

HOW TO PERFORM SALAH WHERE QIBLAH IS NOT KNOWN?

Q: 18-? Sometimes we are at a place where we do not know the exact direction of Qiblah. How should we perform Salah in such places? Can we use the scientific instruments to find out the direction of the QIBLAH? What should we do if we do not have such instruments? (Abdullah - Toronto, Canada)

A: Certainly one can use the scientific instruments to find out the accurate direction of Qiblah. However, if somebody is at a place where he has no such instruments nor can he find anybody to tell him the correct direction of the Qiblah, he should to the best of his ability find out the direction by estimate. After doing his best, he can offer his prayer facing a direction which seems to him more correct; His salah will be acceptable in Shariah.

In this case, even if it is learnt after performing salah that the correct direction was otherwise, the Salah is acceptable, and the same need not be performed again.

It should, however, be kept in mind that this rule is applicable only to a person who has done his best to find out the correct direction of the QIBLAH. Conversely, if he has not applied his mind to ascertain the QIBLAH and performed Salah carelessly to any direction, his Salah is not acceptable in case he has performed it facing a wrong direction.

Contemporary fatawaa