

The distance of shortening prayer in the past and present

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Abstract: The basic principle is that Islamic rulings are derived from the original sources of Islamic law, namely the Qur'an, the Sunnah, consensus, analogy, and other legal evidence whose validity is agreed upon and whose validity is disputed.

This research paper examines the opinions of ancient and modern jurists regarding the ruling on the distance required for shortening the four-unit prayers for travelers, whether traveling by old means of transportation such as camels and other means of transportation commonly used in the past, or on foot. It also examines modern means of travel. In the past, travelers, whether on camels or on foot, experienced extreme hardship, fatigue, and exhaustion that cannot be compared to those experienced today. Travelers using modern means of transportation can cover the distance required for shortening prayers in a short time, perhaps minutes or hours at most.

Is the ruling based on the distance traveled by any means, or is there another reason, namely the difficulty involved in traveling? This research paper aims to answer several questions, including: Is it permissible to consider the same distance for shortening prayers when traveling by modern means of transportation as for old means of transportation?

In describing the problem under study, the researcher used the scientific method, which involves collecting and critiquing scholarly material and arriving at conclusions derived from the premises. The researcher sought to document texts from their reliable sources, transcribe Quranic verses in the Ottoman script, and extract hadiths from recognized Sunnah books. The descriptive and inductive approach was used to describe the problem, as was the comparative approach, which involved comparing the opinions of jurists and determining the most preponderant opinion, along with the reasons for the preponderance, if any.

Keywords: Distance - Shortening Prayer - Ancient - Modern Means of Travel.

Introduction

This paper examines an ancient and contemporary jurisprudential study of the distance required for shortening the four-unit prayer, considering the different means of travel, both ancient and modern. Is it permissible for a traveler using modern means of transportation to shorten the prayer by the same distance estimated for the previous means of travel?

Research Problem:

The research problem revolves around an ancient and contemporary issue: the ruling on the amount of shortened prayer using modern means of transportation.

Is it permissible for a traveler traveling by plane, train, car, or even a ship to shorten the prayer, just like someone traveling by camel, mule, or other means, or even on foot? Or are the distances considered in the past no longer permissible in our time?

Importance of the Research: From here, we understand the importance of the research, which attempts to examine the criteria or conditions for shortening the prayer in the hadith as they did in the past.

Research Questions:

- ☐ The research problem results in several questions that I attempt to answer through this study, the most important of which are:
- ☐ Did Sharia set controls or conditions for the permissibility of shortening prayers in the past, and are they permissible in the present?
- ☐ What are the conditions for shortening prayers, and how can we balance them in the past and present?

Research Objectives:

⁶ This research aims to achieve a set of objectives, the most important of which are:

- ☐ Conditions and controls for shortening prayers while traveling.
- ☐ The ruling on shortening four-unit prayers while traveling by old means of transportation.
- ☐ The ruling on shortening prayers by modern means of transportation.

Research Methodology:

⁹ The researcher attempted to use the descriptive-inductive approach to describe the problem under study. He then used the scientific approach, gathering and critiquing the scientific material and arriving at conclusions derived from the premises. The researcher also sought to document texts from their approved sources.

Research Plan:

This research includes an introduction, two chapters, and a conclusion.

² **Chapter One:** A summary of the opinions of jurists regarding the ruling on shortening prayers while traveling by old means of transportation.

Chapter Two: The ruling on shortening prayers while traveling by modern means of transportation.

The conclusion includes the most important recommendations and findings, followed by indexes.

The first section: Explaining the distance of shortening

Jurists have differed on the distance of shortening prayers, with three well-known opinions. These are well-known because there are other opinions besides these. Some say it's a day and a night, some say it's a day's journey, some say it's ten farsakhs, some say it's thirty miles, and some say it's two days and part of a third. [Al-San'ani 1:93, Al-Maqdisi 2:47, Al-Asqalani 2:566, Abadi 4:49]. The first opinion: The distance of shortening the

prayer is a two-day journey (four parasangs) (a parasang is a distance of four farsakhs, equal to twelve miles, equal to twenty-two kilometers and one hundred and seventy-six meters.

Dictionary of the Language of Jurists. [Qal'aji, p. 78, Sulayman, p. 20, al-Zuhayli, 1: 142.]

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This is the opinion of the Malikis, Shafi'is, and Hanbalis [al-Kashnawi 1: 313, al-Mu'unah 1/134, Abu Abdullah al-Mawaq 2: 139, al-Shirazi 1: 102, al-'Umrani 2: 454, 455, al-Nawawi 4: 274, al-Qarafi 2: 47, al-Mardawi 2: 318, Ibn Duwayyan 1: 133.]

The second opinion: The distance of shortening the prayer is a three-day journey (what is meant by a three-day journey is a journey that is three days' journey, not actually a journey, even if one covers it in one day, shortening the prayer). [Al-Zayla'i 1: 209, (six burds). This is the opinion of the Hanafis, and Imam Al-Shafi'i recommended it to avoid disagreement with Abu Hanifa. [Al-Kasani 1: 93, Al-Sarakhsi 2: 28, Al-Shirazi 1: 102, Al-Nawawi 1: 385.]

The third opinion: The distance of shortening the prayer is the distance of any journey. This is the opinion of the Zahiris, although they differed in its estimation. Ibn Hazm said it is a mile. A mile is a measure of length equal to a third of a farsakh, equal to four thousand cubits, equal to one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six meters and twenty-four centimeters. He said eight farsakhs (a farsakh is a measure of distance, Persian, Arabized, measuring three miles, equal to twelve thousand cubits, approximately eight kilometers.

Dictionary of the Language of Jurists, p. 311, Weights and Measures, p. 86, The Jurisprudential Dictionary by Dr. Sa'd Abu Habib, p. 282, Dar Al-Fikr, second edition, 1408. He said it is a burd or more. Two farsakhs. Al-Muhalla. 6: 243 Al-Amili 1: 369, Al-Bazzar 3: 42 Ibn Al-Nazim 1: 167, Atfeesh 2: 352, 353.]

The reason for the disagreement:

The reason for the disagreement among jurists is due to the impact of travel and the hardship involved. Thus, shortening the prayer is similar to its impact on fasting. If this is the case, then shortening is obligatory where there is hardship. As for those who only consider the wording, they say that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Allah has relieved the traveler of half of the prayer and fasting, and also of the pregnant and breastfeeding woman." (A saheeh hadith. Narrated by al-Bukhari in al-Tarikh al-Kabir (2/29) and other scholars of Sunan.) Therefore, anyone who is called a traveler is permitted to shorten and break the fast, and they support this. - On the authority of Jubayr ibn Nufayr, who said: "I went out with Shurahbil ibn as-Simt to a village seventeen or eighteen miles away, and he prayed two rak'ahs. I said to him, 'I saw Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) praying two rak'ahs at Dhu'l-Hulayfah, so I said to him, and he said, 'I only do as I saw the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) do.'" [Muslim 1: 481, No. 692.]

As for the disagreement among those who consider hardship, it is due to the disagreement among the Companions regarding this matter. [Ibn Rushd 1: 122.]

The chosen opinion: After mentioning the evidence and previous discussions, the following becomes clear:

First: The basis upon which the proponents of the first opinion, namely the Malikis, Shafi'is, and Hanbalis, based their claim that the distance for shortening prayers is four burds, has not been free from criticism and debate, which renders it unsuitable for reliance or reliance. It is impossible under any circumstances to restrict the generality of the Almighty's statement: {وَإِذَا ضَرَيْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ} [alnisa' : 101]

However, what is meant by it is four colds, based on similarly weak hadiths, which have been previously explained.

Second: The proponents of the second opinion relied on the hadiths about wiping over the socks for three days and the hadiths about a woman traveling for three days without a mahram. Under no circumstances can the distance for shortening prayers be defined as three days based on these hadiths, as this would be extremely remote and strange, especially in these days when a person can travel the entire world in a few hours, covering thousands of miles without needing this length of time.

Third: The proponents of the third opinion relied on, while their evidence is sound, does not indicate a specific definition of the distance for shortening prayers. The most it provides is that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) shortened prayers for a distance of three days, a farsakh, or a mile.

Fourth: After all of the above, what is reassuring is that everything that is commonly called travel is a journey in which prayers are shortened, without differentiating between long and short journeys. Whatever is not commonly called travel, prayers are not shortened. Because the verse of shortening came in an absolute manner and the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) did not restrict it to a specific distance, although people need to know this distance if there is a specific distance specified, because this matter is repeated every day and people need that in their lives. So if the wise Lawgiver wanted to specify a specific distance for shortening, He would have stated that, the Truth, Glory be to Him, the Most High, who sent down the Book to His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him) as clarification of everything. God Almighty said: {وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بَيِّنَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ} [An-Nahl: 89], And the Almighty said: (مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ) [Al-An'am: 78]

Or the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) made it clear to the Muslims so that they would be clear about the matters of their religion. And since the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) did not specify this distance precisely, and all that was reported from him in the

authentic hadith did not specify that, rather the most that the Sunnah indicated was that it was shortened to three miles and to a mile and so on, and these are actions from which a specific specification cannot be derived, rather the most that they indicate is the permissibility of shortening the prayer to this distance and nothing else [Mansour, pp. 802, 803, 805].

Section Two: The extent of shortening the prayer when traveling by modern means of transportation

The ruling on shortening the prayer if the traveler travels by modern means of transportation

The ancient jurists held that the standard for determining distance is a moderate, moderate pace.

They differed on the ruling on shortening the prayer when traveling by modern means of transportation, with two opinions:

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The first opinion: The majority of jurists, including the Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools, held that if a traveler travels forty-eight miles in an hour or a moment, it is permissible for him to shorten the prayer—whether on land or at sea. Because it is a suitable distance for shortening prayers, covering it in a short time does not affect the validity of the prayer. [Manh al-Jalil 1: 401, al-Dasuqi 1: 358, al-Nawawi 4: 212, al-Sharbini 1: 266, al-Bahuti 1: 505.]

This is analogous to covering a distance by modern means of travel, such as trains, airplanes, and spacecraft.

The second opinion: The Hanafis hold that if a traveler covers a distance estimated to take three days in a short hour, he does not shorten his prayers. [Ibn Abidin 2: 123, al-Shawkani 2: 30-31, al-Zayla'i 1/220.]

This is because the reason for shortening prayers, which is the possibility of hardship, is no longer valid.

Another opinion among them is that if he reaches a place within the specified distance in a short time, it is permissible for him to shorten his prayers. However, they refuted this by saying that this opinion is unlikely because the reason for shortening prayers is no longer valid. [Ibn Abidin 2: 123, al-Shawkani 2: 30-31, Al-Zayla'i 1: 220.] And I respond: Hardship during travel is inevitable in any case.

The chosen opinion:

I see the preponderance of the first opinion, which states that shortening prayers is permissible while traveling, as long as the travel time exceeds the distance specified by Sharia for shortening prayers, which is estimated at eighty-five kilometers. This is based on the concession, facilitation, and alleviation for which shortening prayers was legislated, and because travel always involves hardship and difficulty, and people differ in this regard according to their abilities. And God knows best.

Main findings and recommendations:

- ☐ I suggest studying ancient fiqh issues using methods and means appropriate to the modern era.
- ☐ Comparing the hadith with the ancients to keep pace with the modern era and emphasize that Sharia rulings are appropriate for all times and places.
- ☐ If the hardship is removed, people will not resort to concessions, lest we reach the level of negligence, as concessions were legislated for alleviation, and this is what distinguishes Islamic law.

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