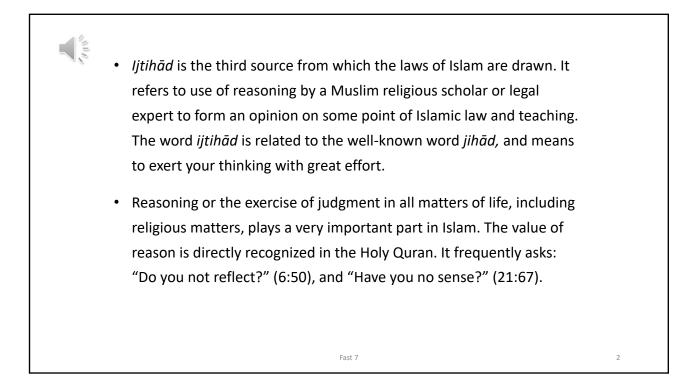
Ramadan Daily Quran Study, by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2023

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

Fast 7: Exercise of Judgment or *Ijtihād* — basic principles

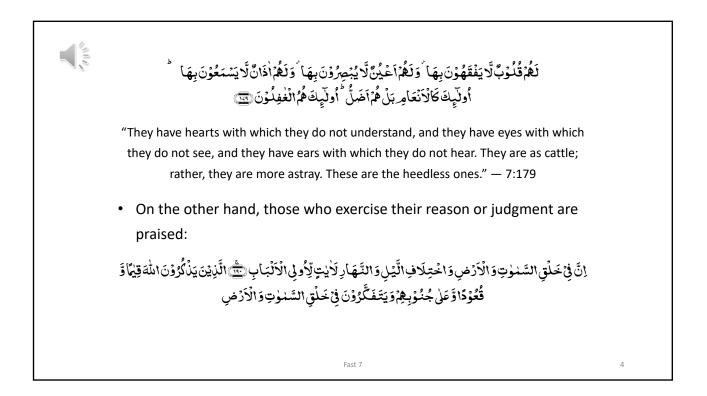
Fast 7

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- The Quran points out a weakness in some people that: "They are a people who do not understand" (8:65). It says that God has created signs "for a people who reflect;" (16:11), "for a people who have sense (2:164)", and "for a people who understand" (6:98).
- In the above quotations, the Arabic word used for "reflect", is *tafakkur*, for "sense" is *'aql*, and for "understand" is *fiqh*. This indicates the different aspects of powers of thinking granted to human beings.
- Those who do not use their reasoning faculty are compared to animals:

Fast 7

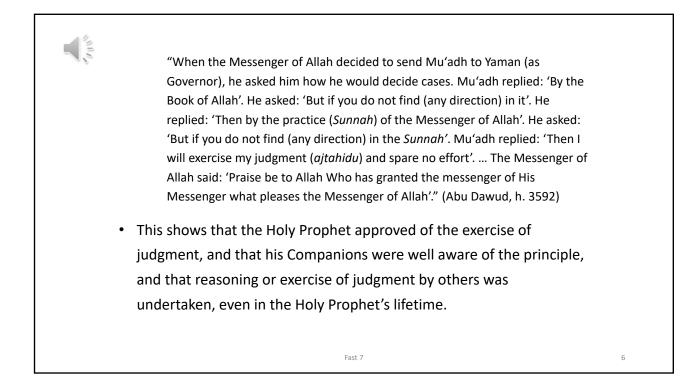




"In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day, there are surely signs for **those who have understanding**, those who remember Allah standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides, and **reflect** on the creation of the heavens and the earth..." —3:190–191

 The exercise of judgment (*ljtihād*) is recognized in Hadith as the means by which a decision may be arrived at when there is no direction in the Quran or Hadith. The following report is regarded as the basis of *ljtihād* in Islam:





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 After the Holy Prophet's death, *Ijtihād* had to be used more and its need became greater. The Caliphs had a council to which every important case was referred, and its decision by a majority of votes was accepted by the Caliph and the Muslim public. It is written in a book on the history of the Caliphs, *Tarikh-ul-Khulafa*, by Imam Jalalud-Din Suyuti:

"When a case came before Abu Bakr (the first Caliph), he used to consult the Book of Allah; if he found anything in it by which he could decide, he did so; if he did not find it in the Book, and he knew of a practice or saying of the Messenger of Allah, he decided according to it; and if he was unable to find anything there, he used to question Muslims if they knew of any decision of the Prophet in a matter of that kind,

Fast 7

and a company of people thus gathered round him, every one of whom stated what he knew from the Prophet ... but if he was unable to find anything in the practice of the Prophet, he gathered the leaders of the people, and the best of them, and consulted them, and if they agreed upon one opinion (by a majority) he decided accordingly." (See p. 20 in *The History of the Khalifahs*, translated by A. Clarke)

• The same rule was followed by Hazrat Umar, the second Caliph, who took care always to gather the most learned Companions for consultation. When there was a difference of opinion, the decision of the majority was acted upon. Besides this council, there were great individual teachers, such as Hazrat Aishah, Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar and others, whose opinion was highly revered. Decisions were given and laws made and promulgated subject only to the one condition that they were neither contrary to the Holy Quran nor to the practice of the Holy Prophet.