

ISSUES OF IJTIHAD

ISLAMIC WISDOM FOR CHANGING TIMES

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Issues of Ijtihad

Islamic Wisdom for Changing Times

MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

Translated and Edited by
Prof Farida Khanam
Dr Rajat Malhotra
Maulana Farhad Ahmad

Goodword Books

First published 2026

This book is copyright free

This book is the English translation of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's Urdu book entitled *Masail-e-Ijtihad*.

Goodword Books

A-21, Sector 4, Noida-201301, Delhi NCR, India

Tel. +91 120 4131448, Mob. +91 8588822672

info@goodwordbooks.com

www.goodwordbooks.com

CPS International

Centre for Peace and Spirituality International

1, Nizamuddin West Market, New Delhi-110 013, India

Mob. +91-9999944119

info@cpsglobal.org

www.cpsglobal.org

Center for Peace and Spirituality USA

391 Totten Pond Road,

Suite 402, Waltham MA 02451, USA

Mob. +1 617 960 7156

email: info@cpsusa.net

CONTENTS

TAQLID AND IJTIHAD	Anachronistic Attitude	42
TAQLID AND IJTIHAD	8 Criticism and Ijtihad	44
Contemporary Muslim Society	9 Choosing the Battlefield of Badr	47
Respect for Humanity	11 The Consequences of	
Consideration of Circumstances	12 Ignoring Criticism	48
The Wisdom of Gradual	Principles Over Personalities	51
Reform	14 The Benefits of Criticism	53
Change in the Field of Action	17 True Standards and	
Stages of Hadith Study	19 False Standards	56
The Importance of Ijtihad	20 The Need for a Revolutionary	
What is Ijtihad?	21 Mindset	57
Intellectual Crisis	23 Two Types of Ijtihad:	
The Ability to Reassess	23 General and Special	58
Compilation of Fiqh During the	The Need for an Additional	
Era of Muslim Power	27 Qualification	59
No Example Available	27	
The Issue of Blasphemy		
Against the Prophet	29	
The Power of Peace	33	
The Traditional Fiqh is		
Insufficient	36	
Utilization of Modern		
Opportunities	38	
Military Mindset and		
Peaceful Means	41	
	ISSUE OF IJTIHAD	
	INTERPRETATION BASED	
	ON PERSONAL INSIGHT	66
	Interpretation Through	
	Reflection	73
	DIALOGUE, NOT WARS	78
	Double Mistake	82
	Summary of the Discussion	87
	DIVINE REASONING	89

CONTENTS

A Simple Example	93	Knowledge without	
The Initial Explosion		Realisation	131
of the Universe	95	Difference of Perspective	134
The Example of Pairs	98	Dichotomous Thinking	136
CHOICE BEFORE		Sign of Wisdom	138
PAKISTAN	101	Second Chance	139
INSIGHT BORN OF FAITH	110	Difficult Becomes Easy	140
On the Occasion of		Harm Caused by	
Confrontations	111	Wrong Thinking	141
The Starting Point	112	Lesser Evil	144
Tolerating Insult	113	The Strength of Forbearance	145
No Premature Action	115	Peace of Mind	147
Avoiding Confrontation	116	Protection of Purpose	151
Concession to Others	117	Equalising Matters	152
Secrecy	118	Importance of	
Accepting the Status Quo	119	Understanding Context	154
Ease in difficulty	120	Problem of Memory	156
Strategic Retreat	121	Contentment and Progress	157
The Policy of Gradualness		Unilateral Adjustment	159
in Reform	122	Ease in Difficulty	160
Making Concessions as the		Mistake of Generalisation	162
Situation Requires	123	Practical Method	164
Future Vision	126	Result-Oriented Action	165
THE ART OF CLEAR		Mental Tension,	
THINKING		Brainstorming	166
THE ART OF CLEAR		Peace for what Purpose?	167
THINKING	130	Thinking Behind the Times	168

CONTENTS

The Secret of Reform	170	From Revenge to Violence	214
Lack of Right Thinking	172	War is Outdated	215
Secondary Position	173	Against the Spirit of the Age	215
Media Culture	174	The Need for Tolerance	216
Contrarian Thinking	177	The Benefits of Peace	217
Rising Above the Situation	179	The Need to Change	
Critique is Not Something Bad	180	Muslim Policy	217
A Better Gift for A Child	181		
Secret of Unity	182	THE CULTURE OF	
Opportunity with Problem	183	PEACE	
Successful Marital Life	183	WHAT IS PEACE?	222
BELIEF IN GOD AND		Peace is the Religion of	
SCIENCE	186	the Universe	223
RELIGION AND SCIENCE	191	The Quran, A Book of Peace	224
The First Group:		Peace Versus Violence	226
Bertrand Russell	192	Reconciliation is Best	227
The Second Group: Einstein	194	No to 'Corruption in the Land'	229
A Preserved Religion:		Ending Conspiracies	230
A Divine Blessing	199	No Extremism	231
CONTENTMENT: THE		Killing One Person is	
SECRET TO SUCCESS	201	Like Killing All Humanity	232
What is Terrorism?	208	Dousing the Fires of Violence	233
Open Condemnation		Strife After Reform	234
is Essential	209	Avoidance, Not Confrontation	235
The Case of Failure	211	Patience, The Secret	
Religion is in Danger	211	of Success	236

Avoid Conflict	238	Divine Warning, Not Human	
War Only for Defense	239	Oppression	270
The Path of Patience		The Power of Silence	271
wins God's Help	240	Violence, A Result of	
Turning your Enemy into		Frustration	272
your Friend	241	Positive Status Quoism	273
A Result of our Own Actions	242	No Justification for Violence	274
Anger is a Weakness	244	Solving Enmities	275
Remaining Patiently Steadfast			
on the Truth	245	THOUGHTS WORTH	
The Price of Peace	246	CONSIDERING	
Accepting Offers of Peace	249	HAJR JAMEEL	278
Greater Provision	250	Reactive versus Reflective	
Peace, The Means for Security	251	Response	288
Mercy for Humanity	253	FROM WAR TO PEACE	291
<i>Jihad</i> , A Peaceful Activity	255	Peace for the Sake of Peace	295
Peace at all Costs	256	The Age of War is Over	295
God's Name is Peace	258	TRUE COMPANIONSHIP	298
Who is Strong?	258	In the Prophet's Company	301
The Formula for Social Peace	259	Extended Companionship	303
Salvation in Silence	260		
Do not Confront the Enemy	262		
The Method of Non-Violence	263		
The Limits of Dissension	264		
Peaceful Means are Better	266		
Flexibility, Not Rigidity	267		
Peaceful Citizens	268		
Waiting is also a Solution	269		

TAQLID
AND
IJTIHAD

TAQLID AND IJTIHAD

The human mind can be categorized into two types: an imitative mind (*taqlid*) and a mind guided by independent reasoning (*ijtihad*). The distinction between these two can be described as follows: an imitative mind is a closed mind, while an independent reasoning mind is an open mind. The intellectual journey of an imitative person comes to a halt at a certain point, whereas the intellectual journey of an independent reasoning person continues to progress, ceasing only with death. This distinction can be better understood through an example.

Shakespeare was a great writer of the English language, who passed away in 1616. On the other hand, George Bernard Shaw, an English writer of a later period, was born in 1856—there was a gap of about three hundred years between their periods of activity. In the history of English literature, Bernard Shaw holds a lesser position as compared to Shakespeare. Referring to this, Bernard Shaw famously remarked:

“I am smaller in stature than Shakespeare, but I stand upon his shoulders.”

This statement reflects an independent reasoning approach. Such a way of thinking fosters broad-mindedness and courage. In a society where this attitude prevails, the journey of intellectual evolution continues unhindered. Each generation adds to the intellectual heritage of its predecessors and further develops it to pass on to future generations.

Contemporary Muslim Society

Now, consider Muslim society. In the present era, the process of intellectual evolution among Muslims has almost come to a standstill. The primary reason for this stagnation is the dominance of imitative thinking (*taqlidi*), while the practice of independent reasoning (*ijtihadi*) has been abandoned, and treated almost as a vice to be avoided. Generally, there is a widespread belief that all knowledge and research have already been accomplished by the scholars of the past (*salaf*). The prevailing notion is that our only task is to read their books and follow their conclusions. However, this mindset creates a permanent obstacle to the intellectual progress.

Muslims today face two possible approaches in their way of thinking:

1. “My stature is lesser than that of my predecessors, but I stand upon their shoulders.”
2. “My stature is smaller than that of my predecessors, and therefore, I lie at their feet.”

A living community cannot remain confined to approaches shaped by earlier circumstances. While it must honour its intellectual inheritance, it must also have the courage to think anew in the light of the Quran and Sunnah, so that their guidance may be meaningfully applied to contemporary conditions. This is the true spirit of ijtiḥād.

The tragedy of present-day Muslim society is that imitation has too often taken the place of reflection. As a result, Muslims have failed to understand changing circumstances and have remained largely unaware of the opportunities offered by the modern age. The need today is not to abandon the past, but to stand upon it and move forward.

Ijtiḥād is the effort to discover the guidance of Islam for new situations with wisdom, realism, and a peaceful approach. It teaches that criticism is not an enemy, but a means of growth. It opens the door to constructive action, respect for humanity, and the renewal of Islamic thought in every age. The present book is an attempt to understand this principle in relation to the modern age.

Goodword Books
CPS International

PDF

ISBN 978-81-69327-02-2



9 788169 327022