

The MOON & *the* MONTH

A Fatwa on the Importance of Sighting
the Crescent for Determining
the Lunar Months

By

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SAMPLE

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Thanks to Imam Cheikh Tidiane Cisse for the permission
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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

It is with great pleasure that we present to you, a legal verdict (*Fatwa*) on one of the most controversial issues that has caused division and anxiety in the community of Muslims worldwide. This problem usually rears its head immediately before the start of the holy month of Ramadan and reaches its apex towards the end of the holy month. Each faction giving its own reasoning as to how it derives its formula for starting the month and ending it. The groups that adhere to the pronouncements of Saudi Arabia as to when to begin and end fasting are there. We also find the groups that adhere to their ancestral home sightings. Then there are the groups that prefer to use scientific calculations to derive their start and ending dates. Finally, there are the groups who chose to follow the local sightings of trusted community members or fatwa councils.

The translation of this important evaluation of what the Holy Quran and Noble Sunnah says about sighting the Hilal (New Crescent Moon) of a month, is long overdue. Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse masterfully brings forth all of the proofs and reasoning necessary to bring this contentious issue to rest. We pray that it serves as a guide for all who are interested in knowing the truth by the TRUTH.

We added a short biography of Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse at the end of the treatise. Islamic scholars of West Africa have long been ignored or overlooked when it comes to the mastery of their knowledge in all of the fields of the Islamic sciences. We hope this book will induce true seekers of knowledge to further investigate the incredible literary and scholarly brilliance of this man of Allah.

Wasalaam

Ibrahim A. Dimson

Publisher, Fayda Books

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PROLOGUE BY THE SHAYKH AND IMAM HASSAN CISSE
(ALLAH HAVE MERCY ON HIM AND BE PLEASED WITH HIM)¹

All praise is due to Allah who *“taught by the pen; He taught man what he did not know”* [AL-‘ALAQ, 4-5]. And may prayers and blessings be upon the noblest of the Messengers, our Master Muhammad, who said, *“If anyone travels a path in which he seeks knowledge, Allah will make easy for him one of the paths that lead to Paradise.”* He also said, *“The Angels lower their wings to the seeker of knowledge out of satisfaction with his action.”* He also said, *“All those in the heavens and the earth seek, even the whales in the sea, seek forgiveness for the scholar.”* He also said, *“The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like the superiority of the moon to the stars.”* And he said, *“The scholars are the heirs of the Prophets. The Prophets don’t bequeath gold or silver. Rather, they only bequeath knowledge. So, if anyone takes it, he has taken an ample portion.”* And may blessings and peace be upon his family and companions, the guided guides, as well as the generation that followed them, and all those who follow them in excellence until the Day of Judgement.

We are happy to present, to the lovers of the Shaykh—Shaykh al-Islam al-Hajj Ibrahim Niasse, *may Allah be pleased with him, cause him to be satisfied and be pleased with us on his behalf. Amin.* This important compilation, from among his prestigious works. It has been republished with the intention of keeping his legacy alive and out of eagerness to benefit and remind the believers. Allah (Exalted is He) has said: *“And remind. Indeed, reminders benefit*

¹ In the original text, the supplications *“May Allah perpetuate his honor and extend his life”* were used. The Shaykh has passed since the last printing of this book. So, I thought it more appropriate to use the formulas for the pious who have passed on.

the believers” [AL-DHARIYAT, 55]. Furthermore, there is no doubt that we are in need of listening to the voice of the Shaykh in all matters or reading his ingenious points of view on a variety of topics. This is especially the case in this time. Since he has not left us neglected, it is imperative, at every moment, that we review his precious and priceless writings through reading and discussion. That is because they all adhere to the Book and the Sunnah. And we are doubly in need of extracting lessons and benefitting from them inwardly and outwardly.

Thus, I present to you that which I am able in the time, hoping from Allah (*Blessed and Exalted is He*) that He make it possible for us to publish for the first time whatever has not been published and reprint anything that is scarce in the bookstores. For, He is the illuminated lamp for us in our journey to the Real (*Majestic is His affair*). And He is the Straight Path. If anyone holds tight to him, he is guided. And if anyone seeks refuge in him, they are saved. May Allah enable us and you to that in which there is benefit for Islam and the Muslims.

We thank all those who helped to make this work possible and facilitated this sublime effort. And we ask Allah that He reward them, on our behalf, with much good. And may He make theirs and our feet firm. And the last of our prayers is that all praise is for Allah, Lord of all the worlds. Peace

(Shaykh) Al-Hassan ‘Ali Cisse

Madinah Kaolack

3rd of Shawwal 1416 AH

25th of February, 1996 CE

FOREWORD

All praise is due to Allah by whose grace good works are completed. May blessings and peace be upon our Master Muhammad, who said, “*Fast when you see it. And break your fast when you see it.*” And may blessings and peace be upon his pure family and elect companions, as well as all those who follow them in excellence until the Day of Judgement.

To proceed:

This book is one of dozens of books written by the honorable Shaykh al-Islam and guide of mankind, the custodian of the sanctuary of the Muhammadan creed, about whom the scholars of his age testified to his vast knowledge and wise reading, and to whom the Saints of his age, the Shaykh of Shaykhs, the mine of steadfastness, the Imam of the guided Imams, the Seal of the realized folk, the support of the *Qutbs* and Gnostics, the spiritual educator of the possessors of intellect, children of gnosis and certainty, our Master and Support, our Shaykh, Mawlana Shaykh Ibrahim b. al-Hajj Abdullah Niassa al-Kawlakhi al-Senegali al-Tijani (*may Allah be pleased with him*) (1320-1395 AH).

This book, if it is small in form and length, it comprises much assistance and great benefit, resolving one of the issues in Islam of great importance to the Muslims. Indeed, I am referring to the issue of sighting the *hilal* and the Muslims being united upon the start and end of the fast in the Islamic world, to which some have called. The Shaykh has taken a definitive stance in the matter, which is clear to the reader of the book. That stance is completely entrenched in the Book and the Sunnah. And the Shaykh has clarified, in this book, that it is impossible for the Muslims to be

united in the start and end of their fast. In that, he depended upon both textual and intellectual evidence. And he consolidated his proof with authentic evidences from the Book and the Sunnah and the opinions of the notable scholars, as was his habit. Thus, his book became a perfect, curative compendium, the best resource of the subject on which to rely, until, very soon after the publication of the Shaykh's book, the legal verdicts of the fiqh councils all coincided with the opinion of the Shaykh. Thus, Allah benefited the *Ummah* by it and gave victory to the Sunnah. Peace.

The Publisher

7th of Shawwal 1416 AH

27th of February 1996

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