**Perspectives on Islamic Law: Evolution and Contemporary Discourse  
  
A Special Series Of Lectures By Dr.  Ahmed Murad**

**Course List**

An introductory level course for the uninitiated providing an overview of sources and processes involved in developing religious rulings and its relationship to law and politics. Rethinking for the ever-changing world while still grounded in tradition and without negating the basic pretexts or historical context. The concept of religious authority and who can define Islam.

1. **Source of Law**
   1. Quran
      1. Quran as guidance from the Creator
         1. Man’s dependence on divine and God’s communication with man
         2. Forms of communication… Inner person – not just chemistry
         3. Prophethood
         4. *Wahi*– the revelation
         5. Revelations before prophet
         6. How revelation came to prophet
      2. History of compilation and transmission
         1. Recordings at the time of Prophet
         2. Recording at the Time of caliphate
      3. History of Quranic script
         1. Oldest manuscripts
         2. Modern printings
      4. Quran – structure and organization
         1. Surah, ayah, juz
         2. Is there an order and method to Quran
         3. Quranic text structure or random
         4. Language of the Quran
      5. Understanding Quran
         1. Levels of understanding
         2. Methodology of interpretation
         3. Makkan&Madinan
         4. Occasions of revelation and significance of historical settings
         5. Introduction to major tafasir
            1. Early tafasir
            2. Modern tafasir
            3. Traditional vs rational
      6. Major Themes and Characterstics of Quran
         1. Quran’s worldview
         2. Quran’s Person
         3. Quran’s ethics and morality
         4. Quran’s charge to its recipients
      7. Special terminologies of Quran
         1. *Ilah, rabb , ibadah, deen*
         2. *Kafir, muslim, mumin*
         3. *Taqwa, zikr, sabr, infaq, jihad, qital*
      8. Old and new misconceptions
         1. Quran and the orientalists…
         2. Jihad
         3. Women
         4. Politics
   2. Sunnah
      1. Hadith—history and principles
         1. Learning and transmission methods
         2. First 200 years
      2. Compilation of Hadith
         1. Types
         2. Criteria
         3. Authentication
      3. Hadith terminologies and classification
         1. Reports and their paths
         2. Authentication
         3. Classification
      4. Muhadditheen—their life and their times
         1. Short biographies (Malik b Anas, Ahmad b Hanbal, Bukhari, Muslim, An-Nasai, Abu Dawud, Tirmidihi, Ibn Majah)
         2. Distinctive methodologies
      5. Features of major collections of ahadith
         1. Science of Munkar hadith
         2. Historical controversies
         3. Contemporary controversies
   3. Seerah
      1. Early sources of seerah
      2. Major works and their characteristics
      3. Major aspects of prophet’s seerah
      4. Quran as a book of Seerah
2. **Fiqh­–Seerah and Sunnah**
   1. Fiqh is not law
   2. Evolution of Fiqh
   3. Fuqaha—there life and there times
3. **Basic Concepts / Terminologies / Methodologies**
   1. Ijma
   2. Qyas
   3. Istihsan
   4. Muslaha
   5. Hukmsharai
4. **Concept of Authority**
   1. Divine vs human authority
   2. Religious vs political authority
5. **Contemporary Issues**
   1. Concept of Islamic State
   2. Globalization and pluralism
   3. Compulsion / reversion
   4. Cultural evolution
   5. Concept of maroof