



The ruling on reciting Surah Al-Fatihah after offering Witr after 'Isha' Prayer

Fatwa no. (7012):

Q: Please, your honor, give me a Fatwa on reciting Surah Al-Fatihah after the 'Isha' (Night) Prayer, i.e. after the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) for a non-specific number of times such as a hundred times, more or less, without specifying a certain time. I always recite the Qur'an hoping for more rewards from Allah. Is this considered a Bid'ah (rejected innovation in religion) given that after reciting Al-Fatihah, I ask Allah for forgiveness and guidance. May Allah guide you to serve Islam and the Muslims.

A: The Qur'an is the word of Allah (may He be Exalted); the superiority of Allah's words over the words of people is similar to the superiority of Allah over people. The reward of reciting the Qur'an is great, which no one can measure except Allah. No one should dedicate a special Surah or Ayah to be recited at a particular time or for a particular purpose, except what was mentioned by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

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For instance, Surah Al-Fatihah for Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and supplications for the sick to be cured) and in each Rak'ah (unit of Prayer); Ayat-ul-Kursy (the Qur'anic Verse of the Throne, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255) when going to bed so that one is protected from Satan; and Al-Mu'awwidhat (Surahs Al-Ikhlâs, Al-Falaq and Al-Nas) (Say (O Muhammad peace be upon him): "He is Allâh, (the) One.), (Say: "I seek refuge with (Allâh), the Lord of the daybreak") and (Say: "I seek refuge with (Allâh) the Lord of mankind") for Ruqyah.

A person also should not commit themselves to recite a certain Surah or Ayah for a specific number of times, unless this is authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). This is a form of 'Ibadah, so it should be Tawqifiyyah (bound by a religious text and not subject to personal opinion).

Thus, it becomes evident that reciting Surah Al-Fatihah, especially at night after the Witr is considered a Bid'ah, even if it is not for a specific number of times, as this was not authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) or from the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them). It is best to recite the Qur'an without restricting oneself to Al-Fatihah or to the time of night after Witr. Rather, one should read any portion of the Qur'an, without specifying a certain number or a certain time, except what was mentioned in Shari'ah, as previously mentioned.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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