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**The third question of Fatwa no. 1500:**

**Q 3: An Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) intentionally recites only Surah Al-Fatiha in every Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). He says that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said to the man who fell short in offering his Salah: 'Recite what you memorize from the Qur'an.' Therefore, reciting a Surah is an act of Sunnah; if neglected, the obligatory Salah is still valid. Is his saying true? If a person forgets to recite a Surah after Al-Fatiha and does not offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness), is his Salah invalid or not?**

**A:** The Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is that after reciting Al-Fatiha in the first two Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) of Zuhra (noon), `Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (sunset) and `Isha (Night) Prayers, he would follow it with a Surah of the Qur'an. This is also the case with the prayers of Fajr (dawn), Jumu`ah (Friday), Eid prayers, Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer for a solar eclipse) and Salat-ul-Khusuf (Prayer for a lunar eclipse). This is the established Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and we do not know of any evidence indicating that he confined his recitation to Al-Fatiha only. Doing so is against the Prophet's Sunnah, those claiming that this is in accordance with the true Sunnah are in fault and are acting contrary to the authentic Hadith in this regard. Moreover, the Hadith of the man who fell short in performing his Salah should not be taken as evidence for such people, because the Prophet ordered the man to recite what he memorizes of the Qur'an, meaning, other Surahs in addition to Al-Fatiha as stated in many other Hadith. According to some narrations of this very report as related by Abu Dawud, ( Say Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and then recite Al-Fatiha and what Allah wills (from the Qur'an). ) This direct text may settle the dispute.

**Secondly:** The said Hadith was mentioned in a state of teaching the man

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where he had gone wrong in his Salah, and as such, it is not to be taken as an excuse that other ways are not obligatory, otherwise, other matters such as the intention in Salah and offering Taslim upon finishing it will not be obligatory either. As for forgetting to recite a Surah of the Qur'an after Al-Fatiha, this does not necessitate Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) according to the more correct view of scholars.

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

**Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta'**

