

This book shatters the myth that naked-eye sighting of the new moon and completing thirty days in the case of weather-related or other obscurities are the only two valid methods of determining the month of Ramadan. The author explains that certainty, not actual sighting, is the real objective of the Shari'ah and that the Qur'an does not mandate physical sighting. A careful analysis shows that those hadiths that seemingly require sighting actually require certainty. The assertion that all Muslim scholars prohibit the use of astronomical calculations, both in affirming or negating the month of Ramadan, is not correct. As calculation is now more accurate than naked-eye sighting, due to certain astronomical and scientific advancements, the use of calculation is the closest to the real objective of the Shari'ah and to the spirit of the hadiths.



Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Shah earned his B.A. (Hons) and M.A. (Hons) in *usul al-din* (the fundamentals of the Islamic religion) from the International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan, and his Ph.D. in comparative religions from the University of Wales, UK. He has taught at the International Islamic University, the University of Wales, the University of North Florida, St. Thomas University, and Florida Community College; served as religious director of various Muslim communities in the United States; and been the national president of the Shari'ah Scholars Association of North America, the Islamic Circle of North America, and several other Muslim organizations. Currently, Dr. Shah is executive director of the Fiqh Council of North America and religious director of the Islamic Society of Milwaukee.


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A Fiqhi Discourse

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