Ramadan Daily Quran Study, by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2023

Adapted and edited from *The Religion of Islam* by Maulana Muhammad Ali Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore (UK)

## Fast 8: Exercise of Judgment or *Ijtihād* — Schools of Jurisprudence

Fast 8

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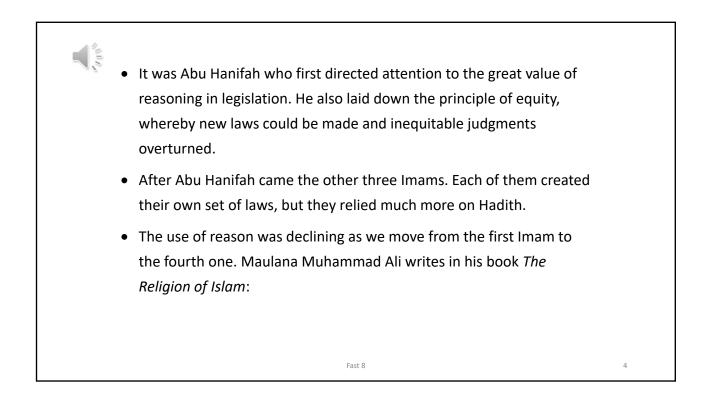
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• In the second century of the Islamic era, the four great jurists (Fuqaha) who arose codified Islamic law among Sunni Muslims according to the needs of their time. Their names are very well known: 1. Imam Abu Hanifah (died 150 A.H. / 767 C.E.) ابو حنيفه مالک (died 179 A.H. / 796 C.E.) 2. Imam Malik 3. Imam Shafi'i شافعى (died 204 A.H. / 820 C.E.) 4. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal احمد ابن حنبل (died 241 A.H. / 855 C.E.)



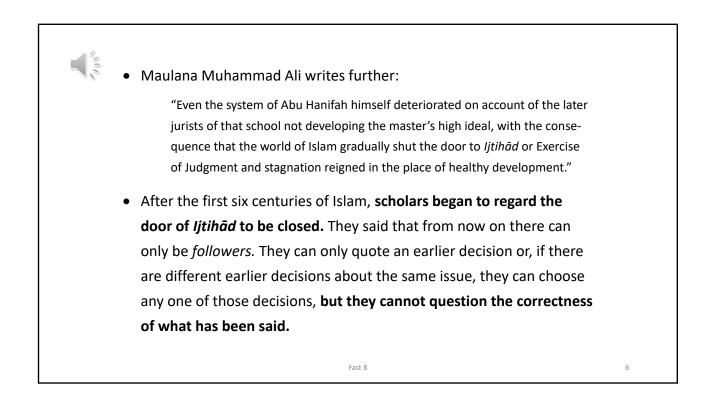
- Abu Hanifah's School is the most widely followed in the Muslim world and it is the one that Muslims in the Indian subcontinent follow.
  Imam Abu Hanifah based his system largely on the Quran, and on very few Hadith reports since in his time Hadith reports had not yet been compiled into collections.
- Later on when Hadith was collected, and was more in use, the followers of the Hanafi system introduced into it more such reports.
- The development of this system on the right lines would have resulted in immense benefit to the Muslim world. **But this did not happen.**





"Ahmad ibn Hanbal made very little use of reasoning, and as he depended almost entirely on Hadith, the result was that he admitted even the weakest report. It would thus appear that from the system of Abu Hanifah, who applied reasoning very freely and sought to deduce all questions from the Quran by the help of reason, the system of Ahmad ibn Hanbal is distinguished by the fact that it makes the least possible use of reason, and thus there was a marked falling off in the last of the four great jurists from the high ideals of the first, so far as the application of reason to matters of religion is concerned." (chapter on *ljtihād*)







 On the contrary, the Holy Quran recognizes independence of opinion for one and all, and requires that absolute obedience be given only to God and His Messenger. Independence of thought for every Muslim is recognized in Islam by allowing him to differ with all except the Quran and Hadith. And since the ultimate test of the correctness of Hadith is the Quran itself, the conclusion is evident that Islam allows independence of thought subject only to one thing, that the principles laid down in the Quran are not contravened.



