

In the name of Allaah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Sheikh Muhammad bin Saleh Al Othaimen **Fatwa on Eclipse and Lunar Calendar**

The question:-

Assalaamu Alaykum WaRahmatullahi WaBarakaatuhu

If the solar eclipse happens fully or partially after the sunset in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and this eclipse was witnessed in the region west of the kingdom, what is the ruling of the following day for this country in which the solar eclipse happened? Is this the completion of the 30th day of the month? If the following month started on that day through calculation or sighting of Hilaal, what is the ruling?

Presenter: Abdul Aziz Sultan Almar'esh, General Manager responsible for watching Hilaal at the department of Astronomical research at King Abdul Aziz City for Science & Technology.

BismillahirRahmaanirRaheem Wa Alaykum AsSalaamu WaRahmatullahi WaBarakaatuhu.

If an eclipse takes place after sunset in any place on earth, it becomes impossible to have a new month the next day. This is due to the fact that scholars and experts are of the same opinion that the physical reason for the eclipse is the presence of the moon between the sun and the earth.

It is also common knowledge to the scholars and the public that a new month would not start without the sighting of Hilaal, some time after sunset.

If that is the case, then a new month would not be possible in the same night where eclipse has taken place after sunset. This is impossible based on the norms that the Almighty Allah set for the rotation of the sun and the moon.

The Almighty Allah stated in the Glorious Qur'an, (Sura Al-An'am 6:96)
"He makes the night for rest and tranquillity, and the sun and moon for the reckoning (of time): Such is the judgment and ordering of (Him), the Exalted in Power, the Omniscient."

And (in Sura Ya-Seen 36:38-40):

"And the sun runs its course for a period determined for it: that is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing. And the Moon, - We have measured for it mansions (to traverse) till it returns like the old (and withered) lower part of a date-stalk. It is not permitted to the sun to catch up the moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day: Each (just) swims along in (its own) orbit (according to Law)."

And (in Sura AshShams: 91:1-2):

"By the sun and its (glorious) splendor; By the moon as it follows it;"

This verse indicates that the moon in the night of the Hilaal, follows the sun. Therefore, if the moon follows the sun, it is consequently coming later than the sun and not possible for it (e.g. the moon) to be in the middle between the sun and the earth. So how would it jump in order for it to be between (the sun) and the earth?

Furthermore, a person who observes the movement of the sun and the moon, notices that the moon always lags the sun in its movement. Thus, you can see the moon in the first night of the month- for example the moon would be two or three meters away from the sun. The second night, the moon would move further away from the sun. The third night, the moon would still get further and further, and so on until the middle of the month. At that time, the moon would be on the opposite side of the horizon from the sun. Thus between them would be like between the East and West.

Therefore, if a person claims that the month began in the same night when an eclipse took place after sunset, is like a person who claims that the moon would be in a full-moon position in the same night when it is born. Or, like the person who claims that the sun would rise before dawn, or like a baby will show up before he gets out of the womb of his mother. All these things are impossible according to the rules and behavior that the Almighty Allah has ordained for this splendid universe, in its precise system.

As for the belief in the power of the Almighty Allah, there is no doubt that the Almighty Allah is Capable to do anything. And He is also capable to combine the two moons, and to separate them and to dim them or to make them shining in their light at any time. As He stated in the Glorious Qur'an.: (Sura Al-Qiyama 75:7-10):

"At length, when the sight is dazed, And the moon is buried in darkness. And the sun and moon are joined together,-
That Day will Man say: 'Where is the refuge?'"

But the rules that the Almighty Allah laid down concerning the sun and the moon of this world are fixed, and do not change, except in case of a miracle for a Prophet or in the honor of a Wali (closely befriended man to the Almighty Allah).

This is written by Muhammad AsSaleh AlOthaimen 30/1/1412H. Signed.