

## Describe Al-Mawardi's theory of Imamate.

### Introduction:-

Al-Mawardi was the first political thinker in the history of Islam. He belonged to the orthodox shafi'ite school of jurisprudence. He was made Qadi ul Qudat (Chief Justice of the Empire) by the Abbasid Caliph Al-Qaim. He proposed his theory of Imamate in his famous book Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyah. He wrote this book in order to support the Abbasid Caliphate against its detractors and to restore it to its original position. Mawardi gave a mass of detail about the qualifications, mode of selection, duties, and conditions on which an Imam can be deposed. His other literary works include, Nasihat ul Muluk, Qawanin ul Wizarat, and Tahsiin ul Najas fi Tahsiin ul Zafar.

### Contextual Background:-

During Mawardi's time Abbasid Caliphate was declining. It was facing major challenges from Seljuks, Fatimid Dynasty, and Buwayhid Dynasty. Among them the Buwayhid Dynasty posed a more significant threat to the Caliph because they were too powerful and too close to the capital.

Buwayhid Emir deprived Abbasid Caliph of all political authority. However, it was with the support of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, that the Abbasid had maintained some spiritual and temporal authority. Mawardi had supported the rule of Abbasid Caliph through his theory of Imamate.

### Principles of Imamate:-

According to Mawardi the institution of Imamate is based on the following Principles: attempt by giving subheadings.

1. Sovereignty belongs to Allah.
2. Authority is vested in Caliph as the successor of Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H)
3. It is duty of Imam to enforce shariat and defend faith and Muslim to enable them to live their lives according to the injunctions of shariat.

### Qualifications of Imam:-

Mawardi gave 7 qualifications to become Imam.

1. He must have knowledge of religion.
2. He must uphold justice under all conditions.
3. He must have all physical senses.
4. He must be physical fit.
5. He must be a wise person.
6. He must be a brave person and capable of waging jihad.
7. He must belong to Banu Quraysh.

## Mode of Selection:-

A person can be appointed as Imam in one of the two ways:

1. He may be elected by an electoral college, which consists of people present in the capital.
2. The ruling Imam may nominate him, if he possess all the required qualifications.

## Duties of Imam:-

An Imam has following duties to perform:

1. He should execute justice and solve the cases between desputing parties following shariah. He should encourage weak to seek his right. criminal
2. He should enforce the legal code of the Quran so that people might not violate the 'hadud' set forth by Allah.
3. He is responsible for the collection and distribution of zakat and Kharaj, according to the injunctions of shariah, without any fear or favor.
4. He has to appoint trusted and honest persons to the principal offices and treasury in order to ensure good and effective administration and for safeguard of finances of state.
5. He should establish supremacy of Islam over all other religions. For this purpose

he should declare jihad against those who oppose Islam.

6. He has to fix stipend from Bait-ul-mal to disadvantaged people.
7. He has to maintain law and order in the country, so that people could travel freely in the country and proceed to their economic activities.
8. He must protect the Islamic territory against any kind of enemy invasion in order to protect lives of people.
9. He must protect and maintain the established principles of Islam.
10. He should keep himself informed of the affairs of the state. So that he himself directs the national policy and protect the interests of people.

### Duties of the People

1. People should obey the Imam.
2. People should help Imam in defense and security of the country.

### Deposition of Imam:-

According to Mawardi Imam can be deposed under following conditions:

1. If there is any change in his moral status, known as 'azala' in Islamic jurisprudence. This change can be of 2 types.
  - a) If he ignores the Islamic injunctions

- and gives himself upto immoral and worldly pleasures.
- b) If he rejects the established principles of Islam.
2. If he suffers the loss of physical senses, physical organs or mental faculties.

### Conclusion:-

Mawardi's theory of Imamate provides a ~~good~~ great detail about the qualifications, duties, selection and deposition of Imam. His theory of Imamate is the ~~first~~ systematic theory of Imamate in the world. Even in the modern times Constitutions of various countries provide the eligibility, duties, elections, and conditions for the removal of the head of state.