

## Determination of the proper date to celebrate *Eid al Adha*

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According to a *hadith* [tradition of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him (pbuh)] narrated by Ibn 'Umar, "On the *Day of Nahr* (10th of *Dhul-Hijja*), the Prophet stood in between the *Jamrat* [where the symbolic lapidation of Satan in Mina took place] during his *Hajj* which he performed and said, "**This is the greatest Day** (i.e. 10th of *Dhul-Hijjah*)." The Prophet started saying repeatedly, "**O Allah! Be Witness** (I have conveyed Your Message)." He then bade the people farewell. The people said, 'This is *Hajjat-al-Wida.*' [a farewell]"

When *Hajj* approaches, well-meaning Muslims will again raise the perennial argument about unity in the Muslim *Ummah* [community]. We will inevitably hear that *Hajj* is for the *Hajjis* [those who are performing the *Hajj* in Mecca], and we must celebrate *Eid ul Adha* on the day that they are observing it, and if we don't that would be tantamount to saying that the *Hajjis* performed their ritual on the wrong day. The TARIC Islamic Centre, the Hilal Committee of Greater Toronto and the many thousands of organizations in North America, South Asia, South Africa and Australia may celebrate *Eid ul Adha* on the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Dhul Hijjah* which may not coincide with the Saudi authorities, but is the *sunnah* [custom or practice] of Prophet Muhammad. The *bida* [perverse innovation] is to ignore the local sighting of the moon and seek out the moon's position in another locality so that one may perform an *ibadat* [worship or service to God]. It is analogous to phoning someone in Halifax to determine if the sun has set so that we in Toronto can perform *salat ul maghrib* [the sunset prayer].

Let us ask ourselves: "What is "*Eid ul Adha*"? According to many authentic *ahadith* [traditions the the Prophet] the Messenger (pbuh) asked Muslims to celebrate the two *Eids* in the second year after reaching Medina. When the Messenger (pbuh) arrived in Medina, he said: "**You had two feasting days. Allah has replaced them with two better ones: the day of Fitr** (breaking fast) **and the day of 'Nahr'** (sacrifice). " The *Hajj* was made obligatory on Muslims nine years later so that, although the sacrifice on the 10th. of *Dhul Hijjah* is associated with the *Hajj* it predates it and is not dependent on it. The important question for us in Toronto, [Canada] therefore, is: "*is Eid ul Adha the tenth of Dhul Hijjah wherever you are, or is it the day after the Hajjis have stood on Arafat?*" They are not the same. In the year 2000, the moon of *Dhul Hijjah* was sighted in Toronto during the evening of March 7. Since Saudi Arabia is eight hours ahead of us, and since the possibility of seeing the moon becomes greater as one travels west, let us assume that the moon was not seen in Mecca on the

evening of March 7, but instead a day later on March 8. For us, the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Dhul Hijjah* was Friday March 17, but for Saudi Arabia, it should be on Saturday, March 18 [they actually celebrated it in Saudi Arabia on Thursday, March 16, 2000]. Would those who are postulating so-called 'unity' urge us to then ignore our own moon sighting and our own calendar and delay *Eid ul Adha* by one day in order to correspond with the *Hajj*? With a change in the Saudi regime, they could possibly revert to actually sighting the moon rather than calculating. We await the proposals of the "*Eid ul Hajj*" propagators, if and when this happens Insha Allah.

The Prophet (pbuh), according to Tirmidhi, stayed in Medina ten years offering his sacrifice. The Messenger (pbuh) sacrificed on the tenth day in Medina. (Sunan Baihaqi). The Prophet and the Muslims followed this tradition of sacrificing on the tenth day of *Dhul Hijjah* in Medina, or wherever they were, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day. As Muslims, our worship is based on what we are told by Allah *Subhanahu wa ta'aala* [may He be Glorified and Exalted] in the Qur'an and what was practised by the Prophet (pbuh). The *sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh) was to determine the day of *Eid ul Adha* as the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Dhul Hijjah*. This was determined by the Prophet (pbuh) sighting of the crescent wherever he was on the 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> of *Dhul Qa'dah*. If, as we are told by those postulating the 'Day after Arafat' position, that *Eid ul Adha* is dependent on the *Hajj* date, then why did the Prophet (pbuh) make no effort to ascertain the *Hajj* dates in Mecca for his *Eid* celebration in Medina? After the conquest of Mecca in the seventh year of the *Hijra* [the year of immigration from Mecca to Medina which marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar] there would have been no problem in finding out when the *Hajj* was going to be since there would be ten days for a rider to travel to surrounding areas with the glorious news. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) made no attempt to know, or to inform the Muslims in the areas around Medina about when the *Hajj* was in Mecca. Every Muslim community prayed according to its own sighting of the crescent of *Dhul Hijjah*.

**Accordingly, all the scholars of Islam are unanimous that *Eid ul Adha* is on the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Dhul Hijjah* which is determined by the sighting in each locality, and NOT ON THE 10<sup>th</sup> OF *DHUL HIJJAH* IN MECCA.**

It is a *bida* to try to impose a Vatican-like dogma on the Muslim *ummah*, although the propagators would tell you that they are simply following a 'universal horizon.' Don't be fooled. In Ramadan of 1999 it was claimed that the moon was seen in Yemen and Libya, and the Muslims of those countries began fasting on December 8, 1999. Those who claim to accept any sighting anywhere in the world conveniently ignored those Muslims, opting for the 'universal sighting' of their choice. The Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) opposed every attempt to impose the moon sighting in one town over the others, even in close

proximity, when it was not seen on a clear horizon, or when the horizon was cloudy on the 29 day of the Islamic month.