

start of Ramadan or the beginning of the hajj pilgrimage season at the end of the year. One lawsuit of this sort was brought by a member of the Hebronite Hammouri family against a member of the Jerusalem Daoudi family in July 1892, at the beginning of the Muslim month of Dhu al-Hijja. *Sayyid* Hammouri claimed he had sold to the Jerusalemite a silver watch one month earlier, and that the two had agreed that *Sayyid* Daoudi would pay the price of the watch, fifty kuruş, after one month, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Dhu al-Hijja. The *sayyid* Daoudi did not deny the sale of the watch; he denied that the day of the court case was the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month, the agreed-upon day for payment of the debt. Witnesses were brought in to testify what day it was, by means of recalling their sighting of the new moon the previous week, which they did in great detail.<sup>340</sup> The judge ruled that Daoudi's debt had been proven, and that the new moon had been observed. The recorded outcome of the case was that *Sayyid* Daoudi was ordered to pay fifty kuruş to *sayyid* Hammouri. The effective outcome of the case was to document the sighting of the moon and the beginning of the hajj pilgrimage season.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>340</sup> "Last Saturday evening, after the sunset on Friday, after the sunset call to prayer, four minutes after we left the mosque after sunset prayers we saw the new moon of Dhī al-Hijje [...] rising from the west toward the north, at half an arm's length [above the horizon], and we were in an elevated place [at the time]..."

<sup>341</sup> HR 14 / 148 / 476 (7 Dhu al-Hijja 1309 / 3 July 1892) See also HR 14 / 130 / 409 (29 Ramadan 1309 / 27 April 1892). This case follows the same pattern, except the dispute is over fifty kuruş paid for an *abaya* (a men's gown). The date was again confirmed by witnesses who testified to their citing of the new moon, which also signified the end of Ramadan and the beginning of 'Eid al-Fitr.