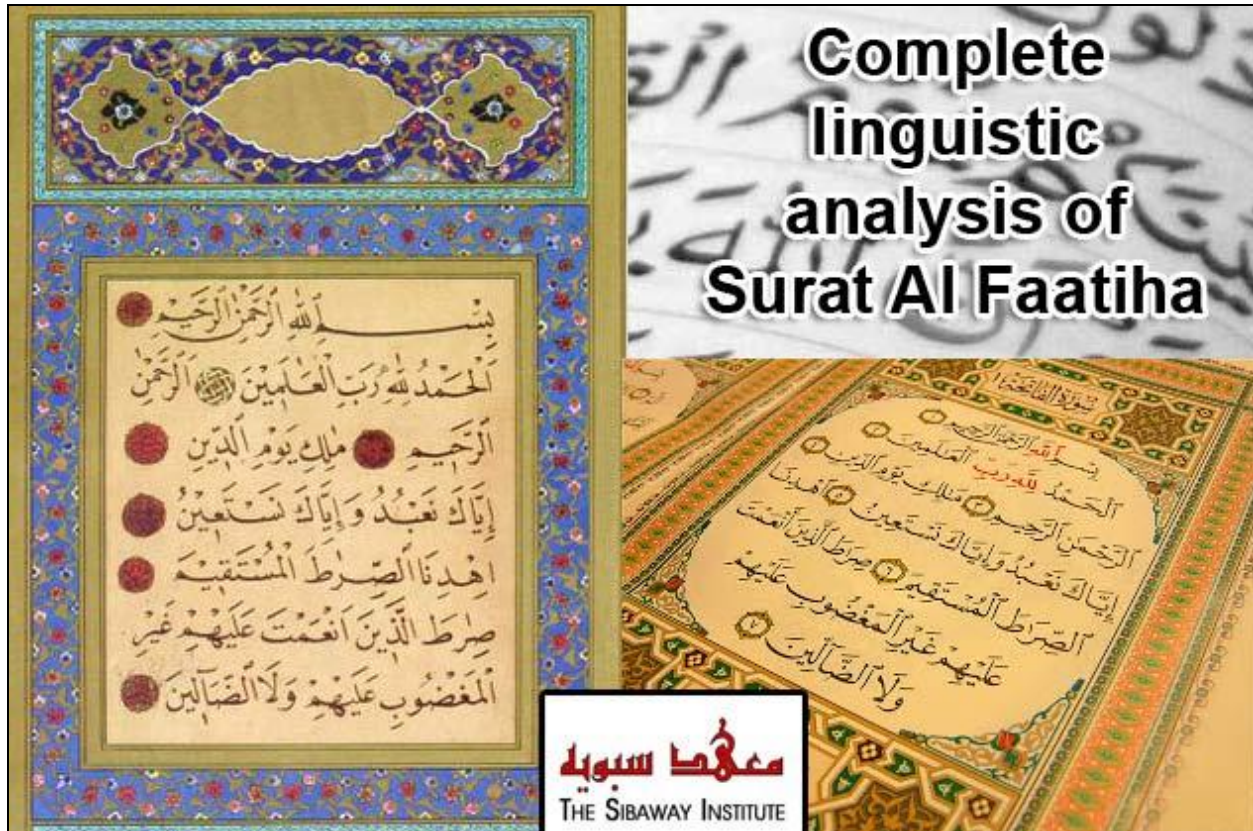




## Part 2

معهد السبويه  
 THE SIBAWAY INSTITUTE

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# الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

الحمد has the following 2 meanings:

1. Praising an attribute that someone possesses.

OR

2. Praising someone for the benefit one receives from them.

E.g. Praising Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) for a benefit one has such as guidance or good health.  
Another example is praising Him for his greatness

Another word similar to الحمد is الشكر

الشكر is thanking someone for a benefit that one receives

All Shukr is for Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) because whatever good one receives is from Allah سبحانه و تعالى, He created the means for you to receive this benefit, However Allah told us to thank whoever does good to us and thanking them is in fact thanking HIM.

**POINT:** The word used in Surat ul Faatiha is a comprehensive word and not specific.

الحمد is more general while الشكر is more specific. By using the word الحمد the meaning of thanks الشكر is included in this.

Let us see what the word الشكر entails

Example: In the following ayah Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) is addressing the family of Dawood Alayhi asalam

يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَحَارِبَ وَتَمَاثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَاسِيَاتٍ  
اعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُودَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُورُ

*[We said], "Work, O family of David, in gratitude." Quran (34:13)*

Here شُكْرًا is not just a feeling one has or something one says but it's actually action.

When Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) bestows on us his blessings it's not enough to simply acknowledge it in our hearts and tongue but we should use these blessings in what pleases him.

Another example of the word الشُّكْر

نِعْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي مَنْ شَكَرَ [٥٤:٣٥]

*As favor from us. Thus do We reward he who is grateful. Quran (54:35)*

Here the word نِعْمَةً is used for a **Favor** and the verb شَكَرَ is used to acknowledge this favor.

On the other hand الْحَمْدُ is more general and is also used in the following manner in the Quran.

For example:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ  
وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْحَبِيرُ

[All] praise is [due] to Allah , to whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and to Him belongs [all] praise in the Hereafter. And He is the Wise, the Acquainted. Quran (34:1)

Here الحمدُ does not mention a favor but is mentioning Allah's attributes

Another example:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أَجْنِحَةٍ مَّثْنَى  
وَتُثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ يَزِيدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

[All] praise is [due] to Allah , Creator of the heavens and the earth, [who] made the angels messengers having wings, two or three or four. He increases in creation what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent. Quran (35:1)

This Ayah again does not mention a favor; it mentions the creation of Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) and His greatness in creating them, so الشكر here in this ayah would not be appropriate.

الحمدُ is the perfect word to use.

Let us examine this ayah:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ  
الدُّعَاءِ

**Here on the tongue of Ibraheem Alayhi salam, he says** "Praise to Allah, who has granted to me in old age Ishmael and Isaac. Indeed, my Lord is the Hearer of supplication." Quran (35:1)

Here, it could be argued that it should have been الشكرُ (All thanks belong to Allah).

Why then was الحمدُ used? because here it mentions two things: 1. A favor which

Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) granted Ibraheem Alayhi salam and 2. the قدرة (power) of Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) in granting him this blessing.

We have other 2 words

## الْمَدْحُ and الثَّنَاءُ

الْمَدْحُ actually means praising an attribute and is used for both the intelligent and inanimate. الْمَدْحُ can be done to anything; to a human being, an animal, food, a book e.t.c

So using الْمَدْحُ here in the 2<sup>nd</sup> ayah instead of الْحَمْدُ would not entail perfect word choice because this is related to Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) in the context of praising His attributes as well as thanking Him for the great blessings he has given us.

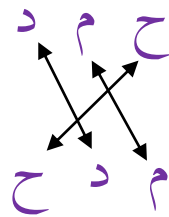
Another word is الثَّنَاءُ which means to "single out" from the rest, although using it to praise someone has its limitations.

Example: there are a number of people and you want to single out somebody from this group regarding a specific trait or action. Singling out someone could be done for praise or it could be done to insult or degrade.

So we would say that الْحَمْدُ was the perfect word to choose in the context of the Surah.

No other word would have been more appropriate.

Now let's look at the base letters of these 2 roots ( This phenomenon exists in the Science of Etymology - Ulmul Istiqaaq)



الحمد

المدح

Here we see that الحمد and الْمَدْحُ have the same based letters but arranged in different order.

If this happens in the Arabic then there is a relationship between them

The relationship is as follows: الحمد is to praise somebody for his attributes or for benefit one receives while المَدْح means to praise someone or something for an attribute they possess. Both have the common meaning of PRAISE. المَدْح is general in that it refers to praising an intelligent being or non intelligent and الحمد is also more general in the sense that it is used for praising both an attribute as well as praising one for a benefit or blessing they receive from them.

Let's see what scholars say about الحمد

أَنَّ فِي الْحَمْدِ تَعْظِيماً وَ أَجْلاً

و محبة ما ليس في المدح

(This quote is from Ruh Al Ma'ani, Famous tafseer of Imam al Alusi.)

Verily, in الحمد there is the meaning of magnification, majesty and love, that is not present in المدح . Therefore, it is clear why the word الحمد was used.

## Why was it الحمد?

For the definite article ال , scholars mention two meanings that are possible, with both of these meaning being intended

1<sup>st</sup> Meaning is that of GENUS and

2<sup>nd</sup> الاستغراق meaning ALL

[Both of these meanings ( along with the other meanings) are covered in the course “Definiteness and Indefiniteness “ ARB01]

1<sup>st</sup> meaning GENUS: الحمد refers to the act of praising with its مصدر meaning. The meaning of genus refers to the act of praising regardless of a doer and a time frame. So this act is only for Allah and Allah alone

2<sup>nd</sup> Meaning of "ALL" (Al istighraaq) i.e. Every instance of praise is for Allah

Next we have the particle ل in لله

Scholars mention two possible meanings for ل:

#### 1. Entitlement

#### 2. Specification

**Entitlement** i.e. being the rightful owner of the praise.

**Specification** i.e. to specify someone in particular for the praise.

In this case this ل has both meanings:

الحمد لله means Allah is the rightful owner of all praise and that the praise is specifically for Him and Him alone.

### Lafdh Al Jalalah

We have already done a lesson on Lafdh al jalalah and the special characteristics of this Ism. It is not derived from any other name and this is the dominant opinion

## OTHER STRUCTURES

### Verbal Sentences

There is a course on Word, Phrase and sentence structures in the Quran entitled ARB02. This course deals with different sentence structures and what they actually mean and how meanings change.

أحمد الله I praise Allah

نحمد الله We praise Allah

In verbal sentences, the emphasis is on the doers of the verb. There is a specific praiser

أحمد الله I praise Allah or

نحمد الله We praise Allah

ALSO the verbal sentences don't indicate that praise is deserved only to Allah. We can praise anybody but it doesn't mean it is deserved while

الحمد حق لله → الحمد لله is actually assumed to be All praise is by truth specifically and rightfully the possession of Allah سبحانه و تعالى

Another sentence structure:

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ

Here it emphasis إِنَّ but emphasis is actually used for reasons e.g. removal of doubt or emphasis

In this context this was not needed because we are not removing doubt or emphasizing that All praise is specifically and rightfully the possession of Allah سبحانه و تعالى. Surat ul Fatiha is a Surah recited by Muslims everyday and we don't have doubt that All praise belongs to Allah سبحانه و تعالى

In this case extra emphasis would be deficient thus it won't be needed.

Another point is the difference between جُمْلَةٌ إِنْشَائِيَّةٌ and جُمْلَةٌ خَبَرِيَّةٌ

(More information about this division is given in introductory grammar)



الحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ can be considered both types

جُمْلَةٌ خَبَرِيَّةٌ The Informative Sentence

This sentence gives information. For example if a student in a classroom asked a teacher "To whom does all praise belong to?" لِمَنْ الْحَمْدُ كُلُّهُ . The teacher responds by saying الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

This is a response to the question and is an informative sentence.

Any sentence you give that can be either true or false is called an information sentence.

but الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ can also be from the 2<sup>nd</sup> category i.e. The Generated Sentence.

جُمْلَةٌ إِنشَائِيَّةٌ The Generated sentence

This ayah could also be a feeling that one has. e.g. you experience a blessing from Allah and as a result say الحمد لله with a feeling of gratitude in your heart.

So الحمد لله has both of these meanings.