



## PHILOSOPHY OF DAWAH IN ISLAM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MAULANA WAHEED U DIN AND JAVED AHMED GHAMIDI'S THOUGHTS

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### ABSTRACT

*This research paper describes the comparative analysis of two different schools of thought of Maulana Waheed ud din Khan and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi. Both are contemporary renowned scholars. Their period of life and the present is famous for fanaticism, extremism, Jihad (Qitaal), and old Islamic traditional and conventional thoughts in the Muslim world. An all-around decline of rationalism in our Islamic religious thoughts is visible which has so-far unpleasant consequences nationally and globally being an ummah. In such a suffering state of affairs, both scholars appeared as reconstructionists, progressives, and reformists in religious thoughts. Over decades of detailed research on the Quran and Hadith, both Scholars widely wrote on different socio-political and moral issues addressed by Islam in the present life affairs and hereafter. Many books and articles are written giving a counter-narrative against the old rigid conventional narrative of Islamic thoughts and also opening the way for further constructive debate. Both focused on moderation,*



*progress, and justice for the purpose to oust society from the quagmire of social vices. They adopted a rational approach rather than a traditional methodology to have a true understanding of causes and remedies for religious social pathologies. In this line, they imparted the concept of the development of humanism, morality, and interfaith harmony.*

**Keywords:** *Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Maulana Waheeduddin Khan, Religious thoughts, Reconstruction*

## **Introduction**

Maulana Waheeduddin Khan and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi are two prominent Islamic scholars who have contributed significantly to the understanding and interpretation of Islam in the modern context. They have garnered attention for their progressive and rational approaches to religious teachings, focusing on contextualizing Islamic principles for the contemporary world. Maulana Waheeduddin Khan (born on February 1, 1925, in Azamgarh, India) is a renowned Islamic scholar, peace activist, and author. He is the founder of the Islamic Center in New Delhi, India, and is known for his efforts to promote peace, interfaith understanding, and a modern understanding of Islam.

Maulana Khan's teachings emphasize the importance of dialogue and peaceful coexistence among people of different faiths. He has written extensively on various topics related to Islam, spirituality, and social issues, with an aim to counter extremism and promote a balanced understanding of religion. Some of his notable works include "Islam and Peace," "The Prophet of Peace," and "The Ideology of Peace."

Throughout his life, Maulana Waheeduddin Khan has been an advocate for the relevance of Islamic teachings in the modern world. He believes in the compatibility of Islam with science and rationality, and he has stressed the need for Muslims to adopt a forward-looking approach while adhering to their religious principles. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi (born on April 18, 1951, in Lahore, Pakistan) is a well-known Islamic scholar, theologian, and jurist. He is the founder of the Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences, which aims to provide a rational and contextual understanding of Islamic teachings.

Ghamidi's approach to Islam is often described as modernist and rationalist. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the historical and cultural contexts in which the Quran and Hadith were revealed, and he believes that a literalist interpretation can lead to misunderstandings. He advocates for re-evaluating some traditional interpretations and practices in light of the Quran and Sunnah.

One of Ghamidi's significant contributions is his work on Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh),



where he has proposed a framework called "Ijtihad-based jurisprudence," which encourages scholars to derive legal rulings based on reasoning and the objectives of Islamic law. He has also written extensively on topics such as Islamic ethics, governance, and human rights.

Ghamidi's rational approach has attracted both admirers and critics. While some appreciate his efforts to promote a more nuanced and contextual understanding of Islam, others consider his ideas as departures from traditional interpretations.

Both Maulana Waheeduddin Khan and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi have sought to bridge the gap between traditional Islamic teachings and the modern world, encouraging Muslims to engage in critical thinking, promote tolerance, and contribute positively to society. Their works have contributed to ongoing discussions about the role of Islam in contemporary life and its compatibility with modern values. Contemporary civilization, primarily scientific intellectual atheism, has responded best to the challenges. The best examples are 'Religion and the Challenge of Modern Science,' 'Ideology of Islam,' 'Religion and Science, and 'Expression of Religion.' It is a new science in response to a scientific challenge. However, more work is needed, given the challenge of current cosmology (Nadvi, 2019).

Through his literature, he mentioned the afterlife, gave a sense of God's greatness, and said that this is real prophetic preaching. The war fanaticism of some emotional Muslims and the soulless hatred of the general Muslim scholars towards the West is a kind of duplicity and hypocrisy in the behavior of Muslims. Maulana's Da'wa philosophy for them is to love and sympathize with those who are offered da'wah. And the ancient jurisprudential framework of Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam should be abandoned and Muslims should consider the whole world as Dar al-Dawa and peacefully deal with the affairs of life.

Maulana's idea is that the actual addressee of religion is the individual, not the community. And no change in the community can come without the evolution of the individual. Muslims consider power a gift from God, so running a movement targeting it is absurd. In contrast to slogans like "Revival of Islam" or "Dominance of Islam," he popularized the concept of da'wah activism. He says that the responsibility of Dawah is imposed on every Muslim in the same way it was set on the Prophet (Nadvi, 2019).

My Acquaintance with Javed Ahmed Ghamdi was a little later. I studied various schools of thought and got an initial introduction from "Ishraq" and the institution of "Al-Mawrid". Later, I was introduced to the monthly magazine "Al-Shari'a," so I got more information about Mr. Ghamdi. After that, I read Ghamdi Sahib's books "Burhan" and "Maqamat". Thus, the essential aspects of Ghamdi Sahib's thought have become clear. I get a lot from his lectures.

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Because of Ghamdi Sahib, Farahi's Islamic thought had emerged globally; before that, it was limited to a few academic institutions and some madrasas. Along with the use of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan in *Tabeer-e-deen*, he also presented Minhaj Farahi and Islahi with a loud voice. Although Khan Sahib is not one of the gleaners of Fiqr Farahi, he has also been a student of Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi and studied at Madrasah al-Islah. However, he criticizes and writes about Fikr Farahi's theory of order) in the Qur'an (Ghamidi, 2005).

In the same way, some people say that "order of words" is the key to understanding the Qur'an, but this answer is also incorrect because it is based on personal reasoning. There is no such verse in the Qur'an which declares that understanding the order of the words is the key to understanding the Qur'an (Nadvi, 2019)

While mentioning the name of Maulana Farahi and Islahi, Khan explained the philosophy of Quranic order in one place and then clearly wrote: "Nazm can be an aspect of understanding the Quran, but it is not correct to say that it is the key to understanding the Quran." (Asad, 2016) Anyhow, Ghamdi's way of thinking is entirely different from Khan's in this matter. I think Maulana Khan Sahib did not study the Holy Quran in such a way that is the distinction of the Farahi's school. Instead of making the Qur'an the center and pivot of Islamic knowledge, he emphasized its 'Tazkiri' position more (Islahi, 2006). Similarly, he says that Maulana Farahi also had negative views about the West, like the familiar scholars of that time. For example, he presents that Professor Arnold wrote 'Preaching of Islam' in Aligarh, and Maulana Farahi also had the same idea that it was written to end the spirit of Jihad among Muslims. (Islahi, 2006) However, Maulana Ali Mian has given great importance to this book concerning the history of Islamic Da'wah, and in "Tarikh Dawat Wa Azeemat," there are references to this book in the context of Tatar fitna later Tatars' acceptance of Islam. Ghamdi Sahib did not read science fiction or scientific literature the same way that Khan Sahib did, but Ghamidi has been a regular student of philosophy, so he has a keen eye on the philosophy of science or modern philosophy, While Khan criticizes philosophy. Regarding literature, there is a clear difference in the point of view of Maulana Khan Sahib and Ghamdi Sahib. Maulana not only does not read literary things himself but also forbids his followers from reading them (Nadvi, 2019). Academic literature makes a person possess a poetic and unrealistic temperament and negates the scientific character. In the same sense, Maulana's language and style of writing are straightforward, scientific, and accessible. However, he uses English words and sentences a lot, due to which sometimes the report becomes heavy, while Ghamdi Sahib has excellent literary taste. He is a poet himself, and the apparent effects of Arabic and Persian literature are visible in his Writings. Arabic and Persian couplets, sentences, and proverbs are embedded in his language. Among his predecessors is Maulana Farahi, an eloquent poet of Arabic and the imam of a new school in Arabic rhetoric. Similarly, Maulana Islahi also knew Arabic literature well. Maulana Sultan Ahmed Islahi's approach was very diverse and wide-ranging. For most of his life, he interpreted the thought of Maulana Maududi and Jamaat-e-Islami, but in the last stage of his life, he became a severe critic of this thought. He also has a book on the concept of God's sovereignty. (Ahmed, 2018) I think that Javed Ahmad Ghamdi's view of Arabic literature is



more extensive than that of Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi". Maulana's statement may be exaggerated, but it shows what serious scholars think about Ghamdi Sahib.

This debate of whether the Quran is the source of religion or the Quran and Sunnah, a combination of both, has been going on since ancient times. Ghamdi Sahib created a very beautiful, literary, comprehensive, and meaningful interpretation and said: "The only source of religion is now only the nature and attributes of the Messenger of Allah, may God's prayers and peace be upon him", people of taste cannot live without praising him.: "The only source of religion is Prophet Muhammad, Messenger of Allah, may God's prayers and peace be upon him. It is a pity that until today all the critics of Professor Ghamdi who belong to Jamaat-e-Islami, Ahl al-Hadith, and Deobandi and new traditionalist schools of thought, none of them have given any scholarly and principled criticism. People like Salahuddin Yusuf, Nader Aqeel Ansari, and Hafiz Zubair have committed such intellectual betrayals and fallacies that Al-Aman and Hafeez. Another wrote: "Ghamdism is a temptation born out of the womb of modernism which has taken the form of a religion parallel to Islam."(Jahangir, 2011). However, recently a criticism has been overlooked, which has been done in a balanced style with great decency, integrity, and arguments, and with politeness and respect. This critic is Maulana Nazim Ashraf Misbahi, he has written an article called "Criticisms of Sufism by Javed Ahmed Ghamdi" and has fully defended Sufism. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan also faced oppositional propaganda throughout his life. Jamaat-e-Islami, Ahl al-Hadith, and Deobandi schools of thought extensively participated in this propaganda. At times, especially in the case of the Babri Masjid, a leader of Nadwa ran their propaganda against him. The irony is that today the same gentlemen have come and stood at the exact place where Maulana stood yesterday. A significant difference between these two gentlemen is that Ghamdi Sahib considers the Holy Qur'an and the established Sunnah as the primary source of thought, knowledge, and interpretation. He indeed uses the Ahadith, but according to him, in religion, their natural position is that of history, which needs to be investigated. According to them, neither a single straw is added nor subtracted from the hadiths; they do not add any belief or action to the religion. (Sarwan, 2018) In our Islamic academic history, this is the position of Imam Abu Hanifah and Shatabdi. The interpretations may be different. He started as a preacher and writer, then he turned to studying science and Western cultural challenges, and delivering Islamic literature in a contemporary style became his goal.

However, the thought of the Muhaddithians and the traditionalists had such an influence on our world of knowledge that it was lost, and the other schools of thought were also heavily influenced by them. This approach of the Muhadditheen was based on anti-intellectualism and literalism, so there was a decline in the intellectual world among Muslims in general, which continues to this day. Only the religion of 'Etizal could save it from this decline as the Mu'tazila also belonged to the class of scholars; Mu'tazili scholars like Abu Muslim Isfahani and Zamakhshri set a high example of meditation on the Holy Qur'an. But his intellectual violence and closeness to the ruling elite of that time put him in opposition to Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and others. They severely mentally tortured Imam Ahmad, and because of them, a strong reaction against the Mu'tazilis arose among ordinary Muslims. The Muhadditheen objected to the Mu'tazila, saying that today 'Tizal is considered an insult. However,



the traditional theological schools of Ahl al-Sunnah, Fiqr, Ashaira, and Mataridiyyah, found themselves forced to make much use of the Mu'tazila. The reason is that in the environment of philosophical and logical thinking, the anti-intellectual stance of Muhadditheen based on static and literalism does not work at all. Therefore, it is seen that whatever criticism Ibn Taymiyyah has of Ghazali or the philosophers of Islam is also based on rational reasoning. (Ghamdi, jan, 2018) Even the late coming Muhadditheen reduced their severity and acknowledged the services of Mutkalmeen (Scholars) (Khan, 2011).

Any How Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's point of view is different in this matter; he is merely following the general and traditional point of view here. I believe this is because Khan Sahib was not much concerned with the research knowledge of the Quran and Hadith. Both men criticize Sufism and Sufis, but Maulana Khan's criticism is that traditional Sufism is all based on the heart, while the result of scientific research is that the heart is nothing; it is only a pumping machine; the real thing is the mind. Sophia founded Sufism on an unreal something by basing it on the heart. Maulana himself claims to be a Sufi and is also a believer in a series, but he calls his Sufism based on Bermind Sufism (Nadvi, 2019)

Ghamdi says the heart is definitely a pumping machine, but along with the body, the human being has also got a personality or soul, the center of this personality is the heart. The same heart in the hadith is discussed as (There is a part in the human body which if it is healthy, your body is healthy and if it is damaged, the whole body becomes corrupt).

While Mr. Ghamdi admits the importance of purification and charity, he considers the philosophical ideas of Sufism as "an alien plant in the land of Islam" Like Iqbal, he has examined it in depth, and in "Burhan" there is a critical critique on it. The article titled "Islam and Sufism." (Izhar ud din) Dr. Rashid Shaz has written a whole chapter on Sufism and has highlighted the wickedness of spiritualists. Ghulam Qadir Loon criticized it in the light of the Qur'an in "Study of Sufism" and Altaf Ahmad Azmi in "*Wahdat al-Wujud*, a non-Islamic theory. "However, a common shortcoming in these criticisms of Sufism is that the terms and interpretations of Sufism have not been understood from the words of Sufism itself. Still, the meaning that can be understood from their appearance has been criticized.

Most of Khan Sahib's work consists of Islamic literature in a scientific style, affirmation of God, etc. At the same time, Ghamdi has drawn more attention to correcting many misconceptions in Islamic thought, internal reform, and education of Muslims. However, they pay attention to jurisprudential issues, focusing more on the correct understanding of hadith. Because of this, they are hated by the blind imitators of the Salaf. And the scholars of this class are trying to gratify their sectarian and stagnant psychology by calling this thought inappropriate names like 'Farahiya sect and Ghamdiyyah sect.' (Ghamidi, 2009)

Both Khan Sahib and Ghamdi Sahib are proponents of the culture of dialogue. Khan Sahib has also



been meeting and talking with non-Muslim intellectuals. Ghamdi Sahib probably has less tradition of interaction with non-Muslim scholars; perhaps the atmosphere and conditions of Hindu Pak have also influenced the approaches of both.

About Jihad, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and Ustaz Ghamdi both have different opinions. For example, Khan Sahib considers Jihad to be only defensive, and the Qur'anic verse for that is, "Peace is better anyway" (Al-Nisa' 4:128), which he argues from the Hodaybiyyah incident. And later in the period of the Sahaba, they justified the wars fought by the Muslims. In this regard, one criticism of historians and jurists is that they made the image of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) more of a conqueror prophet than a prophet of Dawah. This mindset became common among Muslims in the later periods. Ghamdi recognizes Jihad as a principle on both proactive and defensive levels, but he connects the end of proactive Jihad to fulfilling the Quranic law. They think that when Allah's judgment is fulfilled on a nation, it is punished in this world. The nations of the past used to be punished by heavenly punishment, now, they are penalized by the swords of the believers, but it is for the direct addressees of the Messenger. Since there is no proof of completion to this extent, proactive Jihad (fighting) will not be valid (Khan, 2011)

Regarding the revival of Islam or the re-political rule of Islam, Ghamdi Sahib says that Allah first gave the power of the earth to the Hamite race, then to the Semitic races, which continued until the end of the Abbasid period. Now it is the turn of the Japheth race, which includes the Turks, Tatars, Mughals, the Western nations, the Chinese, and the Aryans of India. The same research was presented by Allama Anwarshah Kashmiri while speaking on the hadiths of Ashrat al-Sa'at.

He says that: "The period of dominance of this Ummah, as stated by Sheikh Akbar, Mujadid Alfi Sani, Shah Abdul Aziz, and Qazi Sanaullah, the author of Tafsir Muzhari, was one thousand years. This is supported by the tradition of Ibn Majah that my Ummah will receive half a day. If she remains upright after that, the rest of them will also remain upright. Otherwise, they will perish like those who died. History also testifies that the great calamity of the Tatar sedition came upon us after five hundred years, which left the edifice of religion shaken. And the period of one thousand years was completed. During this period, Islam dominated the world's religions in the East and the West. This was the era of the dominance of the Muhammadan Ummah, after which Allah made the people of Europe dominate us. (Ghamdi, 2018)

Therefore, according to Ustaz Ghamdi, Muslims, and religious preachers need to work in the field of da'wah instead of political conflict. They should strive to convey the Holy Quran to the world's people. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan also believes that the world is the source of Da'wah and that Western civilization is a helper of Da'wah. That is, Ghamdi Sahib's mind is inclined towards principle-making like Imam Shatbi, while Khan Sahib's reason is descriptive, not principled. Considering the principles of Dajjal, Dabat al-Arz, Mahdi, and the Messiah's second coming, Maulana interprets them and tries to explain them scientifically. And they take the second coming of Christ in the sense that it will be the role of Christ that the world will enter a peaceful era and the atmosphere of war will end. Mr. Ghamdi does not believe in the appearance and departure of Dajjal and Mahdi. Similarly, he is



not convinced of the second coming of Christ, but his position in this matter is the same as that of Sir Syed, Muhammad Abdah, Rashid Raza, etc. Ghamdi mastered the Qur'an, Arabic lexicon, Arabic language, Qur'anic sciences, and Shari'ah sciences, while Maulana Wahiduddin Khan did not have that research knowledge. Khan does not accept evolution. (Faiz Al-Bari)

Along with this, Ghamdi Sahib also has some jurisprudential differences; for example, in Western countries or in countries where the non-Muslim majority is the ruler, Regarding the obligation of Friday prayer, they believe that it was initially the right of the Islamic government or its representatives, which the scholars have violated and established their right. The origin of this research is found in the opinion of the Hanafis, but according to the mufti, it is of the latter, which Ghamdi Sahib does not refer to. However, they say that the scholars have made ijthad to maintain the Islamic collectivity, which they are following, but its conditions are not being adhered to. The matter is reasonable in its place, but in the changed circumstances, there will be great difficulties for the authorities to declare Friday that the Muslim community is required everywhere and Friday is the best symbolic expression of it. However, it is a fact that just as the common mosques have become a place for different religious groups and sects instead of Allah Almighty, it is necessary to find a solution for them. Likewise, Mr. Ghamdi says that the Zakat can be paid from the tax that Muslims pay in non-Muslim majority countries. There is no Shariah basis for this because zakat is not just a tax, but it is a worship-like prayer. Therefore, the government or the Islamic community has the right to receive it, but if not, then Muslims can pay for it individually. Therefore, this position of Ghamdi Sahib did not seem to be very strong. Maulana Waheeduddin Khan Sahab generally avoids giving opinions on jurisprudential issues. The opinion of both of them on bank interest is also different from the common scholars. Although Khan Sahib has not explained this issue clearly, Ghamdi Sahib says that Bank Interest is not included in Riba. The opinion of both of them on bank interest is also different from the common scholars. Although Khan Sahib has not explained this issue clearly, Ghamdi Sahib says that Bank Interest is not included in Riba. They also give their arguments and suggest that the bank should give it another name other than interest. Regarding the issue of boundaries, the views of Ghamdi Sahib, Maulana Farahi, Islahi, and Maulana Inayatullah Subhani, all of them are different from the general scholars regarding the punishment of stoning, apostasy, and Blasphemy law. (Al-Risalah, The Edition of the Christian Model) While Waheeduddin Khan is convinced of lynching, his position on apostasy and the punishment of Blasphemy is also the same as that of Ghamdi. For example, he writes in one place: "The truth is that this law (punishment for apostasy) has nothing to do with Islam." This is the creed of some later jurists and not of the Qur'an and Sunnah. A great virtue is Ghamdi Sahib's academic modesty. He holds his opinions with full confidence but does not make their words final. In the same way, Ghamdi disagrees well with modern scholars, but while mentioning them, he respects them, while Khan sometimes takes an aggressive tone in his criticism. Ghamdi Sahib has started work on the Hadith project after the translation and interpretation of the Holy Quran. This is also a noble work. Its importance is that it shows which hadith came in which background and which event it describes. This will mean that the many misconceptions that have spread among Muslims concerning various hadiths and their wrong meanings have become common. They can be corrected only when the correct background of these hadiths and narrations becomes





clear. In addition, this also negates the impression that the scholars and thinkers of the Farahi school do not pay attention to the science of hadith.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Maulana Waheeduddin Khan and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi stand out as influential Islamic scholars who have endeavored to interpret and communicate the teachings of Islam in a manner that resonates with the challenges and complexities of the modern world. Their contributions have been marked by a commitment to rationality, contextual understanding, and peaceful coexistence. Maulana Khan's emphasis on peace, interfaith dialogue, and the compatibility of Islam with reason highlights his dedication to creating a harmonious global society. On the other hand, Ghamidi's rationalist approach, emphasis on historical context, and his proposals for rethinking Islamic jurisprudence demonstrate his pursuit of a more nuanced and relevant understanding of Islamic teachings. Both scholars have sparked important conversations about the role of Islam in contemporary life, encouraging Muslims to navigate the delicate balance between faith and modernity, tradition and reason, while striving for a more enlightened and tolerant world.

Maulana Waheeduddin Khan and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi have left a lasting impact on the discourse surrounding Islam's place in the modern age. Their works have not only resonated within the Muslim community but have also garnered attention on a global scale. By advocating for rationality, open dialogue, and an informed interpretation of Islamic teachings, they have challenged traditional norms and encouraged Muslims to engage critically with their faith.

Maulana Khan's emphasis on peace, non-violence, and interfaith understanding speaks to the universal values that Islam espouses. His dedication to countering extremism and promoting a message of harmony has inspired countless individuals to view Islam as a religion of compassion and coexistence. His prolific writings, especially on the compatibility of science and faith, have contributed to breaking down perceived barriers between religion and modern knowledge.

Javed Ghamidi's scholarly approach to understanding Islam within its historical and linguistic context has ignited thoughtful discussions about the evolution of Islamic thought. His ideas on Ijtihad-based jurisprudence and the need to reevaluate certain traditional practices have paved the way for a more adaptable and dynamic interpretation

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of Islamic law. While his approach has sparked debates within traditionalist circles, it has also garnered respect for its commitment to intellectual rigor.

Both scholars have faced their share of challenges and controversies, as progressive interpretations often encounter resistance from conservative quarters. Nonetheless, their unwavering dedication to promoting a balanced and informed understanding of Islam has set them apart as trailblazers in the realm of Islamic scholarship.

In an era marked by misconceptions, cultural clashes, and the rapid spread of information, the legacies of Maulana Waheeduddin Khan and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi continue to inspire Muslims to navigate the intricacies of their faith with a forward-looking perspective. By blending traditional teachings with contemporary insights, they have demonstrated that Islam can indeed be a guiding light in a world undergoing constant change.

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