

Meqats for wearing Ihram

There are special places designated by the sacred rules of Islam for wearing ihram. It is incumbent on the pilgrim to wear ihram there. There are nine such places, each of which is called Meqat :

1. Thul Hulaifah which is situated near Madinah. It is the Meqat for the people of Madinah and all those who wish to perform the pilgrimage travelling from Madinah. As a matter of caution, it is preferred that ihram be worn, if possible, in the local mosque known as Masjid-ush-Shajarah. It is insufficient, though, to wear it outside, except for ladies in menstruation or the like.

Rule 162: It is not permissible to delay wearing ihram from Dhul Hulaifah and wearing it at Johfa instead, except for a valid reason, such as sickness or due to weakness.

2. Wadil-Aqeeq which is the Meqat for the people of Iraq and Najd and those passing through there. It has three parts: Maslakh, Ghamrah and Thati Irq. The preferred view (al ahwatil awla), is for a pilgrim to wear his ihram before reaching Thati Irq, if there is no case for dissimulation (taqiyyah) or illness.

Rule 163: It has been said that in dissimulation, it is permitted to wear ihram secretly before Thati Irq without removing all clothes. On getting there, the clothes may be removed and ihram worn without incurring any kaffarah (penalty). However, this opinion is not free from ishkāl.

3. Johfa which is the Meqat for the people of Syria, Egypt and the West and those who pass from there if they have not worn ihram earlier at Thul Hulaifa either with or without excuse.

4. Yalamlam which is the Meqat for the people of Yemen and those who pass from there. It is the name of a mountain.

5. Qarn-ul-Manaazil which is the Meqat for the people of Ta'if and all those who pass through that route.

6. Insofar as the last four Meqats, i.e. numbers (2) to (5) are concerned, the Meqats are not confined to the mosques only. but all that which comes under the banner of these places is so considered. If the pilgrim is unable to specify the exact place, he can wear ihram by making a vow (nadhr) before reaching the Meqat.

7. The proximity of any of the above quoted Meqats: If a person takes a route which does not cross any of the said Meqats, he must wear ihram from any place which is parallel to the Meqat, that is to say, a place at which, when he faces the Holy Ka'ba, one of the Meqats would be to his right or left, and when he proceeds from that point to Makkah, the Meqat would be behind him.

8. It is sufficient to use common sense to determine if one has reached such point; it is not necessary to take exact measurements. If a person takes a route on which he reaches a place which becomes parallel to two Meqats, it, as a matter of preferential precaution, is recommended that he should wear ihram on reaching the first of such two places.

9. Makkah which is the Meqat for Hajj-ut-Tamatu', as well as Hajj-ul-Qiraan and Ifraad for the residents of Makkah, and its neighbourhood – irrespective of whether or not their obligation shifted to that of the residents of Makkah – as they are not required to proceed to the rest of the Meqats. However, it is preferable for all, except women, to proceed to some other Meqats, such as Ja'ranah to wear their ihram.

10. As a matter of precaution, one should wear ihram at a place within the area considered as part of the ancient Makkah at the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), although it is permissible to wear it at one of the new places recently built, except those which would fall outside the Haram.

11. The pilgrim's home is the Meqat for those who are nearer to Makkah than the Meqat as it is permissible for them to wear ihram from their homes and are not obliged to return to a Meqat .

12. Adnal Hil like Hodaybiyyah, Ja'ranah, or Tan'eem: It is the Meqat for Umrat-ul-Mufradah after the Hajj-ul-Qiraan or Ifraad and all Umrat-ul-Mufradah by those in Makkah. There is only one exception which was explained earlier under Rule 140.

Rules of Meqats

Rule 164: It is not permissible to wear ihram before reaching Meqat nor is it enough just to pass from there in ihram. There is no alternative to wearing the ihram at the Meqat itself. However, there are two exceptions:

1. If a pilgrim has made a vow (nadhr) to wear ihram before the Meqat, it is valid to do so, it is not necessary to renew it at the Meqat, or pass through it. Indeed, it is permissible to proceed straight to Makkah without passing through any Meqat. In this regard there is no difference between an obligatory and an optional pilgrimage or Umrat-ul-Mufradah.
2. However, if the ihram is for an obligatory pilgrimage, then it is necessary that he should wear ihram in the season of the pilgrimage, as has already been discussed.
3. If a pilgrim wishes to perform Umrat-ul-Mufradah in the month of Rajab, and fears that the month will

elapse before he proceeded to the Meqat, it is permissible to wear the ihram before the Meqat and it will count as the Umrah of Rajab, even if the remaining ceremonies were performed in Sha'ban. In this regard, it does not matter whether the Umrah is obligatory or optional.

Rule 165: It is obligatory on the pilgrim to be certain that he reaches the Meqat and wears ihram there. He must be satisfied or have shari'i proof that the place is the Meqat. It is not permissible to wear the ihram, if there is doubt whether the Meqat has been reached.

Rule 166: If a pilgrim had made a vow to wear ihram before Meqat and contrary to it wears ihram at the Meqat, his ihram is not invalidated. However, he must pay kaffarah for infringing the vow, if he did so deliberately.

Rule 167: Just as it is not permissible to wear ihram before reaching Meqat, so is it not permissible to delay wearing it. It is not permissible for a person who intends to perform a pilgrimage or Umrah or to enter the Haram or Makkah to pass by the Meqat, by choice, without wearing ihram there, even if there is another Meqat ahead. If a pilgrim passes by a Meqat, he must, if possible, return to it to wear the ihram. There is one exception for those who pass Thul Hulaifah to Johfa, without excuse. In such a case, it is evident that wearing ihram from Johfa is sufficient, albeit he is sinful.

As a matter of precaution, it is not permissible to pass any place which is parallel to one of the Meqats without wearing ihram, although one can ignore this precaution because there is another Meqat ahead or parallel. If a passenger does not intend to perform a pilgrimage or enter Makkah changes his mind after passing Meqat, he can wear ihram for Umrat-ul-Mufradah from adnal hil

Rule 168: If a pilgrim passes by a Meqat deliberately without wearing ihram, without prejudice to the previous rule, there are two possible avenues:

- if it is possible to return to the Meqat, it is obligatory to do so and wear ihram there; it makes no difference whether he returns after having entered the Haram or from outside it; if he does so, his pilgrimage is valid;
- if the pilgrim is not able to return to the Meqat, whether he is inside or outside the Haram, his pilgrimage is invalidated and wearing ihram from any place beyond the Meqat is not sufficient. He must perform the pilgrimage in the ensuing year, if he has the means.

Rule 169: If a pilgrim abandons wearing ihram due to oversight, unconsciousness, and the like, or ignorance of the rule or Meqat, four situations would arise:

- if it is possible to return to the Meqat, it is obligatory to do so and wear ihram there;
- if he is in the Haram and it is not possible to return to the Meqat, and it is possible to come out of the Haram, he must go outside and wear ihram there; it is preferable that, having made his exit from the Haram, he must proceed as far away from it as possible to wear ihram;

- if he is in the Haram and it is not possible to come out, he must wear ihram wherever he is, even if he has entered Makkah;
- if he is outside the Haram but it is not possible to return to the Meqat, as a matter of precaution, he must return as far as possible towards the Meqat and wear ihram. In all these four situations, the pilgrimage is valid, if the pilgrim acts in accordance with what is stated above. The same rule applies to a person who wears ihram before reaching Meqat, or after leaving it out of ignorance, or due to an oversight of the rule.

Rule 170: If a woman pilgrim, who is in haydh, does not wear ihram at Meqat out of ignorance of the rule and enters the Haram, as a matter of precaution, she must go out and wear ihram, if it is not possible for her to return to the Meqat. In such a situation, it is preferable that she should go as far away from the Haram as possible and wear ihram, if in so doing there is no risk of missing the pilgrimage. If there is no possibility of moving out of the Haram, like the others, he should wear ihram inside the Haram.

Rule 171: If the umrah becomes void, including by reason of the invalidity of the ihram, it is obligatory to repeat it, if possible and if, for lack of time, it is not possible to repeat it, obligatory pilgrimage becomes invalid and it is necessary to perform it again in the succeeding year.

Rule 172: A group of scholars have stated that if a pilgrim performs an Umrah without ihram, it is valid if he did so out of ignorance or due to an oversight. However, this is debatable (ishkal). In this situation, as a matter of precaution, if it is possible, it be repeated in the manner we have stated.

Rule 173: If a person travels from far for a pilgrimage, it is obligatory on him to wear ihram for Umrah at one of the first five Meqats. If his route passes through one of them, no problem arises. If not, as is the case in modern times, when pilgrims first land in Jeddah, which is not one of the Meqats, it is not permissible to wear ihram there as it has not been established that it is parallel to any Meqat. In such a case, he has three options:

1. He can make a vow (nadhr) to wear ihram from his town or on the way, just before passing over any of the Meqats and before landing in Jeddah, and wear the ihram at the place stipulated in the vow. There is no problem in this, provided it does not entail protecting oneself from the sun (istidhlal) – such as by flying during night time – or sheltering from the rain.
2. If he lands in Jeddah without ihram, he can proceed to one of the Meqats, or to a point which is parallel to it, to wear his ihram from there. He also can go to any of the places, situated behind the Meqat, such as Rabigh which is on the way to Madinah, and wear ihram there by making a vow (nadhr), as it is situated before Johfa which may not be easy to get to.
3. He must make a vow to wear ihram in Jeddah and do so. This is only permissible, if it is known, albeit generally, that there is a place between Jeddah and Haram, parallel to one of the Meqats, not far away from Johfa. If there was a probability that such a place is parallel to Johfa, and he could not achieve it,

ihram by virtue of nadhr is not permissible.

4. However, if the pilgrim arrives in Jeddah with the intention to proceed to one of the Meqats, or the like, and he could not make it, he is permitted to wear his ihram with a nadhr there and then. In such a case, he, evidently, is not required to renew his ihram outside the Haram before entering.

Rule 174: It has already been stated that, for Hajj-ut-Tamatu', it is obligatory to wear ihram in Makkah. If a pilgrim deliberately wears it elsewhere, his ihram is invalid, if he enters Makkah having worn it. Indeed, it is obligatory on him, if possible, to wear it again in Makkah; otherwise, his Hajj is invalid.

Rule 175: If during Hajj-ut-Tamatu' a pilgrim forgets to wear ihram for Hajj in Makkah, it is obligatory for him, if possible, to return to Makkah. Otherwise, he must wear the ihram wherever he remembers to do so, even if he has reached Arafat, and his Hajj is valid. The same is the rule for one ignorant of the rule.

Rule 176: If a pilgrim forgets to wear the ihram for Hajj and does not remember to do so until the completion of all the rituals, his Hajj is valid. The same rule applies to one who is ignorant of the rule.

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