

## Traveler's Salah

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Allah said:

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ  
(النساء: ١٠١)

*When you travel on the earth, there is no sin on you in shortening your Salah.*

Anas radiallahu anhu reported, "We travelled with the Prophet from Medina to Mecca and offered two Rakat (for every prayer) till we returned to Medina."

- The least amount of travel in which shortening of Salah become compulsory and breaking fast in Ramadhan becomes permissible is the one covering a distance of three days out of the shortest days of the year by foot or on camel with average speed.
- If a person covers a distance of three days in, say, one hour on a fast vehicle like train or airplane, then also shortening of Salah is compulsory for him.
- Shortening of Salah is compulsory for a traveler.
- If a person performs the complete Salah while in journey, he has committed a bad act.
- The traveler should shorten the obligatory Salah in Zuhr, Asr and Isha.

- So on these occasions, he should perform two Salah-units as obligatory Salah, instead of four.
- He should not shorten the Salah in Fajr and Maghrib.

## **Prerequisites for validity of the intention to travel**

For validity of the intention to travel, three things are prerequisites:

1. The person who has made the intention should be an adult. If he is a child, then shortening of Salah will not be compulsory for him.
2. The person who has made the intention should be independent in his journey.
  - Shortening of Salah will not be compulsory if he is subordinate in the travel to a person who has not made the intention to travel.
  - The intention of wife to travel will not be valid when his husband has not made that intention as she is subordinate to her husband.
  - Similarly, the intention of a servant is not valid when his master has not intended to travel as the servant is subordinate to his master.
  - The intention of a soldier to travel is also not valid when his commander has not made that intention as he is subordinate to his commander.

3. The (one-way) distance of the journey should not be less than three days by foot

### **When should shortening of Salah be started?**

- Shortening of Salah is permissible only when the traveler has come out of the village and crossed past its buildings.
- Shortening of Salah is permissible only when the traveler has come out of the city and crossed past its buildings and yards.
- Shortening of Salah does not become permissible by merely making the intention of travel as long as he has not left behind the village or the city.
- If the person has come out of his house but not yet crossed past the yards of the city or the buildings of the village, then also shortening of Salah is not permissible.
- Shortening of Salah is compulsory in all journeys no matter whether the journey was undertaken for an act of virtue like Haj or Jihad, or for a permissible act like trading, or for a sinful act like thievery.
- If a traveler completes a four-unit Salah having sat for At Tahiyat after the first two units, his Salah will be valid. The last two Salah-units will become supererogatory. However, such a Salah is detestable as the ending Salam has been relocated from its rightful position.
- If a traveler completes a four-unit Salah without sitting at the end of the first two units for a period in which At Tahiyat may be recited, then his Salah will be invalid. The reason is that

shortening is a necessitation according to Hanafis, not mere concession.

## Period of shortening of Salah

- The traveler will keep performing shortened Salahs till he returns to and enters his city or village.
- However, if during journey he intends to reside at a city or village for fifteen days or more, he will not shorten his Salahs.
- If he intends to reside for less than fifteen days, he will keep performing shortened Salahs.
- Similarly if he does not make intention of residing but remains at a place for years, he will keep performing shortened Salahs.

## A traveler following a resident Imam in Salah and the reverse

- It is permissible for a traveler to perform Salah following a resident Imam. The traveler should then complete the four rak'at Salahs, following his Imam.
- A resident may also follow a traveler Imam.
- When a traveler is the Imam for residents, he should, after completing his two units in a four-unit Salah and performing the ending Salam say out loud: "I am a traveler so you people complete your Salah."
- But the preferable way is to say out this before starting the Salah as well as after completing his two units.

- When a resident follower stands up to complete his Salah after his traveler Imam has performed the ending Salam, he should not recite in the units. He should instead complete his remaining rak'aat without Quran recitation like the follower whose ablution breaks during Salah, so he goes back for ablution and returns to complete the missed out units.
- If a person misses a four-unit Salah during journey, he will late-perform it as two units, whether he does this during the journey or when resident.
- If a person misses a four-unit Salah while resident, he will late-perform it as four units no matter whether he does this during journey or while resident.

## Types of residences

According to Shariah there are three types of residences:

### 1. Watan al Aslie (permanent residence)

This is the permanent residence of a person where one resides with his family. Such residence can only be cancelled by another residence of similar level, like emigrating and moving to another place with any intention of leaving the new destination.

### 2. Watan al Iqamah (temporary residence)

Watan al Iqamah is the temporary residence of a traveler where he intends to stay for 15 days or more, regardless of the distance between this residence and his Watan al Aslie.

### 3. Watan al Suknā (Residence in transit)

Watan al Suknā is the temporary transit residence where the traveler intends to spend less than 15 days during his travel. This residence in transit does not change the ruling. This means if one is a resident (Muqīm) then entering a watan al suknā will not make him a musafīr. Similarly, if one is already a traveler then entering watan al suknā will not make him a resident (Muqīm).

