5248 - Reciting another soorah before al-Faatihah goes against the teaching of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)

the question

can a person recite another surah or ayah from the quran before the fatiha in salah?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not permissible to recite another soorah before al-Faatahih in the prayer. What is to be recited before al-Faatihah is the opening du'aa', then one should say A'oodhu Billaahi min al-Shaytaan ir-Rajeem, then Bismillaahi ir-Rahmaan ir-Raheem. Whoever recites a soorah before al-Faatihah has gone against the teachings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) who said, "Pray as you have seen me praying." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) never recited any soorah of the Qur'aan before al-Faatihah, rather he would recite an opening du'aa', such as:

"Wajjahtu wajhiya lilladhi fatara al-samawaati wa'l-ard haneefan musliman wa maa ana min al-mushrikeen. Inna salaati wa nusuki wa mahyaaya wa mamaati Lillaahi Rabb il-'Aalameen, laa shareeka lahu wa bidhaalika umirtu wa ana awwal ul-muslimeen, Allaahumma anta al-malik… (I have set my face towards the Originator of the heavens and the earth sincerely [in Islam], and I am not among the Mushrikeen. Indeed, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds, no partner has He. With this I have been commanded and I am the first of the Muslims (those who submit to Him). O Allaah, you are the King…)."

(Sifat Salaat al-Nabi by al-Albaani, 92).

After that, he would seek refuge with Allaah and say Bismillaahi ir-Rahmaan ir-Raheem, then he would recite al-Faatihah, reciting it aloud or silently according to the requirements of the prayer being offered.

(Sifat Salaat al-Nabi by al-Albaani, 95-97).