139757 - They differ concerning the timings of the prayer; who should they follow?

the question

I am living in Holland and there are two mosques in the town where I am staying. Each mosque gives times for the call to prayer that are different from the other mosque, in addition to the timings that we find on the Internet. Which one should we follow? Please note that the difference between them is many minutes. The month of Ramadan is coming, in sha Allah, and the timings for Fajr and Maghrib prayer are different in each mosque. What do you think we should do? Which of them should we follow? Please note that one of the mosques is run by Turks and the other by North Africans. Or should I follow the timings on the Internet?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The timings for prayer are clearly explained in the Islamic texts, and they are based on things that are visible, and can be understood by any one with a little sense.

The time for Fajr begins with the breaking of the true dawn, in which the light spreads horizontally along the horizon, to the right and left.

The time for Zuhr begins when the sun moves from the middle of the sky.

The time for ‘Asr begins when the shadow of an object is equal in length to the object itself, after the sun has past its zenith.

The time for Maghrib begins when the disk of the sun disappears completely beneath the horizon.

Al-Nawawi said: What matters is when its disk disappears completely, and after it has disappeared

completely the rays that remain do not matter; rather the time for the prayer begins even though those rays are still present. End quote. Al-Majmoo', 4/169

Ibn Taymiyah said: At that time, the fasting person may break his fast and the time when prayer is disallowed ends, and what is left of red light on the horizon does not affect any ruling.

The time for 'Isha' begins when the red glow disappears from the horizon.

For more information on the timings of prayer, please see the answer to question number 9940.

You have to try hard to recognise the signs and act in accordance with them. If that is too difficult for you, then there is nothing wrong with following one of the mosques, if you trust the religious commitment and sincerity of the people in charge.

And Allah knows best.