



Important note with respect to Chapters five and six

1. The next two chapters are devoted to the actual manner of *salāh*. The *salāh* being described here is not based upon the unquestioned following of any particular *madhab* (school of thought), but rather upon the manner in which the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed his *salāh* as witnessed by others and from authentic sources in the Qur'ān and sunnah. The two main works referred to are:
  - a. The Prophet's Prayer صلى الله عليه وسلم described, from beginning to end as though you see it, by Sheikh Muhammad Nasruddin Al Albāni
  - b. *Fiqh as Sunnah - Purification and Prayer*, by As-Sayyid Sābiq;
2. Both these books are widely available in book form and on the net. You may want to refer to them to understand the reasoning behind their narratives and also to obtain a wealth of alternative *adkhār* (words of remembrance);
3. This summary description of *salāh* can be used by both boys and girls, men and women. There does not appear to be any evidence that the *salāh* as performed by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was any different for women;
4. Here are some important expressions to bear in mind:
  - i. *Rak'ah*: one cycle or unit of *salāh*, from standing to standing or sitting;
  - ii. *Sajdah Sahw*: A prostration of forgetfulness. This is an additional prostration, performed at the end of the *salāh*, if certain parts of the *salāh* are missed or forgotten. However, there are areas that it does not cover;
  - iii. *Rukn as-salāh*: This is a pillar or cornerstone of *salāh*. These actions or words must be done or read respectively. If they are missed in any *rak'ah* then that *rak'ah* must be repeated. It would not be acceptable simply to perform *sajdah sahw*; **Whenever you see this font and the pillar icon, a *rukhn of salah* is being highlighted.** 
  - iv. *A fard is something obligatory.*
  - v. *Wājib is also an obligatory act. According to the majority of the scholars of the jurisprudence, wājib is entirely synonymous with fard. Whenever you see this font and the triangle icon, a wājib of salāh is being highlighted.* 
  - vi. *sunnat-as-salāh*, an action within the *salāh* that was performed by our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and therefore highly recommended.

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### The First rak'ah

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1. I notice that the opening position of *salāh* is standing. Is that right?

- i. Yes, this is called *al qiyām*;
- ii. ***Al qiyām is a rukn of the salāh, and is compulsory for those who are physically able to do it;***
- iii. For those who are sick, they may sit or lie;
- iv. The feet should not be together in *al qiyām*, but should be shoulder width apart;
- v. A person may perform *nawāfil* (voluntary) *salāh*, sitting, but will only incur half the reward;
- vi. During *al qiyām*, it is not permissible to close your eyes;
- vii. Look at the point of prostration (*sajdah*);
- viii. Do NOT look up at the sky; Do NOT look here, there and everywhere.




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### The Evidence

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#### Al Qiyām

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حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقَوْمُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

Maintain with care the (obligatory) prayers and (in particular) the middle prayer and stand before Allāh, devoutly obedient.

Sūrah al Baqarah, 2:238

Narrated 'Imrān bin Husain رضي الله عنه Allāh's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "Pray standing and if you are unable, pray sitting and if you cannot, pray lying on your side"

Bukhari, Muslim and An-Nisā'i

Again, it was narrated that 'Imrān bin Husain said: "I asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about one who prays sitting down. He said: 'Whoever prays standing up is better, and one who prays sitting down will have half the reward of one who prays standing up.

Bukhari

#### Where not to look

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Anas bin Malik رضي الله عنه said: the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "How is it that some people raise their eyes towards the sky during salāh?" He stressed (this point) and added, "People must refrain from raising their eyes towards heaven in salāh, or else their sight will certainly be snatched away."

Bukhari, Riyādh asSālihīn

In another narration of the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, 'So, when you pray, do not look here and there, for Allāh sets His Face for the face of His slave in his salāh, as long as he does not look away.'

Tirmidhi

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## 2. How do I open the salāh?

- i. With a phrase known as *takbīr*. These are the words:

الله أكبر

**Allāhu Akbar**

Allāh is the Greatest



- ii. This opening *takbīr* of the *salāh* is called *Takbīra-tal-Ihrām*
- iii. **The *Takbīra-tal-Ihrām* is a *rukn* of the *salāh*. If it is omitted, the entire *salāh* must be repeated.**



### 3. Do I raise my hands at *Takbīra-tal-Ihrām*?

- i. Yes, and preferably at the same time as *takbīr*;<sup>1</sup>
- ii. Your hands should be raised to the shoulders with palms level with shoulders or fingertips level with lobes of ears;
- iii. Your fingers should be apart, with palms facing qibla;
- iv. Raising hands is a *sunnat-as-salāh*, an action performed by our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and therefore highly recommended.



### 4. Where do I place my hands in *al qiyām*?

- i. Place your right hand over your left;
- ii. In fact, place your right hand over your left hand, or hand and forearm or forearm;<sup>2</sup>
- iii. Place your hands on your chest, above the level of your elbows.

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## The evidence

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### *Takbīr and Taslīm*

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Narrates Ali رضي الله عنهم, the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'The key to *salāh* is purification, it is entered by *takbīr* and exited by *taslīm* (*Assalāmu alaikum..*).'

Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Al Hākim

### Raising the hands

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Malik b. Huwairith رضي الله عنهم reported, 'The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم raised his hands opposite his ears at the time of reciting the *takbīr* (the beginning) and then again raised his hands opposite the ears at the time of his bowing and when he lifted his head after bowing he said: "Allah listened to him who praised Him", and did like it (raised his hands up to the ears).

Salim narrated it on the authority of his father رضي الله عنهم who reported: I saw the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم raising his hands opposite the shoulders at the time of beginning the prayer and before bowing down and after coming back to the position after bowing. However, he did not raise them between two prostrations.

Both above recorded in Muslim

### Placing of the hands

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Sahl ibn Sa'd As-Sā'idi رضي الله عنه, said, 'People were ordered to place the right hand on the left forearm in the prayer.'

Al-Muwatta

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<sup>1</sup> although raising before or after *takbīr* is also recorded in ahādīth (Muslim).

<sup>2</sup> Or you can grab completely your left wrist. However, be careful about other types on non authentic placings e.g. hands on sides of arms.

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd, رضي الله عنه, said, 'The Prophet, صلى الله عليه وسلم, saw me placing my left hand on my right hand, so he pulled it and placed the right over the left.'

An-Nasā'i; Ibn Hajar declared its chain of narration Hasan (good) in his book Fath Al-Bāri

Wā'il ibn Hajar, رضي الله عنه, narrated that he saw the Prophet, صلى الله عليه وسلم, place his right hand on his left. Muslim



#### 5. Apart from *Takbīra-tal-Ihrām*, how do I commence the *salāh*?

- i. It is preferred to commence the *salāh* with supplications praising Allāh;
- ii. After *takbīr* you can say:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ، وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ، وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ، وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ

**Sub-haanak Allāhumma, wa bihamdika, wa tabāra kasmuka, wa ta'āla jadduka,  
wa lā elāha ghayruk**

You are Glorified Oh Allāh, and Praised, Your Name is Blessed, Your Majesty is Exalted,  
and none has the right to be worshipped but You

- iii. These words need only be said in the first *rak'ah*<sup>3</sup>;



#### 6. What do I say next?

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم

**A'ūdhu billāh himinash-Shaytānir Rajīm;**

I seek refuge in Allāh from the accursed Satan

- i. This is know as *isti'ādha* and is a *sunnah*;
- ii. It can be said in the first *rak'ah* only or at the start of every *rak'ah*;
- iii. And then say (also a *sunnah*):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Bismillāh ar Rahmān Ar Rahīm**

In the Name of Allāh, The Compassionate, The Merciful

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### The evidence

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### Seeking refuge

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فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

*So, when you recite the Qur'an, (first) seek refuge in Allāh from Satan, the outcast.*

*Sūrah Nahl, 16:98<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> *Abu Dawūd* and *Hākim*. Other supplications can be said - see previously mentioned books of *Al Albāni* and *As Sābiq*.

<sup>4</sup> There are two opinions: i) This *ayah* realtes to the entire *salah*, so *isti'ādha* need only be said in the first *rak'ah*. ii) this *ayah* confirms that because the Qur'an is being recited afresh, *isti'ādha* should be said at the start of every *rak'ah*. Both opinions are valid. Bear in mine also that *isti'ādha* is a *sunnah* and so should not be a major source of dispute amongst *ummah*.

## Saying *Bismillāh*:

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Anas relates عنه رضي الله عليه وسلم صلى الله عليه وسلم, Abu Bakr, Omar and Othmān, and they did not recite it (*Bismillāh*) aloud  
An-Nasā'i; Ibn Hibban and at-Tahawi with Sahih chain

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### 7. Next we recite the opening Sūrah of the Qur'ān. Is that a must?

- i. Yes. **Reciting *Sūrah Fātiḥah* is a *rukn* of the *salāh* and must be read in every *rak'ah*. If it is missed, then that *rak'ah* must be repeated. It would not be acceptable simply to perform *sajdah sahw*;**
- ii. Behind an *imām* in the 'quiet' prayers, you must read *Sūrah Fātiḥah* quietly to yourself;<sup>5</sup>
- iii. Behind an *imām* during the 'loud' prayers, you need not say it quietly to yourself. The *imām*'s recitation is sufficient for you, unless it is inaudible, in which case, read it to yourself;
- iv. You must move your tongue and lips when reciting;
- v. When reading the Sūrah, think about the words you are saying;
- vi. Recite one verse at a time and pause between each verse, without joining them. (Abu Dawood)



**Alhamdu lillāhi Rabbil 'ālamīn, Ar-Rahmānir-Rahīm  
Māliki yawmid-Dīn, Iyyāka na'budu wa iyyāka nasta'in  
Ihdinas-Sirātal-Mustaqīm - Sirātal-ladhīna an'amta 'alaihim  
ghayril-maghdūbi 'alaihim wa lad-da'illīn**

(All) praise is (due) to Allāh, Lord of the worlds, The Compassionate, the Merciful  
Sovereign of the Day of Recompense. It is You we worship and You we ask for help.  
Guide us to the straight path - The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor,  
not of those who have evoked (Your) anger or of those who are astray.

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## The evidence

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### Sūrah al Fatiḥa

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Ubada ibn as-Samit عنه رضي الله عليه وسلم صلى الله عليه وسلم related that the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'There is no prayer for one who does not recite the Opening of the Book'  
Recorded by the Group of Collections and referring to Sūrah al Fātiḥah

Abu Hurairah عنه رضي الله عليه وسلم صلى الله عليه وسلم reported that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Whoever prays a prayer and does not recite the opening chapter of the Qur'ān has not prayed correctly'  
Bukhāri, Muslim and Ahmed

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<sup>5</sup> What do I mean by 'loud' and 'quiet' prayers in this book? During fajr, magrib and isha only, when praying in *jamā'ah*, the *imām* is required, in the first two *rak'ah*, to read the Qur'ānic verses in the *qiyām* position, aloud. During dhuhr and asr, those verses should be read silently.

## Imām's recitation is your recitation

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It was narrated that Abu Hurairah said: The Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'The imām is appointed to be followed, so when he says the *takbīr*, say the *takbīr*, and when he recites, be silent.'

An-Nisā'i, Muslim, Abu Daūd

It was narrated that Jābir رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Whoever has an imām, the recitation of the imām is his recitation.'

Ahmed, Ibn Mājah and others – declared strong by Ibn Taymiah

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Narrated Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها, Ummul Mu'minin, 'The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite: "In the name of Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds; most Gracious, most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment," breaking its recitation into verses, one after another.'

Abu Dawud

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### 8. Al Fātihah is a *du'a* (a supplication). Should I say 'āmīn' at the end?

- i. Yes, you should;
- ii. In congregation, when the recitation is quiet, you should say it quietly;
- iii. In congregation, when the recitation is loud, you should say it:
  - a. loudly
  - b. with a prolonged voice
  - c. simultaneously, with the *imām*, not before or after him.

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### The evidence: saying Āmīn

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Wa'il ibn Jubair رضي الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم recite....."and not of those who have gone astray," and then say "Āmīn" and make it long with his voice.

Ahmed

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'When the reciter says Āmīn, then say Āmīn, for the angels say Āmīn, and if a person's Āmīn coincides with the Āmīn of the angels, his previous sins will be forgiven.'

Bukhāri, Tirmidhi and others

It was narrated from Ibn 'Abbas رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'The Jews do not envy you for anything more than they envy you for the Salām and (saying) Āmīn, so say Āmīn a great deal.'

Ahmed Ibn Mājah

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### 9. What do I read after Sūrah Fātihah?

- i. It is a *sunnah*<sup>6</sup> to recite further verses from the Qur'ān;
- ii. You can recite a whole sūrah or just particular ayāh;
- iii. Anything can be recited, long or short;
- iv. You may even combine two or more sūrahs in one *rak'ah*;
- v. With regard to the verses in the first *rak'ah*, it is preferable to:
  - a. make the recitation longer than that in the second *rak'ah*;
  - b. recite verses that appear earlier in the Qur'an than the verses in the second *rak'ah*
- vi. Beautify your voice when reciting Qur'ān;
- vii. For those of you new to Islām, here are two small sūrahs you could use for the time being:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَالْعَصْرِ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

**Bismillāh ar Rahmān Ar Rahīm**  
**wal asr, innal insāna la fee khusr**  
**Illal ladhīna āmanu, wa āmilus sālehāt**  
**wata wa sowbil haq, wata wa sowbis sabr**

In the Name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful

By Time, Indeed mankind is in loss, except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience. (Sūrah al Asr)

Or

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ إِنَّا أَعْظَمْنَاكَ الْكَوْتَر فَضَلَّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرِ إِنَّ شَائِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

**Bismillāh ar Rahmān Ar Rahīm**

**Inna ātayne kal kawthar, fa sal-le, le rabika wan har, inna shāne akka, Huwal Abtar**


In the Name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Indeed, We have granted you (O Muhammad) Al Kawthar. So, Pray to your Lord and Sacrifice (to Him alone).

Indeed, your enemy is the one cut off. (Sūrah al Kawthar)



#### 10. I have recited from the Qur'ān whilst standing in *al qiyām*. What next?

- i. After ending recitation of the Qur'ān, PAUSE;
- ii. Raise the hands as mentioned earlier. This is a *sunnah*;
- iii. Move into the bowing position, and *whilst moving* (Bukhari, Muslim) say *takbir*;
- iv. This bowing position is called *ruku*;
- v. **NOTE: it is *wājib* to say *takbīr* between movements in the rest of the *salāh* (except when rising from *ruku*).** 
- a. If *wājib* actions are missed unintentionally, then *sajdah sahw* must be performed.



<sup>6</sup> The little known fact that reciting surāhs after Fatiha is only a *sunnah*, is evidenced by hadith. 'Ata' reported it on the authority of Abu Huraira who said: Recitation (of Surat al-Fatiha) in every (rak'ah) of prayer is essential. (The recitation) that we listened to from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) we made you listen to it. And that which he recited inwardly to us, we recited it inwardly for you. And he who recites Umm al-Qur'an, it is enough for him (to complete the prayer), and he who adds to it (recites some other verses of the Holy Qur'an along with Surat al-Fatiha), it is *preferable* for him. (Muslim)

- b. If a *wājib* act is missed deliberately, then the entire *salāh* must be repeated.

### 11. Tell me about the bowing position.

- i. This is known as *ruku*.
- ii. ***Ruku* is a *rukn* of *salāh* and is performed as follows:**
- iii. The top part of your body from the hips, should be at a right angle with the bottom part, no higher, no lower;
- iv. **Your hands should be on your knees. This is *wājib*;**
- v. Your fingers should be spaced apart;
- vi. Your back should be straight;
- vii. Your head should be level, neither dropping below nor raised above the level of your back;
- viii. Your elbows should be away from your body;
- ix. **It is a *rukn* of *salāh*, that throughout the prayer, you should maintain ease between each *salāh*. The same applies to *ruku*.** Remain in that position until you have achieved calmness. i.e.
  - a. The *ruku* should not be hurried, the way many people do;
  - b. We must bring our bodies to right angles, no more no less;
  - c. We must wait in that position until our entire body has come to rest.




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#### The evidence: *Ruku*

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التَّائِبُونَ الْعَابِدُونَ الْحَامِدُونَ السَّائِحُونَ الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ الْأَمْرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

(Such believers are) the repentant, the worshippers, the praisers (of Allāh), the travelers (for His cause), those who bow and prostrate (in prayer), those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and those who observe the limits (set by) Allāh. And give good tidings to the believers.

*Sūrah ath Tawbah, 9:112*

It was narrated that Abu Humaid As-Sa'idi رضى الله عنه said: When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم bowed he was balanced, he did not make his head higher or lower than his back, and he put his hands on his knees.

An-Nisā'i and also covered in a longer hadith in Tirmidhi

Section from a hadith narrated by Uqbah ibn Amr al-Ansari: ".. When he bowed, he placed his hands upon his knees and put his fingers below, and kept his elbows (arms) away from his sides, so everything returned properly to its place.

An-Nisā'i and Abu Da'ud

Abu Qatada رضى الله عنه reported Allāh's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying, 'The one who commits the worst theft is he who steals from his prayer.' When asked how one could steal from his prayer he replied, 'By not performing his bowing and his prostration perfectly.'

Ahmed



### 12. What is the *adhkār* of *ruku* i.e. what is to be spoken?

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ

**Sub-hāna rab-biyal 'Adhīm**

How perfect is my Lord, the Supreme



- i. You should actually utter these words;
- ii. Say them when you are actually 'in' *ruku*, not on the way in or on the way out;
- iii. **They must be said at least once (*wājib*)**, preferably three times, but also more;
- iv. Reciting *ayāhs* of Qur'ān is forbidden in *ruku*.<sup>7</sup>



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#### The evidence: *Ruku adkhār*

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Narrates Hudhaifah رضي الله عنه , I prayed with the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and while bowing he would say 'Sub-hāna rab-biyal 'Adhīm'  
Muslim and four others

Related in Muslim, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Verily I have indeed been forbidden from reciting the Qur'ān in *ruku* or *sujūd*. In *ruku*, therefore, Glorify the Supremacy of the Lord, Mighty and Sublime, in it; as for *sujūd*, exert yourselves in supplications (*du'a*) for it is most likely that you will be answered.

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Insh'Allāh we will rise from *ruku* and continue this summary description of *salāh* in our next chapter.

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<sup>7</sup> The scholars of the Standing Committee were asked: We know that it is not permissible to recite Qur'ān when prostrating, but there are some verses which include *du'a*'s, such as the words, "Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us" [Āl 'Imrān 3:8]. What is the ruling on saying such *du'a*'s that are mentioned in the Qur'ān, when prostrating? They replied: There is nothing wrong with that if it is done as a *du'a*' and not as recitation of Qur'ān. End quote. Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 6/443. Source: Islamqa.com

## The five daily prayers? (salāh) (part c)

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### Questions

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1. What do we mean by '*takbīr*'?
2. What is the name of the first *takbīr* in *salāh*?
3. What is *al-qiyaṃ*?
4. Where do you look in the *al-qiyaṃ* position?
5. Where do you place your hands in *al-qiyaṃ*?
6. After the *Takbīr al-Ihrām*, what are the possible opening words of *salāh*?
7. Next comes *al-Fātihāh*. Do you say "*Bismillāh*" before reciting?
8. *Sūrah al-Fātihah* is a *du'a*. Should you say "*āmīn*" at the end? Explain.
9. How do you read *Sūrah al-Fātihah*?
10. What do you read after the *Sūrah*?
11. What is *ruku*?
12. Describe exactly the posture in *ruku*.
13. What do we mean by 'calmness' in *ruku*?
14. What is the *adkhār* of *ruku* i.e. what is to be said?



Salāh overflowing onto the road, Deira, Dubai, United Arab Emirates