

*Maulana
Wahiduddin
Khan*

In the book, **500 Most Influential Muslims of 2009** published by Georgetown University, Washington DC, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has been called “Islam’s Spiritual Ambassador to the world.” He has been internationally recognized for his contributions to world peace, having received, among others, the Demiurgus Peace International Award, the Padma Bhushan, the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavna Award and the National Citizen’s Award.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was born in Azamgarh (U.P.) in 1925, and educated at an Islamic seminary. From his very childhood, he showed a voracious appetite for modern knowledge, spending entire days in the library. Well versed in both classical Islamic learning and modern science, his research led him to conclude that the need of the hour was to present Islamic teachings in the modern or contemporary idiom. His life since then has been devoted to addressing the contemporary mind and presenting Islam to the world as a complete ideology of peace in the modern idiom.

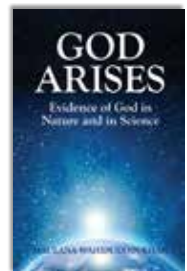
“... in the fourteen hundred years of Islamic history, innumerable books on Islam have appeared. There are just a few books calling mankind to God which are clearly distinguishable from the rest because of the clarity and force with which they make their appeal. Without doubt, this book is one of that kind.”
—Al-Ahram, (Cairo)

His first book, *Naye Ahad Ke Darwaze Par*, or ‘On the Threshold of a New Era’ was the result of his exhaustive study. He elaborated upon this in his next work, *Ilme Jadid Ka Challenge*, or ‘Islam and Modern Challenges’, which was later published as ‘God Arises’. This book is accepted as the standard Islamic position on modern thought and has been incorporated in the curricula of universities in many Arab countries. It

has been translated into various languages, such as English, Arabic, Malay, Turkish, Hindi, Malayalam and Sindhi. Its Arabic version has been published under the title of *Al-Islam Yatahadda* and has become popular in the Arab world.

The culmination of his research was his book, *Al Islam*, which has been published in English as ‘The Vision of Islam.’ In it he presents in the modern idiom the interpretation of the Islamic scriptures based on peace and spirituality. He has since authored over 200 books, booklets and leaflets on prophetic wisdom and peaceful co-existence in a multi-ethnic society, giving the correct interpretation of the Islamic scriptures such as ‘*Islam-The Voice of Human Nature*’, ‘*Islam Rediscovered*’, ‘*Quran for All Humanity*’, ‘*Quranic Wisdom*’ and ‘*From the Spiritual Tree*’.

To give full expression to these positive ideas, the Maulana established the *Islamic Centre* at New Delhi in 1970. Subsequently, the organ of the Centre, ‘*Al-Risala*’, the

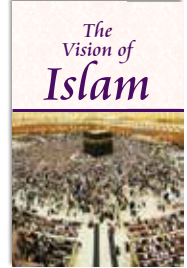


"This book offers an explanation of the teachings of Islam in a contemporary style and aims at providing such an interpretation of Islam as will address the modern mind."

—Maulana Wahiduddin Khan,
The Vision of Islam

monthly magazine, launched in Urdu in 1976, continues to be published till today. This journal, consisting almost entirely of his own articles, quickly acquired a wide circulation throughout the Urdu-speaking world, and has done much to make people understand the peaceful face of Islam, to awaken in Muslims a new awareness of their social responsibilities and to promote positive thinking and action. The first issues of the English and Hindi versions of *Al-Risala*

were launched in February 1984, and December 1990 respectively. The English version continues to be published under the title of 'The Spiritual Message' and now is being published as the 'Spirit of Islam'.



Presenting Islam as a complete ideology of peace, he presents to the world the true face of Islam based, as it is, on peace, tolerance, pluralism and co-existence and helps people understand their purpose in life by explaining the creation plan of God. Besides his books numbering over 200 he has written thousands of articles for national and international dailies and magazines and given thousands of lectures in Urdu and English that have been preserved for posterity. This material presents Islam 'as it is' as exemplified in the early period of Islam. One who wants to understand Islam has simply to refer to this material for guidance.

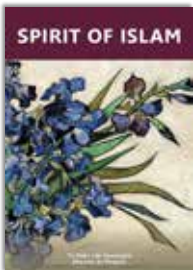
He has analyzed the issue and presented the counter ideology—the ideology of peace—in his hundreds of articles and many books, such as 'The Ideology of Peace', 'True Jihad', 'Islam and Peace', 'The Prophet of Peace: Teachings of The Prophet Muhammad' published by Penguin Books, 'Islam and World Peace' and 'Political Interpretation of Islam'.

Quoting UNESCO's dictum that as violence begins from the minds of men, it can only be eliminated at the level of the mind; the Maulana says that the jihadist mentality can be re-directed towards peace by projecting the ideology of peace based on the Quran and Hadith. Once they appreciated that their

understanding of Islam based on its political interpretation has nothing to do with Islam, they give it up on their own. After reading his books, many Kashmiris and Pakistanis with jihadist mindsets have left off violence and are working in the fields of education, peace and interfaith. He says that this material has to be spread globally in various languages for the issue to be resolved once and for all.

"Spirit of Islam aspires to address modern, individual minds to provide intellectual food for common issues that confront man, like life and death, success and failure, suffering and evil, peace and spirituality and the meaning and purpose of existence."

—Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, (New Delhi)



To carry on his mission of peace, the Maulana established *CPS International*, Center for Peace and Spirituality, in 2001 at New Delhi, India as a non-political, non-profit and non-governmental organization. As is apparent from its name, the organization aims to promote and reinforce the culture of peace through mind-based spirituality. The center helps individuals to re-engineer their minds towards a culture of peace by living God-oriented lives. The center believes that when such positive, spiritual individuals prevail in society, it will result in a peaceful world.

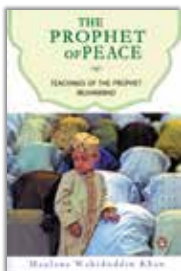


Maulana

Wahiduddin Khan, third from left, planting an olive tree in Jerusalem during a peace conference of all religions in 1995.

During interfaith efforts he explains that the Quran is a divine book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the first quarter of the seventh century. The Quran does not claim to be a superior book or a complete book. All the books sent by God were originally one and the same. The only merit that can be claimed for the Quran is that it is a book of divine revelation faithfully preserved as regards text and language in its original form. This gives the Quran authenticity and credibility, so that one may study it with the conviction that it God's preserved Message for mankind.

The Maulana explains that the message of the Quran is to make man aware of the Creation Plan of God or what is the purpose of man's life on earth. According to the divine plan, man was created as an eternal being. The Creator divided man's life into two parts, the pre-death period and the post-death period. The pre-death period is the testing period and the post-death period is the period for reward. The pre-death period is temporary, while the post-death period is to last for all eternity. Man's test is basically a freedom-based test. One who misuses his freedom will be deprived of God's blessings and one who uses his freedom properly will be rewarded with eternal paradise. The Quran gives all the necessary details of this divine scheme.



Containing one hundred and fourteen chapters, the original text of the Quran is preserved in Arabic and its translation is available in all the major languages including English. Although written originally in Arabic, the Quran has been made accessible, thanks to translations, to those who have no knowledge of Arabic. While no substitute for the original, translations of Al-Quran spread the word of God far beyond the

"The slim and handy book (published by Penguin) is a timely rebuttal to the jihadist mentality and a guide to those who wish to understand Islam better."

– The Times of India (ST)

Arabic speaking peoples to a far broader spectrum of humanity, thus, serving the unique purpose of conveying the eternal guidance of God to all mankind.

While many translations of the Arabic preserved Quran were available, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan felt that a translation and commentary of the Quran in the modern scientific idiom was still needed. He translated the Quran into Urdu along with its commentary entitled *Tazkirul Quran*. This is also available in Hindi (*Pavitra Quran*) and in Arabic (*Al Tazkirul Qaweem fi Tafseeril Quran il Hakeem*). English has become the truly international language with over 75% of the world population understanding it. The Quran Complex, Madinah, Saudi Arabia conducted research on the impact of the various translations of the Quran in English. They concluded:

“In spite of there being 47 English translations of the Quran, none has received the acceptance of the modern world.” —*Bibliography of the Translations and the Meanings of the Quran in English (1649–2002)*

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan with his team worked tirelessly to translate the Quran and commentary into English, which is published under the title, ‘*The Quran*’. The feedback about this translation is that it is lucid, easy to understand and in contemporary English. Some of the feedback is given below:

“Simple and direct, the book being extremely readable reaches out to a large audience, Muslims as well as non-Muslim” —*Review of The Quran (English) by the Speaking Tree, Times of India, 16 May 2010*

Millions of copies of ‘*The Quran*’ have been distributed worldwide and has received world-wide acceptance. It is considered easy to understand. Besides English and Urdu, its translations are now available in Braille (English), German, Spanish, French, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu and Malayalam and its commentary in Arabic, Hindi, Telugu and Marathi. Efforts are on to translate it into all international and Indian languages.

The Maulana’s vision is to facilitate the entry of the message of peace and spirituality into each and every home in the world and to usher in an era of global peace and unity. Through the CPS and its global chapters, the Maulana has prepared a team of Ambassadors of Peace and Spirituality to spread the message of peace to the world. He has done this by re-engineering their minds, using the simple formula:

“Change yourself through spirituality by living a God-oriented life and you will be able to change the world.”

The Maulana, who is well traveled, and the recipient of several national and International awards, has made a very great contribution to world peace in his tireless campaign to avert the danger of a nuclear conflict between various countries. To this end he put forward a proposal for a worldwide movement for nuclear disarmament at a peace forum held at Zug in Switzerland in 2002. On that occasion, he was awarded the Demiurgus Peace International Award by the Nuclear Disarmament Forum AG. The award was given to acknowledge his outstanding achievements in strengthening peace among nations and for his efforts to develop a complete ideology of peace and present Islamic teachings that address the modern

mind. He has also been awarded the title of Ambassador of Peace by the International Federation for World Peace, Korea.

Some of the national awards that he has been honoured with are the Padam Bhushan, the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavna Award, the National Integration Award, the Communal Harmony Award, the Diwaliben Mohan Lal Mehta Award, the National

"All I can say is that I found it more readable than any translation I had read earlier. I recommend it to Muslims and non-Muslims alike."

– Khushwant Singh, *Hindustan Times*, January 09, 2010



Amity Award, the Dilli Gaurav Award, the FIE Foundation Award, the Urdu Academy Award, the Aruna Asaf Ali Sadbhavna Award and the National Citizen's Award which was presented by Mother Teresa.

The book, *The 500 Most influential Muslims of 2009*, published by Georgetown University, Washington DC has named him "Islam's Spiritual Ambassador to the World." His approach, the book points out, is "popular among Indians, both Muslim and non-Muslim." Maulana Wahiduddin Khan envisages a peaceful world. His vision is that the message of peace and spirituality enter each and every home on the globe and re-engineer individual minds towards positivity. The Maulana believes that when spiritual individuals congregate in sufficient numbers, it will result in a peaceful society.

The Maulana, through the ambassadors of peace – CPS International and its partners – is carrying on his peace mission at a global level. Under the Maulana's patronage and inspired by his spiritual wisdom, the Ambassadors of Peace are taking the message globally, using every available medium such as one-on-one interactions, lectures, seminars, conferences; printed material: books, booklets, leaflets, articles, periodicals; audio-visual material: audio and video lectures online and through mp3s, mpeg4, etc.; television, radio, online; etc.

The ambassadors of peace have made it their life's mission to take the message of peace and spirituality to every corner of the globe so that it reaches each and every home and ushers in an era of global peace and spirituality.

To find out more about Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, visit: www.cpsglobal.org, www.quraninternational.net, www.goodwordbooks.com and www.alrisala.org.



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