names projected showing his privilege, which is above properties and the Essence of Allāh. While the form itself suggests His name direction, while the fact that *asma’* showed His singularity. God is itself a name for Essence (*Ismu dhāt*) of divinity in terms of the absolut name itself. Not from the connotation or understanding the nature of the gift of his properties, as well as not for the sense of "not making giving nature.

"*Al-Raḥmān*" is the title of an abundance of the universal form and completeness based on relevance wisdom and relevant to the reception at the beginning of the first. "*Al-Raḥīm*" is Abundant for completeness meaningful prescribed for humans in terms of

³⁰ Alternatively, we might read it as: ‘this being a ramification (*farʿ*), while in origin (*aṣl*) the initiation [of creation] is a mercy (*raḥmah*) connected to His pre-eternal knowledge’. Either way, this passage indicates that Tustarī understands the creation as a manifestation of God’s quality of being the Merciful, as is confirmed by the explanation that follows it.

³¹ Both are two compassionate names (*ismān raqīqān*), of which one is more compassionate (*araqqa*) than the other’. In his commentary on *Basmalah*, Ṭabarī explains that of the two forms derived from the verbal root *r-ḥ-m*, *al-raḥmān* denotes a stronger quality than *al-raḥīm*. According to a tradition narrated in Ṭabarī’s commentary on the authority of al-‘Arzamī, ‘[the divine name] *al-Raḥmān* [denotes mercy] to all creatures, while the name *al-Raḥīm* [denotes mercy] to the believers.’ According to another tradition narrated on the authority of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, ‘Jesus, the son of Mary, said: “*Al-Raḥmān* is the Merciful in the next world as well as in this world; *al-Raḥīm* is the Merciful in the next world.”’ See Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*, (Cairo, 1955–69). vol. 1, p. 148–9.

the base end because it often stated, "O Almighty *Rahmān* for the World and the Hereafter, and Merciful for the Hereafter."

That means the projection of a perfect humanity, and grace thorough, both general and specific, which is a manifestation of the Divine Essence. " ³²

Ibn al-‘Arabī further explains that there are 18 letters spoken in *Basmalah*. While the amounts stated in writing 19 letters. If the sentences were separated, the number of separate letters was 22.

Eighteen letters indicate the existence of realms that connoted with numbers, 18 thousand naturals. Because the letter *Alīf* is a perfect count to load the entire number structure. *Alīf* is the mother of all strata no longer count after *Alīf*. So, it is understood as the mother of all nature mother called *Jabarūt* Natural, *Malakūt*, Throne, Chair, Seven Heaven, And the four elements, as well as three separate deliveries each in separate sections. ³³ From this explanation, it is clear how much the philosophy has been influenced and entered in the interpretation of Ibn al-‘Arabī.

Unlike Ibn al-‘Arabī, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jailānī has his own paradigm of understanding *basmalah* which his *ṣūfī* pattern is not affected by the mode of mystical philosophy. ³⁴

Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jailānī in his book *al-Ghunyah li Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaq ‘Azza wa Jalla* discussed at length on *basmalah*. In which he explains his preference of *basmalah* and its commentary. ³⁵ It looks like he gives individual attention to *basmalah* as reflected in his statement:

³² Muḥyiddīn Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Kaīm*, Dār al-Yaqḍah al-‘Arabīyah, Beirut, 1986, p.7-8.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.8

³⁴ Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jailānī, *Tafsīr al-Jailānī*, Vol.I, Markaz al-Jailānī lil Buhūth al-‘Ilmiyah, Istanbul, 2009, p.30.

³⁵ Look in his work, *al-Ghunyah li Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaq ‘Azza wa Jalla* in the discussion of the *basmalah* benefit and its *Tafsīr*. He also described before in detail about *basmalah* in *al-Nahl* verse 30.

In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillāh*] is a treasure for those who remember, a mighty resource for the strong, a protective talisman for the weak, a radiant light for lovers, and a joyful delight for those who are filled with yearning.

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the consolation of our spiritual natures [*arwah*]. "In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the salvation of our bodily forms [*ashbah*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the light that illuminates our breasts [*sudur*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the organizing principle that regulates our affairs [*umur*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the crown of the truly confident [*taj al-wathiqin*]. "In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the lamp of those who reach their destination [*siraj al-wasilin*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is that which satisfies the needs of ardent lovers [*mughni'l-'ashiqin*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the Name of the One who honors certain servants and humiliates certain servants [*'ibad*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the Name of the One who keeps the Fire of Hell in store for His enemies as an ambush [*mirsad*], and who keeps the Beatific Vision in store for His friends as a promised rendezvous [*mi 'ad*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the Name of the Single One without number [*Wahid bi-la 'adad*]. "In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the Name of the One who endures forever without end [*al-Baqi bi-la amad*]. "In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the Name of the One who stands firm without supporting props [*Qa'im bi-la 'amad*].

"In the Name of Allāh [*Bismillah*]" is the invocation that serves as an introduction [*iftitah*] to every *Sūrah* [of *al-Qur'ān*].³⁶

C. *Basmalah* in Islamic Scholars Perspective

The scholars agree that *basmalah* is the word of Allah ■. Listed in al-Qur'an at least in *sūrah al-Naml* [27]: 30. "Verily, It is from Sulaimān (Solomon), and verily, it (reads): In the name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful"

³⁶ Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jailānī, *al-Ghunya li Tālibī Tārīq al-Haq 'Azza wa Jalla*, vol.I, Maktabah Al-Saqafiyah, Beirut, 1988, p.186

Islamic scholar not deny the importance of reading *basmalah* when starting *sūrah*, it is no exception, including when someone will make every activity, whether related to worship or the other, such as when doing other activities, which of course is positive. Although scholars admit that this ḥadīth is not found in the six books of ḥadīth standards, but they have different opinions regarding *basmalah* mentioned in *sūrah al-Fātiḥah*. Is *Basmalah* including parts of *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* or not.³⁷

Scholars have different opinion about whether *basmalah* is a verse from *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* and every *sūrah* of *al-Qur'ān*³⁸ or whether it is a separate verse revealed only once, to separate one *sūrah* with another *sūrah*³⁹. Some companions of Abū Hurairah, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar **ؓ**, and the Tabi'īn like Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, 'Aṭa', Al-Zuhrī and Ibn Mubārak and Makah *Fiqh* scholars and experts of *al-Qur'ān* as Ibn Kathīr, also some qira'āt experts of Kufah, and fiqh expert like 'Asim al-Kisa'i, Imām Al-Shafi'i and Imām Hanbalī found that *Basmalah* is one of the verses in *sūrahs* in *al-Qur'ān*.

Imām Mālik and the scholars of Medina, Auza'i tribes, some scholars of Sham, Abū 'Umar and Ya'qūb (both included Qurra' experts of Basrah) that their opinions are considered the most authentic one according to Abū ḥanīfah madhhab. They found that *basmalah* is a separate verse, and revealed to clarify the first *sūrah* and separate from one surah to another.

While 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd **ؓ** said that *basmalah* is not the origin of *al-Qur'ān*. This opinion is shared by most Ḥanafī scholars. Among the arguments that reinforce is a *riwāyah* of Anas bin Mālik **ؓ** who said that he had been praying behind the Prophet **ﷺ**, Abū Bakr, 'Umar and Uthmān **ؓ**. They opened *al-Fātiḥah* with reading the sentence *Alhamdu-lillahi-rabb-al-*

³⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Misbah*, Penerbit Lentera Hati, Jakarta, 4th edition, 2012, p.30

³⁸ Hamka. *Tafsir al-Azhar*, Op. Cit., p. 59.

³⁹ Maḥmūd Shalṭūṭ, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Op. Cit., p.43.

‘*Ālamīn*. They do not start with reading *Bismillah*, both at the beginning of *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* or beginning of every *sūrah*⁴⁰.

Differences of opinion regarding the status of *basmalah* gave implications for jurisprudence law on reading *basmalah* in prayer. Here are some opinions about reading *basmalah* based on the *madhhab* priests;

1. According to the *Māliki Madhhab*

Imām Mālik stated that *Basmalah* is not part of *sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, and therefore *Basmalah* is not readable when reading *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* in prayer. He argued, among others, because *al-Qur’ān* is *mutawātir*, in the case of *riwāyah* lines delivered by the many and convincing. While the *riwāyah* of *Basmalah* in *al-Fātiḥah* is not. The proof is the fact about the disagreements. Besides, according to the followers of Mālik, there is no authentic *riwāyah* that can be used as the argument that *basmalah* on *al-Fātiḥah* is part of *al-Qur’ān*. In fact quite the contrary, so much *riwāyah* proves that *basmalah* is not part of it⁴¹. Based on these descriptions, it is not required reading *basmalah* in *al-Fātiḥah* during prayer times either with *Sirri* or hard⁴².

2. *Ḥanafī Madhhab*

In the opinion of Abū Ḥanīfah, *basmalah* is not part of *al-Fātiḥah* and also not part of the other *sūrahs*. He was opening for signaling the beginning of the *sūrah*⁴³. Abū Ḥanīfah found that *basmalah* reading in *al-Fātiḥah* while praying is *sunnah*⁴⁴ and softly spoken⁴⁵.

⁴⁰ Aḥmad Muṣṭāfa al-Maraghi, *Tafsīr al-Maraghi. Op. Cit.*, p.30-31.

⁴¹ *Ibid*

⁴² Anwar Mujahidin, *Op. Cit.*, p.57.

⁴³ Muḥyiddin Ibnu al-‘Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān. Op. Cit.*, p.5.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.6.

⁴⁵ Anwar Mujahidin, *Loc.Cit.*

3. *Ḥanbalī madhhab*

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal found that *basmalah* is one verse of the *sūrahs* contained in *al-Qur'ān*⁴⁶. Even in one of his *qaul*, Imām Aḥmad stated that *basmalah* is the first verse of every *sūrah* in *al-Qur'ān*⁴⁷. Thus, Imām Aḥmad found that *basmalah* is the first verse in *al-Fātiḥah* anyway. However, in contrast to Imām Shāfi'i that requires *basmalah* read aloud, Imām Aḥmad read *Basmalah* slowly and not *sunnah* to be hardened⁴⁸.

4. According to *Shāfi'i Madhhab*

Basmalah read law in *al-Fātiḥah* in prayer is obligatory⁴⁹, because *Basmalah* is one verse of *al-Fātiḥah* and *al-Fātiḥah* is a pillar of prayer itself. "And indeed we have given you (O Muhammad) seven repetitive and glorious Qur'an." (Surah al-Hijr: 87)

In *al-Umm* al-Imām Shāfi'i said, *Bismillāh* is including seven verses of *al-Fātiḥah*, if left whole or in part is not enough to read *Bismi-Allāhi-al-rahmāni-al-raḥīmi* at the remaining cycles.

Imām Shāfi'i who assess *basmalah* as the beginning of *sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, and because the prayer is not valid without reading *al-Fātiḥah*, then *basmalah* should be read when reading *sūrah al-Fātiḥah*. The reason is quite a lot. Fakhrudḍīn al-Rāzi outlines no less than fifteen proposition. Among others, narrated by Abū Ghurairah **a** which states that the Prophet **ﷺ**, said, "*al-Fātiḥah* contains seven verses, the beginning is *Bismi-Allāhi-al-rahmāni-al-raḥīmi*" (Narrated by al-Ṭabrānī and Ibn Mardawih). Similarly, the Prophet's wife information. Umm Salāmah **d** stated that the Apostle of

⁴⁶ Aḥmad Muṣṭāfa al-Maraghi, *Op. Cit.*, p.30.

⁴⁷ Hamka, *Op. Cit.*, p.60.

⁴⁸ Anwar Mujahidin, *Op. Cit.*, p.57.

⁴⁹ Muḥyiddin Ibnu al-'Arabi, *Op. Cit.*, p.6.

Allah ﷻ. Read *al-Fātiḥah* including *basmalah* (Narrated by Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, Abū Dawud and al-Baiḥaqi)⁵⁰.

Imām Bukhārī also narrated that the Prophet's companions, Anas Ibn Maḥlik **أ**, asked how the Prophet ﷺ reading *al-Qur'ān*. Anas replied, extending his reading. Then, Anas exemplifies craning *bismillāh*, *al-raḥmān*, and *al-raḥīm*. In addition, it has become *ijma`* (agreement) that all Muslims recognize everything listed in the mushhaf as the verses of *al-Qur'ān*. That is why scholars agree not consider the word 'Amin' which is read at the end of *al-Fātiḥah* as the verses of *al-Qur'ān*. While *basmalah*, no one refused inclusion in the manuscripts⁵¹.

From the above, it is clear how each one has a reference to the opinion of each. To that end, it seems less appropriate if we blame an opinion and justify the other. For Quraish Shihab in his commentary might ask the question whether the Prophet ﷺ wanted to show Muslims the diversity of readings and how to practice⁵². If this is so, then the difference of opinion about *basmalah* is no need to debate.

On that basis also scholars of various schools of thought agree that a person who believes that *basmalah* is part of *al-Fātiḥah*, the prayer is valid when *ma'mūm* against people who do not read *basmalah* in prayer⁵³.

D. Spirituality Contained In *Basmalah*

Talking about spirituality contained in *basmalah*, it will be a lot of revealed things from him. This is because the virtue of *basmalah* itself. Before reading *basmalah*, someone just rely purely physical. But when he had read

⁵⁰ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah. Op. Cit.*, p.30-31.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.31.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.31

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.31-32.

basmalah, then it will grab more and more divine light which adds to the energy and blessings in the act⁵⁴.

Someone who started every activity with *basmalah*, the activity will be good, beautiful, and true, and will avoid the temptation of lust which deflect the human heart⁵⁵. Making *Basmalah* as a starting point of each act means avoiding ourselves and others from harm so that all our actions are able to benefit all people and the universe.

Basmalah speakers when hooking his words with God's power and His help, it is as if he said, "By the power of God and His help work I do can be done. Whatever activities we do cannot be done without the consent and help of Allah ■." ”

With utter *basmalah* and appreciate its meaning, then the person will feel weak in the presence of God, but at the same time he is also gaining strength and self-confidence because he gave himself completely to God and expect His help⁵⁶.

Associated with *basmalah*, there are at least five values must be manifested in our daily lives that it values all lead to Allah■.

1. Allah ■ as Target

The first spiritual values held *basmalah* is to make his readers to realize fully that what we all do should do to God or in other words to make God as the only target. Someone who has set God as a target, he would be willing to sacrifice anything for the sake of Allah ■. Word of God, "... *there are people who sacrificed himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah*"⁵⁷.

If *Bismi-Allāhi-al-raḥmāni-al-raḥīmi* already spoken then abstinence for us to do *zalim*. *Basmalah* sentence should be a source of inspiration to do

⁵⁴ Abu Jundulloh Ababil, *Quantum basmalah, Mengungkap fakta Menakjubkan Kehebatan Basmalah dari Berbagai Sudut Pandang*, Yayasan PP Al-Furqon, Madiun, 2013, p.1.

⁵⁵ M. Quraish Shihab, *Op. Cit.*, p.29

⁵⁶ *Ibid*

⁵⁷ Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 207.

good and spread love, in accordance with the nature of God contained therein. With *basmalah* also personal ambition should be abolished and replaced with a shared passion to pursue achievement⁵⁸.

For someone who expects guidance, then by reading *basmalah* and by pleading for his help with the permission of God and his power, the guidance of Allah will come to him so that every activity will be filled with God's guidance and kept away from straying⁵⁹.

2. Follow the terms and rules of Allah■.

Started work with the name of Allah, means someone has been involved Allah ■ in it. Thus, the provisions and rules of Allah ■ are followed in order to obtain the pleasure of Allah■.

This was done by a person because he recognizes his own weakness before God. That he cannot do anything without the intervention of God. According to Shaikh Muḥammad Riḍā, a servant who realized that the ability to do and the work that comes from God, he will act on his behalf. Someone will say, "I started this work in the name of God the almighty and the Mercy. I do this work on his behalf. I want to please Him, not please me. For him, not for me. I do not do the job on behalf of myself. This work is for God, not for me."⁶⁰

3. Recognize weaknesses and limitations

In the *basmalah* also contains the values of awareness of human weakness and limitations. *Basmalah* speech lasting into the soul, will be the driver of the birth of humble attitude. A servant will realize that he can do and move on permits and His will. He is also aware that his success is not solely on intelligence. He believes that God played a role in it.

⁵⁸ Usin S. Artyasa, *Ingin Hidup Sukses dan Berkah? Awali dengan BASMALAH!*, *Op. Cit.*, p.171-172.

⁵⁹ E.Purnama As-Shidiqie, and friends. *Mencari Berkah dari Basmalah, Hamdalah dan Salawat*. Al-Maghfiroh, Bekasi, 2011, p.28.

⁶⁰ Usin S. Artyasa, *Op. Cit.*, p.171-183.

For this reason, when starting a job usually we were taught by our teachers to read; "*Bismillāhi tawakkaltu 'alā Allāh, lā Ḥaula wa lā quwwata illā billāhi*, with the name of Allah I place my sole trust, there is no power and strength except with Allah."

4. Involve Allah ■ in All Activities

If we want to be a part in reaching the truth, involve the name of God in each of our activities. Work, worship, seeking knowledge, and business must involve the name of God in it. All activities must involve God. By doing so, togetherness between us and God, will open the door to truth.

More specifically, a servant of involving God in every pulse, put it in the form of an appointment. This promise is spoken in every prayer to always act with God, "*Verily my prayer, my worship, my life and my death are for Allah, the Lord of hosts. No partner for Him. And, so that was commanded, and I am the first to surrender (to God) "*.⁶¹

5. Passionate Life With Allah ■

We have realized that God created man as any problem. These issues aim to test who among us is the best achievement of obligations. The people who make God the source of life spirit will remain optimistic because it makes God as a wish.

They are fully aware that suffering and happiness are two things that must exist and be passed by the people of this world. With that realization, he will continue the life in spirit. As stated by Ibn 'Aṭa'illāh, "As long as you are in the world, do not be surprised by the existence of suffering. Indeed suffering arises only because it is the nature of appropriateness or original character". The very wise and touching hearts phrase was interpreted by Shaikh Faḍlallāh, "All the experiences and events in the world is constant change in the range of two opposite properties. In this world there is no

⁶¹ Q.S. al-An'am [6]: 162-163

happy and comfortable conditions that can be trusted. It is said, people are looking for what is not created (the world are to be believed), then it will be exhausting him in the sense of loss."⁶²

E. *Basmalah* in Psychological Perspective

In view of Sufism, primary basis for any Islamic practice is a change in behavior towards the inner consciousness, toward moral perfection⁶³. Departing from this fact, it can be concluded that the teachings of Sufism as expressed by Nurcholish Majid is closely related to psychological behavior -based moral teachings, which according to Hamka, psychological behavior always has the spirit to out of the disgraceful behavior and get into favor character⁶⁴.

From the above brief exposure, presumably to be understood that any practice that is done by every Muslim should be fueled by good intentions and sincerity of consciousness. Thus do the deeds that will lead to the perpetrators of moral perfection. The concept of Sufism if it is really actualized will be used for the benefit of psychological behavioral changes expected in Sufism.

What is meant by the mysticism very much in line with the verses of *al-Qur'an*, for example when Allah ■ speaks about prayer, then God clearly said that the purpose of prayer is to prevent the culprit from indecency and evil. As Allah ■ says:

⁶⁵ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ

The goal of prayer is certainly not going to be achieved if the offender did not run it with humility and prayer as a medium to make the behavior change and a better mental attitude. Similarly, the word of God as:

⁶² Ibn 'Aṭ'illāh, *Bunga Rampai al-Hikam (Taḥqīq: Syaikh Faḍlallāh)*, trans., Serambi, Jakarta, 2008, p.198.

⁶³ M.Amin Syukur, *Menggugat Tasawuf*, Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta, 1999, P.14

⁶⁴ Abdullah Hadziq, *Rekonsiliasi Psikologi Sufistik dan Humanistik*, RaSAIL, Semarang, 2005, p. 22.

⁶⁵ Q.S. al-Ankabūt [29]: 45.

66 يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

In this verse God commanded man to turn to God with patience and prayer. This verse seemed to be telling us about the importance of the state of mind of a servant to the granting of a petition because the patient is a condition associated with life course closely linked to the psychological state of a person.

Relation to *basmalah*, if someone who reads *basmalah* and conditioning himself as he did the acts of worship that are described in the science of Sufism, it is very possible if the reader *basmalah*, will undergo psychological behavior changes towards moral perfection. Especially if associated with the Prophet that all the works that are not preceded by *basmalah* then rejected, so *basmalah* became the foundation for the realization of the goal of every act of worship. The psychological behavior changes are expected to be experienced by those who practice *basmalah* are:

a) Improved morale (*al-taraqqī al-akhlaqī*)

Someone who used to initiate actions by *basmalah* will be fully aware that every movement step is always supervised by God and God is always there beside him. With this belief, then *basmalah* role as a 'self control' that led to one's moral improvement. He would be embarrassed to do that violate the norms and he will be afraid to violate religious prohibitions.

b) Understanding annihilated in absolute reality (*al-fana' fī al-ḥaqīqah al-muṭlaqah*)

By reading *basmalah*, it means someone has to bring God in him. *Basmalah* make him feel that whatever he done is essentially based on the permission of Allah and his control. With this kind of confidence, someone will always keep the morals and behavior. God's willingness becomes the goals, and in every single moment that his breath did not escape from the remembrance of Allah■.

⁶⁶ Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]:153.

c) Peace and happiness of the soul (*al-ṭuma'ninah au al-sa'ādah*)

Read *basmalah* also able to make the soul calm, because by reading *basmalah* someone will always remember Allah and remembrance of Allah is the way to get peace of mind. As Allah ■ says:

⁶⁷ الذين آمنوا وتطمئن قلوبهم بذكر الله ألا بذكر الله تطمئن القلوب

With the peace of mind someone will feel the ultimate happiness. Because happiness will only be felt by those who has calm soul.

d) The subjective light

Those whose hearts are calm as the influence of *basmalah* which he read when they wanted to start a job, little by little will emit positive light in him. This is caused by the manner that preserves the behavior of licentious acts.

e) Intellectual illumination

The authors are also many who wrote that read *basmalah* can educate the brain⁶⁸. It is very likely because the intelligence is related to one's psychological condition. The calmer the soul of a person, the easier the person understands something and it greatly affects intellectual brilliance.

f) Lose of fear of death

Those who have believed God's presence fully in every activity, he realized that his presence in the world is because it was created by God, what belongs to God who had entrusted to him, and all will return to God, with no exception, in other words, he realized that one day he will die and return to God. People who read *basmalah* and appreciate its inherent meaning and present the spirit of *basmalah* in his life, he would not fear death, even he missed the coming of death because death is *wasilah* to meet with God.

⁶⁷ Q.S. Al-Ra'du [13]: 28.

⁶⁸ In some of the books mentioned, that with reading *basmalah* in a certain amount, it will improve children's intelligence. One of them is in the book *Quantum Basmalah* compiled by Abu Jundullah Ababil.

Peace of mind gained by *basmalah* readers, will deliver him to eternal heaven of God, as Allah ■ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ (27) ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً (28) فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي (29) وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتٍ (30)⁶⁹

g) Lose of the sense of sin⁷⁰

Sin is usually done by someone because he feels that no one is watching him. The lack of oversight makes someone easily and softly to commit a sin. *Basmalah* read by someone when starting everything prevent him from committing sin, it is most likely because at the time someone reads *basmalah* then he has the intention of something good. It were unnatural if anyone would read *basmalah* when they wanted to commit acts of sin. Thus, it is not directly *basmalah* prevent someone from sinning and of course the reader will carry out what he purposes to the full faith and ask God to be protected and kept away from sin.

⁶⁹ Q.S. al-Fajr [89]: 27-30

⁷⁰ Abdullah Hadziq, *Loc.Cit.* Five changes in the psychological behavior in *Ṣūfī* psychology known as behavioral changes towards the inner consciousness towards moral perfection.