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Concept of Ijtihad, its principles and Contemporary Importance.

INTRODUCTION:

Islam is complete code of life and due to this it provides guidance for every aspect of life regardless of space and time. Besides primary sources of Sharia; Holy Quran and Sunnah, there are secondary sources of Sharia also to provide guidance and resolve challenges. One of them is ijtihad, in which a problem or solution of which is not directly derived from Quran and Sunnah, is resolved through intellectual and analytical reasoning. As the world has rapidly changed and along with it several challenges of modern nature have arisen. In order to solve those problems, ijtihad is necessary.

⇒ Definition:

In literal terms, ijtihad means 'to strive' or 'to exert effort'. It can be defined as "individual effort to find solution of a problem according to 'Figh'."

⇒ EVIDENCE FROM HOLY QURAN:

Allah Almighty has blessed us with a deen, which provides guidance for every matter. In the Holy Quran, Allah Almighty has emphasized on striving for the right path, as well as to resolve matters in accordance with the teaching of Islam.

والذين جاهدوا فينا

And those who strive in our path, we will guide them on our path. And Allah is with those whose deeds are good.

(Al-Ankabut:69)

→ EVIDENCE FROM HADITH:

According to hadith, when Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) while sending Mu'ad Ibn Jabal to the governor of Yemen asked, how will you decide the matter. To which he replied, I will consult the Quran. If the book of Allah contains nothing to guide you. Then I will act upon the precedent of the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). But if the precedent fails, Asked Prophet

Mohammad (Pbuh). Then he replied, I will exert my knowledge to form the judgment. His answer was approved by Prophet Mohammad (Pbuh).

⇒ QUALITIES OF MUTTAHID:

Anyone, who possess the following qualities is eligible for conducting ijtehad.

- 1) He must be muslim.
- 2) He must be mature and sane.
- 3) He must be characterful.
- 4) He must be scholar of Quran and Sunnah.
- 5) He must have knowledge of modern challenges.
- 6) He must be impartial and has the ability to ensure speedy justice.

⇒ INDIVIDUAL IJTEHAD:

This school of thought is supported by Dr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Sheh Waliullah. During their time, they felt the need to take reform measures to rectify the challenges muslims were facing.

Allama Iqbal's book Reconstruction of Thoughts of Islam, is an example.

⇒ INSTITUTIONAL IJTEHAD:

The supporters of Institutional Ijtihad include, Dr. Hamidullah, Jamia-banoria, Darul-ulam-Deoband and Jamia-tul-Azhar. According to Dr. Hamidullah, there should be World Ijtihad Council, which should resolve contemporary issues of Muslims.

⇒ IMPORTANCE OF IJTEHAD:

The importance of Ijtihad cannot be denied, as through the process of Ijtihad the solutions of those problems which are not mentioned directly in Quran and Sunnah can be achieved.

It also helps in reducing the conflicts, and ensures uniformity among the society. Any issue, regardless of the nature and intensity can be resolved through Ijtihad. It also helps in Ijma, as collective wisdom is used to extract solution of an issue.

⇒ IJTEHAD In CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES:

In contemporary ~~times~~ times, there were many issues of which solution was not directly present in the Quran or from Sunnah of Prophet Mohammed (Pbuh). So, in order to resolve these problems and ensure that Muslims conduct their lives according to Islamic teachings, ijtehad was considered. Due to ijtehad these issues were solved but many are still unresolved.

i) Organ or Tissue Donation:

There was an ambiguity in whether donating organ or tissue is lawful in Islam or unlawful. So, keeping in view the recent issue Federal Sharia Court, performed ijtehad and derived an understanding on the matter. The court stated in the judgment that Islam emphasizes on saving life of others, so keeping this in view, organ donation is allowed in Pakistan for the purpose of saving life. But it is banned for commercial purpose, if involved would face ten year imprisonment and fine of one million Rupees.

ii) Question of praying in Space:

Technological advancement has made it possible to travel to space, which in the past was not permissible. So, for muslims, question of direction of praying arises. In this matter also there are various views, but there is a need of consulting ijtehad by a mujtehid to achieve a solution.

⇒ CONCLUSION:

Islam is a complete code of life, a vibrantdeen and ready to provide guidance on every aspect of human life. The world is and will continue to change rapidly. With this rapid change, modern challenges will come to the surface. Ijtihad can be useful to provide valid solution for all the problems of the modern world and help muslims to lead their life according to teachings of Islam, avoiding any conflict or excess.