

Find out **WHY...**

All Muslims are obliged to start  
Ramadhan on the same day...



No matter where the moon is sighted

All Muslims are obliged to start Ramadhan and celebrate Eid on the same day...



If a Muslim country announces that the sighting of a new moon has been confirmed according to the lawful way - for the beginning of Ramadhan or for the day of Eid – then you *have* to fast or celebrate



It is forbidden to wait for a ruler or scholar in your part of the world to give you permission to fast or celebrate.

**WHY?**

## Because this is what Allah [s] and the Prophet [s] ordered

To prove this is the case we have to look at...

- The Quran
- The Sunnah



What we can't look at to prove things are Islamic are ...

- Our emotions
- What people think
- What most people are doing
- What is normal in our community
- What the tradition is.



Remember what Ibn Masud (r) said:  
"The jama'a is truth [haq] even if it is one person".



### The Prophet [s] said...

The Prophet [s] mentioned Ramadhan and with a gesture of his hands said: "The month is thus and thus. (He then withdrew His thumb at the third time indicating 29)." He then said: "Fast when you see it, and break your fast when you see it. And if the weather is cloudy do calculate it (the months of Shaban and Shawwal) as thirty days." [Muslim]

He also said:

"Do not fast till you see the new moon, and do not break fast till you see it; but if the weather is cloudy complete it (thirty days)." [Bukhari]

"The month consists of 29 nights, so do not fast till you have sighted it (the new moon), and if the weather were cloudy, then complete it as thirty days." [Bukhari]

"The month of Ramadhan may consist of twenty-nine days. So do not fast until you have sighted it (the new moon) and do not break fast, until you have sighted it (the new moon of Shawwal), and if the sky is cloudy for you, then complete it (thirty days)." [Muslim]

"The month of Ramadhan may consist of twenty-nine days; so when you see the new moon observe fast and when you see (the new moon again of Shawwal) then break it. And if the sky is cloudy for you, then calculate it (and complete thirty days)." [Muslim]



### The Qur'an says...

"Whoever witnesses the crescent of the month, he must fast the month." [2:185]

"They ask you about the crescents. Say: They are but signs to mark fixed periods of time in the affairs of men and for pilgrimage." [2:189]

These narrations are very clear. The Qur'an and the Prophet [s] order us to fast when the sighting of the new moon of Ramadhan is confirmed, and order us to break the fast and celebrate Eid when the sighting of the new moon of Shawwal is confirmed.

We have to follow these orders of the Quran and the Prophet [s]. We would be sinful if we didn't. Just like we would be sinful if we didn't listen to the Quran and Prophet [s] for another order like praying salah.

## The command to fast is general so it applies to everyone – no matter where they live

When the Qur'an and Prophet [s] order us to fast or celebrate Eid – they are ordering every Muslim – everywhere in the world.

In the hadith, the Prophet [s] commands us to fast using the word 'sumu' - 'do fast'. This word is in the plural form which means the command is general and comprehensive.

This means that it applies to all Muslims, no matter where they live.

"Do **fast [sumuw]** when it is sighted and break fast when it is sighted."

In the hadith, the Prophet [s] commands us to fast using the word 'ru'yateh' - 'sighting'. This word is general.

This means that Muslims have to fast after **any** legitimate sighting of the moon regardless of where the moon was sighted.

"Do fast when it is **sighted [ru'yateh]** and break fast when it is sighted."

Even the Prophet (s) used to begin fasting when he had not personally seen the moon, but a Muslim had told him that he had seen it.

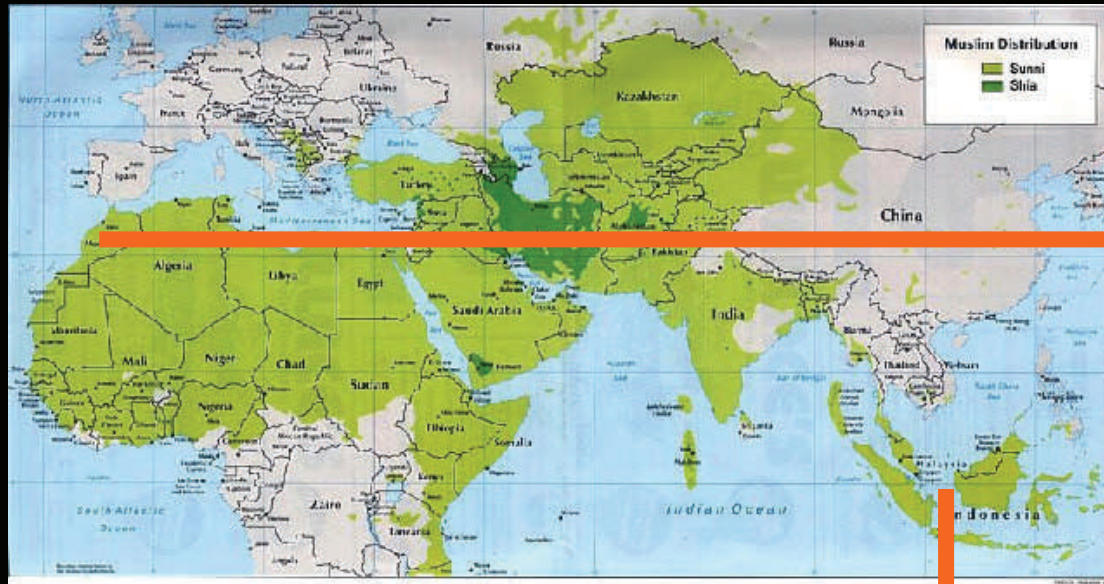
Ibn Umar (r) reported, "**During the time of the Prophet (s), the companions went looking for the new crescent. So I told the Prophet (s) that I saw it. So he fasted and told the companions to fast.**"

[Abu Dawud & Hakim]



# So if the moon was sighted in Morocco do Muslims in Indonesia fast?

# YES



If the people here in Rabat – Morocco, see the moon on Friday night

And the people here in Jakarta – Indonesia, can't see it – they still have to fast the same time as the Muslims in Rabat.

And if they don't get the news in time to fast the same morning then they have to make up that fast after Eid.

During the life of the Prophet [s] the Muslims used to start the fast on the same day and break it on the same day, despite the fact that they lived in different areas. This is another Islamic evidence that the sighting of the new moon in one area obliges all the Muslims to fast together on the same day and celebrate Eid on the same day.

# Here's what some scholars said about every Muslim fasting

## Ibn Taymiyyah:

"...a person who learns about the sighting of the moon in good time to be able to utilise it for fasting, for ending his fast, or for sacrifice, he must definitely do so. The texts [of Islam] and the reports about the Salaf point to this. To limit this to a certain distance or country would contradict both the reason and the Islamic law." [Al-Fatawa, volume 5, page 111]

## The famous Hanafi scholar Imam Sarkhasi

(died 483 A.H.) quotes the narration from Abu Dawud (2333, 2334) that;

The Muslims did not begin fasting since they did not see the moon. Then a man, from out of Madinah, came and told the Prophet [s] that he had seen it (the moon). The Prophet [s] asked him if he was a Muslim to which the man answered 'yes'. The Prophet [s] then said: "**Allahu -Akbar! one is enough for all Muslims**" The Prophet [s] fasted and asked the people to stop eating and start fasting. [Al-Mabsout 3-52]

## WHAT IF THE NEWS REACHES US TOO LATE TO FAST ON THE SAME MORNING?

This has also been answered in the ahadith.



It is also reported in an authentic hadith: Abu 'Umayr ibn Anas reported from his paternal uncles among the Ansaar who said: "**It was cloudy and we could not see the new moon of Shawwaal, so we started the day fasting, then a caravan came at the end of the day and told the Messenger [s] that they had seen the new moon of Shawwaal the day before, so he told the people to stop fasting, and they went out to pray the Eid prayer the next day.**"

# Deobandi Scholars

Founding and well known scholars of the Deobandi movement of the Indian subcontinent have clearly said this is the correct view. It's a pity that many who follow them don't follow their rulings.

The co-founder of Dar al-Uloom Deoband, Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi said:

"If the people of Calcutta sighted the moon in Friday, whereas it was sighted in Makkah on Thursday, but the people of Calcutta did not know of it (the sighting on Thursday); then whenever they come to know of this, it will be obligatory for them to celebrate eid with the people of Makkah and make up (Qada') for the first fasting." [Sharh Tirmizi], Kaukab un Durri, pg 336 Urdu edition].

"Wherever the sighting is confirmed, however far off it may be, even if it were to be thousands of miles; the people of this place will have to abide by that." [Fatawa Dar ul Uloom Deoband, Vol. 6 page 380, Urdu edition]

"Irrespective of how far the news of sighting came from, it is to be relied upon. For instance if the people of Burma did not sight the moon, and a person from Bombay testifies to them of having sighted the moon; it will be incumbent upon the people of Burma to make up for the (first) fasting i.e. Qada'." [Mufti Kifayat ullah, Ta'leem ul Islam, vol. 4, section sighting of moon: Urdu edition]

"When the moon is sighted in one place it is not just for that region but for the entire world." [Maulana Amjad Ali, Bahar e Sharee'at, Vol 2]

## QUESTION:

There has been some dispute in Amritsar etc. regarding sighting of moon for Ramdhan and Eid ul fitr. So should we the residents of Mandla (CP), which is located very far off, follow that sighting or not?

## ANSWER:

In the maslak of Hanafiyyah, there is no consideration of difference in sighting - the sighting of the people of east is binding upon the people of the west and vice versa. This is also demanded by the hadith: "**Fast when it is sighted and stop fasting when it is sighted**", because the address 'fast ' and 'stop fast' is general and for everyone. In conclusion, when sighting is confirmed in whichever place, everyone is supposed to start his fast and break it in accordance with it, i.e when the sighting is confirmed."

[Fatawa Dar ul Uloom Deoband, Vol. 6 page 385-386, Urdu edition]



# Bareylvi Opinion

**The founder of the Barylevi movement,  
Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan, said:**

"In the correct and authentic mazhab of our  
Imams, with regard to the sighting of moon  
for Ramdhan and Eid, distance of the place of  
sighting is of no consideration. The sighting  
of the east is binding upon west and vice  
versa i.e. the sighting of west is similarly  
binding on east."

[Fatawa Rizwi; Vol 4 page 568, Urdu edition]



# Is the idea for all Muslims to fast on one day something new?

No. Here's what the Hanafi scholars say..

**Imam Kasanee** said in his book *Bada as-Sana'i* said that following other than one sighting for the whole Ummah is an innovation [bid'a]. This indicates how weak he felt that the other Ijtihad is.

**Imam Juzairi** in his book *The Fiqh of the Four Schools of Thought [Vol 1]* gives two views of the Hanafis about this:

- 1) The sighting of the moon by any Muslim should be accepted whether slave, free, man or woman without inquiring whether they are just or not,
- 2) The justness [of the witness] should be verified by a judge [Qadi].

**This all sounds simple –**

**so what reasons do people use for not fasting  
on one day?**

Reason 1 – Times of fasting differ for  
each region, like prayer times

Reason 2 – The Companions didn't fast on one  
day..

**We'll also look at**

- Using calculations to decide the new moon
- The idea of 'sticking to the majority'



IN THE MOON GARDENS

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## Reason 1 – times of fasting are like times of prayer – they're different in each area

The thinking goes something like this...

Every country should start Ramadhan and celebrate Eid based on their own sighting of the moon, in the same way each region begins its prayer time according to the sun in that area.

The answer

It's right to say that prayer times differ in each area, because they are based on the times the sun sets and rises – this happens at different times in each region.

So the **times** we Start fasting and Break fasting is different for each region.

Because Allah [s] says:

"And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast until the night appears" [2:187]

But the **day** we Start Ramadhan and Celebrate Eid must be the same all over the world

Because this is what the narrations have clearly indicated; and this is what is confirmed by the understanding deduced from the Shari'ah rule.

The difference in the rising of the new moon between the farthest two points in the world is not more than twelve hours. The classical scholars are excused for not understanding this deduction from the Shari'ah rule, because at the time they were not in a position to clearly realise the movements of the earth, sun and the new moon.

And now that the deduction made from the rule is understood, there are no excuses left for those who claim that the difference in the time of rising could exceed one day, let alone those who claim that it could be even a few days.



## Reason 2 – The companions of the Prophet [s] did not fast at the same time

Another reason given by some is that the companions of one region would not fast at the same time as the companions of a different region.

The evidence for this is taken from a report by Imam Muslim about Kurayb who reported that a lady sent him to Mu'awiya [r] in Al-Sham for some business.

Kurayb said: "I arrived in Al-Sham and did business for her. It was there in Al-Sham that the month of Ramadhan began. I saw the new moon of Ramadhan on Friday.

"I then came back to Madina at the end of the month. Abdullah Ibnu Abbas [r] asked me about the new moon of Ramadhan and said: "When did you see it?"

**I said:** "We saw it on the night of Friday."

**He said:** "Did you see it yourself?"

**I said:** "Yes, and the people also saw it and observed the fast and Mu'awiya [r] also observed the fast;

**He said:** "But we saw it on Saturday night. Some would continue to observe fast till we complete thirty (fasts) or we see it (the new moon of Shawwal)."

**I said:** "Is the sighting of the moon by Mu'awiya [r] not valid for you?"

**He said:** "No, this is how the Messenger of Allah [s] has commanded us."



**THE CLAIM**



# THE CLAIM



That Ibnu Abbas ignored the sighting of the people of Al-Sham and **so** at the end of the narration said: '**...this is how the Messenger [s] has commanded us.**'

Some people say that Ibnu Abbas learnt from the Messenger [s] that the people of one region are not obliged to fast on the sighting of another region.

It's also said that this hadith explains and specifies the hadith : " Fast when you see it and break fast when you see it."

Some therefore claim that the people of each region are commanded to act on the sighting of the new moon in their region only and not in other regions. Therefore the beginning of fast and the beginning of Eid vary from one region to another, according to the times of rising of the moon.

## THE ANSWER —

# THE ANSWER

1. **This report is not a hadith of the Messenger [s]** but the legal opinion [ijtihad] of a companion.
2. The fact that Ibnu Abbas [r] did not act upon the sighting of the people of Al-Sham reflects his legal opinion [ijtihad] and **it cannot be used as a Shari'ah evidence.**
3. The reason for this is that when we have a hadith saying one thing and a legal opinion [ijtihad] saying something else – **the hadith must be acted on and the legal opinion [ijtihad] has to be left.**
4. **The ijtihad of the sahabi cannot specify the general term of the hadith.**
5. So when Ibnu Abbas said: "This is how the Messenger of Allah [s] commanded us", this is not a hadith. It is just the way Ibnu Abbas understood the hadith of the Prophet [s] in which the Messenger [s] said: **"Fast when you see it and break fast when you see it."**

This indicates that Ibnu Abbas understood the hadith as such; though he did **not** say the words: "This is how the Messenger [s] **reported it**," nor did he say:

"This is how we **learnt it** from the Messenger [s]." But he said:  
"This is how the Messenger [s] commanded us."

# What did Imam Al-Shawkani say about this hadith?



He said:...And what is referred in his saying: 'This is how the Messenger [s] commanded us', is his saying (i.e. Ibnu Abbas).

"...And the command of the Messenger [s] lies in the hadith extracted by Bukhari and Muslim, among others, with the following wording: **"Do not fast till you see the new moon and do not break fast till you see the new moon, and if the sky were cloudy, then complete it as thirty days."** And this does not specifically apply for the people of one region to the exclusion of others, but to all the Muslims."

[Nayl ul-Awtar, volume 4, page 268]



# Why can't we use calculations?

Calculating the times when the new moon for Ramadhan and Eid - can't replace an actual sighting of the new moon with the human eye.

The reason for this is that the narrations which mention when to start fasting and end fasting mention seeing the moon with the eyes themselves.

## What role can calculation play?

Calculations can help us know around what time the new moon will be born and therefore the right time to start looking out for the new moon.

## What role can't calculation play?

Governments who use these calculations instead of the sighting, their actions contradict the Qur'an and hadith. Therefore their actions are haram/unlawful and the Muslims are forbidden from relying on their announcements.

## Why?

All the narrations about the sighting of the moon use the word "ru'yatehe" which comes from the word "ra'a" to refer to the sighting.

People who support the idea of calculating the birth of the moon for Ramadan say this word means 'knowledge'. So as long as we have 'knowledge' of when the new moon is born we should fast. And using calculations helps us come to this knowledge

This is a misuse the word "ra'a". The word ra'a *could* mean knowledge. But it's not right to apply this meaning here because of the following two reasons:

When referring to a single object, "ra'a" means to visualize that object through the eye, i.e. he **saw** the moon. However, if ra'a refers to two objects, it could mean to know, i.e. he knew the correct opinion.


Ra'a +	1 object (like the moon)	=	see with the eyes
Ra'a +	2 objects	=	knowledge

If ra'a is used in reference to a physical object, it means to visualize the object through the eye. However, if it is used to present an idea or an abstract thing – like love - then it could mean knowledge.

Ra'a + physical object (like the moon)	=	see with the eyes
Ra'a + abstract object (like love)	=	knowledge

The moon is a single, physical, object. This is why the narrations which use the word 'ru'yatehe' refer to the moon, mean to see the moon with the eyes.





Isn't the rule to see the moon for illiterate people? And since we Muslims are no longer uneducated, surely the rule no longer applies?

Umar (r) reported that the Prophet [s] said: **"We are unlettered people (ummiyah), we neither write nor calculate. The month is this way and that, sometimes 29 days and sometimes 30."**

Those who calculate the first day of Ramadhan and Eid say that the command in this hadith, i.e. to 'sight' the moon, is accompanied by a reason (illah) which justifies the command.

This justification is that the Ummah was unlettered ("We neither write nor calculate"), ie we are illiterate.

If the Ummah is no longer illiterate and is able to write and calculate, we must rely on calculation alone and not sight.

**However, this argument is wrong because...**



# There's no reason [illah] in the hadith

Umar (r) reported that the Prophet [s] said: "**We are unlettered people (ummiyah), we neither write nor calculate. The month is this way and that, sometimes 29 days and sometimes 30.**"

1. The description of the Ummah in this Hadith, "ummiyah", does not imply a legal reason [illah].

"Ummiyah" could mean "Arab". "We neither write [naktub] or calculate [nahsib]..." [TMQ 62:2].

2. 'Calculate' [nahsib] does not mean general calculations because Muslims were commanded by the Shar'iah to follow the laws of Zakah and inheritance etc. even at the time of the Prophet [s] - which do involve lots of calculations.

3. 'Calculate' [nahsib] in the hadith carries several meanings - such as:

- We don't use astronomical calculations to determine the legal Shari'i beginning and end of the month;
- nor do we practice astrology, etc.



Therefore the claim that the hadith describes the condition of the Ummah at the time of the Prophet [s] is false.



And the claim that this condition serves as an illah is also wrong.

# There's no analogy in ritual worships

Even if this "condition" were considered a reason [illah] - analogy [qiyas] on this issue is invalid.

## Why?

1. There can be no analogy [qiyas] in ritual worships (Ibadaat).
  2. This analogy contradicts the definite meaning in narrations which clearly show that the cause [sabab] for fasting is the sighting of the moon.
- Therefore, it is quite clear that the arguments presented to "justify" the beginning of Ramadan through the use of calculations are invalid and haram.
  - The only way to determine the arrival of Ramadan is through sighting the moon.





# What did some of the classical scholars say about calculating the sighting of the moon?

**Imam Malik bin Anas (ra)** said:

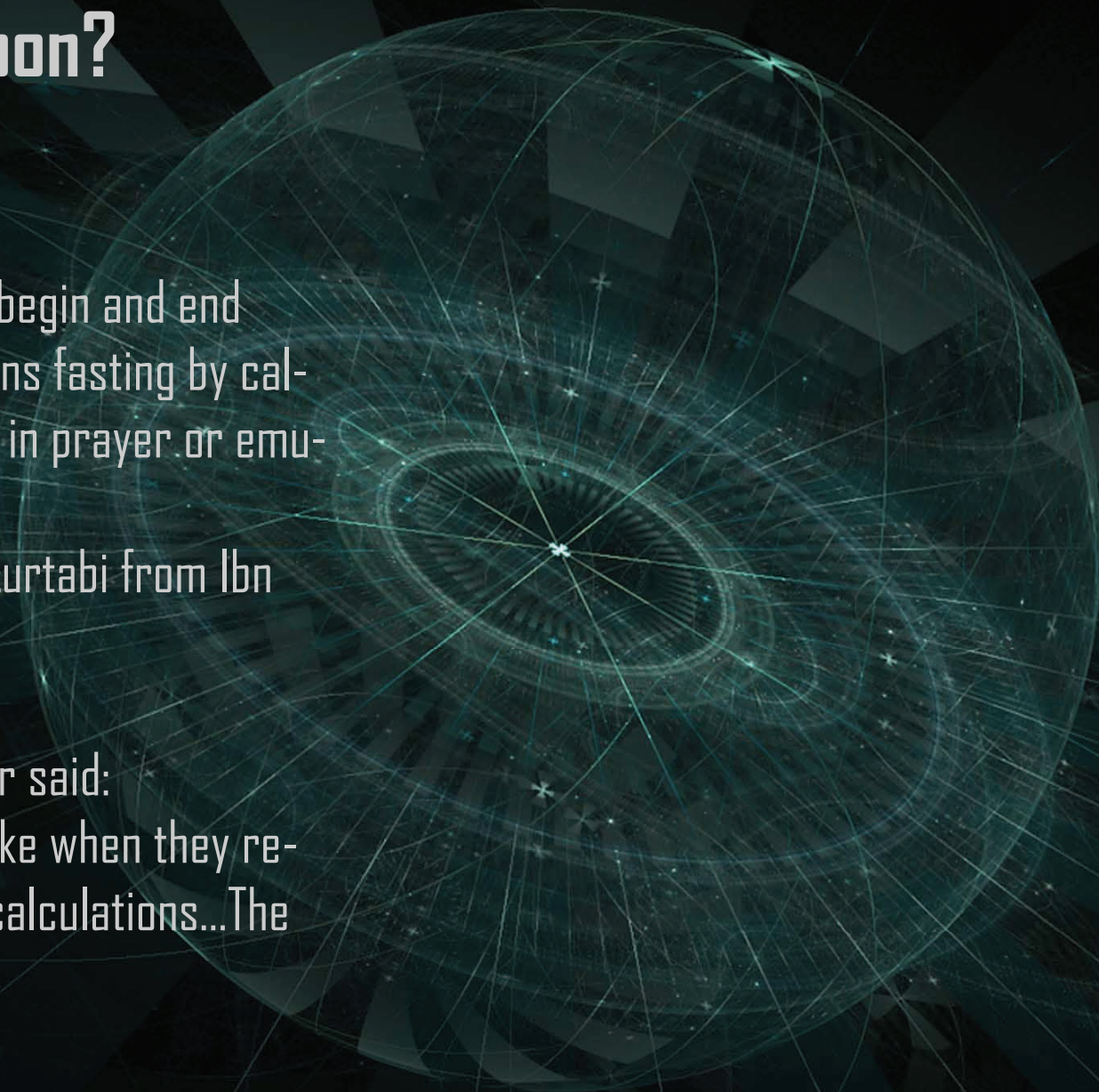
"If you see an Imam who does not begin and end fasting by way of sighting, but begins fasting by calculation, he should not be followed in prayer or emulated."

[as reported in the Tafseer of Al-Qurtabi from Ibn Nafi'e (r)]

**Ibn Al'Arabi**, the renowned scholar said:

"Some of our people made a mistake when they reported that Imam Shaf'i relied on calculations...The report is baseless and falsehood."

[Tafseer Al-Qurtabi]



# What about sticking with the majority – surely we have enough splits with the Ummah?

Some people claim that Muslims must follow what the majority are practicing. They attempt to misquote Islamic texts about "holding on to the Jama'a (group)". They misinterpret these to mean the 'Jumhoor' (majority).

Islam has obliged sticking to the jama'ah [group] of Muslims under an Imam (Khalifah).  
Islam did not oblige sticking to the majority.

Al-Bukhari narrated about Bisir ibn Obaydallah al-Hadhrami that he heard Abu Idrees al-Khoolani say that he heard Huthaifah ibn al-Yaman saying:

"The people used to ask the Prophet [s] about the good and I used to ask him about the bad in fear that it might catch me.

So I said: O Prophet of Allah! We were in times of ignorance and mischief then Allah brought us this good, so is there any mischief after this good?

**He [s] said: Yes.**

I said: Will there be any good after that mischief?

**He said: Yes, and it has smoke.**

I said: What is its smoke?

**He said: (Some) people guide without any guidance, you recognise some (from them) and deny some.**

I said: Will there be a mischief after that good?

**He said: Yes, (some) people who invite at the doors of hell, whoever accepted their invitation they throw him in it (hell).**

I said: O Prophet of Allah, describe them to us.

**He said: They are of our own skin (of our people) and talk our language.**

I said: What do you order me to do if that (matter) caught me?

**He said: Adhere to the jama'ah of Muslims and their Imam.**

I said: What if the Muslims have no jama'ah nor an Imam?

**He said: Then you abandon all those groups, even if you have to grab with your teeth the trunk of a tree till death comes to you as such."**

**What is this hadith asking us to do?...**



# What is this hadith asking us to do?



This hadith is clear that the Prophet [s] orders Muslims to adhere to the group [jama'ah] of Muslims and to adhere to their Imam, and to leave those who invite people to the doors of hell.



When the questioner asked him that in case the Muslims have no Imam and no jama'ah what he has to do in regard with those who call at the doors of hell - the Prophet [s] ordered him to abandon them.



The Prophet [s] did not ask him to disconnect himself from the Muslims or to stay away from working to establishing an Imam.

So his order is clear, disassociate yourself from all those groups who call at the doors of hell, and he emphasised the dissociation of those groups even to the extent that his isolation from them would make him clench to the trunk of a tree until death comes to him.

It means adhere to your deen by staying away from the misleading callers who are at the doors of hell.

In this hadith there is no excuse or permission (for anybody) to abandon the work for establishing a Khaleefah. The sin will remain on him if he does not work to establish a Khaleefah.

The concept of following the majority rather than following Islam is not based on evidence from the Quran and Sunnah and contradicts many evidences about enjoining the good and forbidding the evil even in the face of hardship. The Prophet [s] said: **"The master of martyrs is Hamza, and a man who stands up to a tyrant ruler and gives him advice [nasiha]- and so the ruler kills him."**



# The disease of nationalism

The disease of nationalism has affected us.

Why is it people follow only the sighting in their nation?  
Who has created the borders between these nations?

Why is it that in Delhi, people will follow the sighting in any other part of India but not of Pakistan when it is geographically closer than many parts within India itself like Kerala or Tamil Nadu.

In Pakistan people will not follow the sighting of Bangladesh but before 1971 when it was East Pakistan they would, why?

The Messenger [s] said:

**"He is not one of us who calls for nationalism or who fights for nationalism or who dies for nationalism."**



# That's why starting Ramadhan and celebrating Eid on one day is an obligation



If a Muslim country announces that the sighting of a new moon has been confirmed according to the lawful way- for the beginning of Ramadhan or for the day of Eid – then you *have* to fast or celebrate Eid.



It is forbidden to wait for a ruler or scholar in your part of the world to give you permission to fast.

Mu'az narrated: I said: O Messenger of Allah. What do you think if we had leaders who do not follow your Sunnah and do not adopt your order; in what do you order regarding their affair? The Messenger of Allah [s] said: **"There is no obedience to the one who does not obey Allah 'azza wa jall."**

Imam Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah: that **"The Messenger of Allah [s] forbade fasting on two days, the day of al-Adha and the day of al-Fitr".**