

121610 - A student is studying in one city and living in another: can he shorten his prayers?

the question

A student travels to Riyadh to study in the University; he leaves on Friday evening and comes back to his family and his city on Monday afternoon. Does the ruling on travellers apply to him with regard to shortening and joining prayers?.

Detailed answer

He is undoubtedly a traveller, because he has not taken the city where he studies as his hometown, and he does not intend to settle there at all; rather he is staying there for a purpose. But if he is in a city where prayers in congregation are held regularly, then he has to attend the prayers in congregation. As for the view that is widely held among some of the common folk, that the traveller does not have to pray in congregation or offer Friday prayer, there is no basis for this. Rather praying in congregation is obligatory for the traveller even if he is in battle. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “When you (O Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) are among them, and lead them in As-Salaah (the prayer), let one party of them stand up [in Salaah (prayer)]...” [al-Nisa’ 4:102]. And Friday prayer is obligatory upon everyone who can hear the call to prayer. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “O you who believe (Muslims)! When the call is proclaimed for the Salaah (prayer) on Friday (Jumu’ah prayer), come to the remembrance of Allaah [Jumu’ah religious talk (Khutbah) and Salaah (prayer)]...” [al-Jumu’ah 62:9]. But if you miss a prayer (in congregation) when you are there, or you are in a place

that is far away from the mosques, then you may pray the four-rak'ah prayers as two-rak'ahs. End quote.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him).