



# Recitation of Al-Fatihah

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In the Case of Recent Muslims Who Have Not Yet Learned Arabic and Those Who Cannot Learn It

1. If you are a recent Muslim, make your best effort to learn Al-Fatihah. It is an integral pillar of *Salah*, without which it is invalid. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said, “**There is no *Salah* for the one who does not recite the Opening of the Book (Al-Fatihah).**” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari)
2. Try your hardest to also memorize the essential phrases that must be said during *Salah*. They are only valid in Arabic. These phrases are: ***Allahu Akbar*** (Allah is Greater), ***Subhana Rabbiyal `Azim*** (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great), ***Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah*** (Allah listens to those who praise Him), ***Rabbana wa lakal-hamd*** (our Lord, and to You is due all praise), ***Subhana Rabbiyal A`la*** (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), and the formulas of ***Al-Tashahhud***, ***Al-Salat-ul-Ibrahimiyyah***, and ***Taslim***.
3. If the time of one of the five daily prayers becomes due before you have learned how to recite Al-Fatihah in Arabic, you may instead say: ***Subhan Allah*** (Glory be to Allah), ***Alhamdu lillah*** (all praise is due to Allah), ***La ilaha illa Allah*** (there is no god but Allah), ***Allahu Akbar*** (Allah is Greater), and ***La hawla wala quwwata illa billahil-`Aliyil-`Azim*** (there is neither might nor power except with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great).

4. The validity of *Tasbih* (saying: "*Subhan Allah* [Glory be to Allah]), *Tahmid* (saying: "*Alhamdu lillah* [All praise is due to Allah]), *Tahlil* (saying: "*La ilaha illa Allah* [There is no god except Allah]), and *Takbir* (saying: "*Allahu Akbar* [Allah is Greater]) during *Salah* as a replacement for the *Fatihah* for those who cannot learn this Surah is explicitly stated in the Hadith narrated by `Abdullah ibn Awfa (may Allah be pleased with him) in which he said: "A man came to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and said, 'I cannot learn anything of the Qur'an, so teach me something that I can say instead of reciting the Qur'an.' He (peace and blessings be upon him) replied, 'Say: ***Subhan Allah, alhamdu lillah, la ilaha illa Allah, Allahu Akbar***, wa la hawla wala quwwata illa billahil-`Aliyil-`Azim.'" (Narrated by Abu Dawud)
5. Be keen during this initial phase to pray in congregation. This will help you improve and perfect your *Salah*. Also, the reward for praying in congregation may offset shortcomings or mistakes you may make while learning how to pray.

Only the original Arabic text of the Qur'an is divine. Any translation of the meaning of the Qur'an to any language is not a Qur'an, but only an interpretation. The rules related to the Qur'an and its sacredness do not apply to it.

The propose of translation is to explain the meaning and message of Allah's Word in a language other than that of Revelation. A translation is but a human endeavor, which may contain errors or inaccuracy. Thus, the Qur'an is the exact wording and meaning revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), as Almighty Allah says in His Noble Book: **"The Trustworthy Spirit (Gabriel) has brought it down upon your heart (O Muhammad), that you may be of the warners, in a clear Arabic language."** (Qur'an 26:193-195)