

# Correction

(Translated)

<https://www.al-waie.org/archives/article/20256>

**Thaer Salama (Abu Malik)**

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## Dear Readers:

We received the following from our esteemed brother, Engineer Thaer Salameh (Abu Malek), may Allah reward him:

Asalaamo Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi,

Regarding my article published in Al-Waie Magazine, Issues 474, 475, and 476, entitled “Dismissing the Idea that Different Zones of Visibility Determine the Beginning of Lunar Months, and Rejecting the Idea that Each Country Has Its Own Sighting of the Hilal Crescent of the Moon,” I received a comment indicating that some of its content was understood as advocating the use of astronomical calculations to reject witness testimony in matters of Hilal crescent sighting. It seems that the wording in the article was insufficient to convey my intended meaning. So I wanted to clarify the matter to remove any ambiguity and apologize for any shortcomings in the explanation.

My intention was absolutely not to suggest that a Muslim, after a ruling by a judge or the authority responsible for verifying the Hilal crescent sighting, has the right to reject that ruling based on astronomical calculations, or to refuse to act upon it, or to create controversy and confusion in society under the pretext that the testimony contradicts some astronomical data. This is not my intention, and I did not intend for my words to be understood in that way.

Instead, what I opine, and emphasize, is that fasting, breaking the fast, and the sacrifice are general Shariah rituals in which the unity of Muslims must be evident, not their division and discord.

This is as the hadith states, «الصوم يوم تصومون، والفطر يوم تفطرون، والأضحى يوم تضحون» **“The fast is the day you fast, the breaking of the fast is the day you break it, and the sacrifice is the day you sacrifice.”** This evidences the importance of Muslims unifying in these Shariah rituals, and that the matter rests with the authority responsible for overseeing and announcing them to the Ummah. If a decision is issued by someone with judicial or administrative authority, or by the body tasked with sighting the Hilal crescent and verifying testimonies, then no Muslim should deviate from it based on calculations or any other claims that lead to confusion and division among the people.

The intention of this article was not to shift from the discord among Muslims due to existing political nationalistic borders and the differing dates of fasting, and

breaking the fast across different countries, to a new discord arising from people's differing opinions on whether or not to rely on astronomical calculations, or their differing opinions on which authority to consult in this matter. The aim is to eliminate the causes of division, not to create new ones.

While I am fully aware that astronomical calculations are not valid in Shariah for establishing the sighting of the new moon that necessitates fasting or breaking the fast, any discussion of witnesses should be limited to the sighting itself, not to astronomical terminology and theories. For example, a witness might be asked about the soundness of their eyesight, the shape of the celestial body they saw: did they see it as a Hilal crescent, a circle, or some other shape? They might also inquire about the direction of the arc, the time of the sighting, before or after sunset, whether they saw it alone or with others, and other similar questions related to the description of the sighting itself. These questions help the judge or relevant authority verify the testimony.

However, basing the discussion of a witness on purely astronomical questions, such as: was the sighting before or after the conjunction? What was the elongation? What is the limit of the moon? And other such technical terms, is not something that should be entrusted to ordinary witnesses, nor is it the basis upon which Islamic Shariah Law establishes the beginning and end of Ramadan. Accepting or rejecting testimony is the prerogative of the judge or the legally authorized body, based on their assessment and investigation.

The Shariah evidence on this matter is clear. The hadith of the Prophet (saw) suffices, « صوموا لرؤيته وأفطروا لرؤيته، فإن غُيِبَ عليكم فأكملوا عدة شعبان ثلاثين » **“Fast when you see the crescent and break your fast when you see it. If it is obscured from you, then complete thirty days of Sha’ban.”** The Prophet (saw) made the ruling contingent upon sighting the Hilal crescent, and stipulated that if sighting was impossible due to clouds or similar reasons, the month should be completed as thirty days. Even though the Hilal crescent's presence behind the clouds might be known through calculation, the Lawgiver did not make this calculation the basis for the ruling. Instead, He (swt) made the ruling contingent upon sighting the Hilal crescent, or, if sighting was impossible, upon completing the month as thirty days.

Therefore, if anything in the article that could be interpreted as relying on astronomical calculations to reject testimony, or as making the sighting of the new Hilal crescent a secondary and unnecessary matter, or as prioritizing calculations over what is established by the competent authority for moon sightings, I declare that this interpretation was not intended. Any part of the statement that might have suggested this is hereby retracted, and I offer my sincere apologies.

I reiterate my apology for this error in expression and for the shortcomings in explanation and clarification. I ask Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, to grant me and all my brothers the ability to stand firm in truth, dedicated to it, fearing no blame for the sake of Allah (swt), and to unify Muslims on a common ground, and to unify their ranks under the banner of Islam, the Rayah banner of: There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (saw). And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Responsive.