

בית הוראה דיעטראיט
BAIS HORAAH OF DETROIT
HALACHA HOTLINE

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF HaRav Shmuel Irons שליט"א VAAD HALACHA Rav Aharon Yoel Sorscher • Rav Yissachar Wolf • Rav Boruch Miller

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ISSUE #13 – TRAVEL FAQs

Commonly Received Questions and their Answers

Below are some common questions and answers based on psakim from the rabbonim of the Bais Horaah. Please note: in the event one believes they have heard a different opinion in the past, one's family posek should always be consulted. Mareh mekomos for any specific answers below are available by email request to ask@bhdetroit.org.

● **May one begin traveling if the time for tefilla has come but he has not yet davened?**

- Once the zman tefilla has arrived, (i.e. alos hashachar, mincha ketana, or tzais hakochavim) one should not embark on a trip until one has davened. This applies even if he expects to have sufficient time to daven at his destination. However, in a case where there is no minyan available prior to departing, but there will be ample time to daven with a minyan at the destination, it is permitted to travel first and daven later.
- If the trip is for a mitzvah purpose, it is permitted to depart first and then daven later.
- In a case of pressing need, it is permitted to depart without davening if there will be ample time to daven at the destination even if there will not be a minyan. However, in such an instance one should take steps not to forget to daven upon his arrival, such as setting an alarm or appointing a shomer.
- If one is departing after alos hashachar but before davening shacharis, he should say birchos hashachar prior to leaving.

● **May one travel on erev Shabbos or Yom Tov?**

- Travel is only permitted on erev Shabbos or Yom Tov if one will arrive comfortably with enough time before Shabbos or Yom Tov. These calculations must consider potential traffic or flight delays, etc. In any case, one must depart as early in the day as possible and leave enough time for unexpected delays.
- If Shabbos preparations will still need to be made upon arrival at one's destination (i.e. one who is not a guest), he must leave extra early in the morning.

● **What is the minimum distance of travel that requires Tefilas Haderech?**

- If one is traveling the distance of a *parsah* (approximately 2.6 miles) outside of a city or its metro area, whether by car, airplane, train, boat, or even by foot, Tefilas Haderech should be said. Many Sephardim have the custom to only say it when the trip will take 72 minutes or more.

● **When is the ideal time to say Tefilas Haderech?**

- When driving, the ideal time to say Tefilas Haderech is within the first 2.6 miles of driving after joining the highway that leads out of the metro area. For example, when leaving the Detroit area, one can say Tefilas Haderech after entering the I-75 or I-94 highways. Some have the custom to wait until passing through an uninhabited section of the highway.
- When flying, one should try to say Tefilas Haderech as the plane prepares to accelerate down the runway.

● **What happens if one forgets to say Tefilas Haderech, but remembers while still traveling?**

- One who has not yet said Tefilas Haderech may do so at any point along his journey, unless he is already within 2.6 miles of his destination city.

● **Is one required to stand up or to stop the car to recite Tefilas Haderech?**

- Ideally, one should stop and stand for Tefilas Haderech. In our contemporary mode of travel, however, this is not always practical. As such, it is not required to stop and stand if doing so will diminish, rather than enhance, one's concentration. Furthermore, stopping at the side of the road can be unsafe and should not be done. If one can easily stand to say Tefilas Haderch (for example on a bus or boat) it is preferable to do so.

● **When is one required to repeat Tefilas Haderech on a single trip?**

- Tefilas Haderech is said only once per day of travel, even if making multiple stops. A new day of travel begins at alos hashachar and ends at alos hashachar the following morning.
- If one stops traveling with no plans to continue that day, but later decides to continue traveling, Tefilas Haderech is repeated, even on the same day.
- If one stops overnight and then continues traveling the following day, Tefilas Haderech is said immediately upon departure on the second day, even while still within the city limits.
- If one travels through the night and past alos hashachar, he should repeat Tefilas Haderech after alos, but without the concluding bracha. If he will be davening shacharis soon, he can include Tefilas Haderech in the bracha of Shema

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Koleinu, before the words 'ki Atah shomea.' In both cases he should skip the concluding bracha of Tefilas Haderech. This applies even to one who slept in the car for a short while.

● **Is there an inyan to precede Tefilas Haderech with a different bracha?**

- Yes. If possible, one should try to say a bracha such as Asher Yatzar or Borei Nefashos immediately prior to Tefilas Haderech. This is in order to create a bracha hasemucha l'chaverta – a bracha which is "connected to another."
- One should not delay saying either Tefilas Haderech or the other bracha in order to accomplish this. It is better to say Tefilas Haderech right away even if it will not be semucha l'chaverta.

● **Can one person be motzi another in Tefilas Haderech?**

- Yes. One who hasn't yet said Tefilas Haderech can be motzi another traveler as long as the latter is able to hear the bracha clearly. This underlies the common minhag of one person saying Tefilas Haderech on behalf of the whole family. Others have the minhag for all family members to say it on their own. If a group of adults are traveling together and they all know how to say Tefilas Haderech, they should each say it on their own.

● **I will be driving and do not know Tefilas Haderech by heart. What are my options?**

- Another person over the age of bar or bas mitzvah can say it aloud and the driver will answer amein.
- You can ask a child to read it aloud. In this case however, you must say it along with the child.
- You can have it read over the phone. However, as in the case of a child, you must say it along. A recording of Tefilas Haderech is available by calling the Bais Horaah of Detroit hotline and choosing option #5.

● **May one daven in a multi-faith prayer room?**

- If the room does not contain religious symbols or objects and there are no group services currently in progress, one may use the room to daven.

● **I will be davening at a rest stop. Where is the best place to daven?**

- Ideally, find an indoor spot where you will not be disturbed.
- If that is not possible, you may daven outdoors, preferably next to a car, building, tree or other such large object, so as not to be davening in an open area.

● **May one daven or recite berachos while driving?**

- There is room to be lenient with regard to saying berachos, birchas hamazon and most parts of davening, if one knows them by heart and will be able to maintain some degree of kavanah while still driving safely. However, shemonah esrei may not be recited while engaged in driving.

● **May one daven shemonah esrei while seated in a car or airplane?**

- Ideally, one should daven at a rest stop or in the airport in order to daven properly while standing up. If that is not possible for any reason, one may daven while seated in a car or airplane, even if he is not facing east. If possible, one should briefly stand up in order to bow.

● **Is one obligated to go out of his way in order to daven with a minyan while traveling?**

- If there is a minyan along the route within 72 minutes travel time of his current location, one should wait to daven with the minyan. If he will have to detour more than 18 minutes each way, he may daven without a minyan. Additionally, if it will cause a significant disruption to the trip, one is not obligated to detour even 18 minutes or less.

● **If the zman tefilla arrives while one is traveling, must he stop to daven immediately?**

If there will be ample time to daven at his destination, he may continue traveling. However, he should set an alarm or reliable reminder to ensure that he does not forget to daven. If he will only reach his destination after chatzos halaylah, he should make sure to say krias shema before chatzos.

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