

Question no: 02

Ijtihad, qualities of Muftahid and its importance

1. Introduction

We all know Islam is a complete code of life. It guides human in almost every aspect of life. We can find the solutions through the Shariah.

Shariah consists of Quran and Sunnah along with secondary sources like IJMA, Qiyas and Ijtihad. Ijtihad is to derive Islamic legal order from principles of Quran and Sunnah.

It is practiced in almost all fields of life from politics to economics and from social system to justice system.

But, not everybody have the capacity to do this excellent job, for this a Muftahid is capable of doing this.

A Muftahid possesses certain qualities like knowledge of Quran and Sunnah along with other compulsory knowledge.

The solution to the contemporary problems lies in Ijtihad. Its importance has been felt by everyone because the conditions of Muslims have started to deteriorate in almost every sphere of life. So, there is a need of a guiding principle like the Ijtihad. But let's first discuss what is Ijtihad.

II What is Ijtihad

According to Imam Ghazali Ijtihad is;

"Making of efforts by a mujtahid to find out what Shariah ordains on one or more than one issues"

If we talk about its literal meaning, Ijtihad is to make one's utmost efforts and maximum

striving to do something. And according to Sir Abdur Rahman "Ijtihad means struggle and

to follow the commandments of Shariah."

In short, it means when we do not find the solution of certain problems in the Quran and Sunnah then we will have to derive the solution by Ijtihad by following certain principles and making sure that it is "accordable" with Quran and Sunnah. The person who conducts Ijtihad is called Mujtahid. It need to have certain qualities which we will discuss later.

(9) Ijtihad according to the Quran

Ijtihad is part and parcel of the legislative body. Both Quran and Hadith supports this concept. Allah says in the Holy Quran

(سورة المائدة آية 49) $\text{فإن أيقنوا} \text{فإن}$

Those with sound judgment among them would have validated it.

In short Quran has used the word "أيقنوا" which means to try.

to find and investigate things which are hidden. Similarly Allah says in the Holy Quran "As for those who strive in our cause, We shall surely guide them"

Ijtihad in Hadith:

According to a Hadith narrated by Abu Dawood whose context is that when Hazrat Muhammad (P.B.U.H) appointed Muaz Bin Jabal the governor of Yemen He (P.B.U.H) asked him "How will you make decisions?" He replied ^{says according to} by "Quran and Sunnah". He (P.B.U.H) asked if you do not find any context in these then? Muaz Bin Jabal replied "through my intellect and finding the reason through Ijtihad."

Similarly many of the companions of Holy prophet like the pious four caliphs also conducted Ijtihad

III

Mujtahid and his qualities

A Mujtahid is a high calibre scholar of Quran and Sunnah who has the permission to conduct Ijtihad. Not everyone can or allowed to conduct Ijtihad. There are certain qualities of Mujtahid.

Qualities of Mujtahid

According to "Hussayn al-Baqri" a mujtahid has certain qualities. He mentioned these qualities in his book "Al-Muhamad fi Usul al-Fiqh". These are;

- i. Extensive knowledge of Quran and Sunnah

A mujtahid must have the extensive knowledge of Quran and Sunnah. He must have the understanding of the Quranic words, reason of verses. He must also have ~~the~~ great knowledge of Hadiths of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.M). He must read

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to fully comprehend the Hadith
i.e. reason of revelation, the general
and the specific, the explicit
and the implicit

- ii Engage knowledge of Arabic:

He must have enough knowledge
about the text of Arabic. He
must fully understand Arabic
and the meaning of Arabic
words.

- iii Must able to confirm consensus
of Companions

A Mujtahid must also confirm
the consensus of Companions,
the Successors and leading Imams
and Mujtahideen of the past

so that he makes decision in
accordance with the guiding principles
of their teachings and not to
disrespect their decisions.

- iv Must understand objectives
of Shariah

He should be able to understand
objectives of Shariah and be

able to protect five necessities which are life, religion, intellect lineage and property

v. Must be able to distinguish strength and weakness in reasoning

vi Knowledge of Ijma and qiyas
Must have a sound comprehension of Ijma and qiyas (analogical reasoning)

Imam Shafi'i says

"One cannot be a mujtahid if he does not know about qiyas"

IV Importance of Ijtihad in the contemporary world

Ijtihad is as important as it was before. Islam as we all know is a religion of every day and age. So Ijtihad also offers solution to our modern problems.

Ijtihad is important in modern times because;

- i Can solve socio-economic backwardness

of Muslims:

As we all know today Muslims are facing socio-economic backwardness. It is due to the fact that the Muslims have closed the doors of Ijtihad. We have the examples from the life of Holy Prophet and his companions that how they used to tackle these socio-economic backwardness through Ijtihad.

The second caliph Hazrat Umar (R.A) imposed Zakat on those individual who have the possession of those.

-ii Governments of Muslim countries can benefit from it

In today's world Muslim countries are struggling to find a path which could lead them to the doors of success.

They are finding it hard to make policies which could benefit a common man.

There can be many reasons for

that ^{absence of} Ijtihad is the primary reason. These governments want to have their control over religious establishments and they want to pursue their own policies. But by Ijtihad they can clearly solve these problems.

iii Islam cannot afford to be stagnant and static.

As we are living in a rapidly changing and ~~but~~ ~~dividing~~ world, vast contacts and mutual intercourses are taking place at every ~~day~~ time. The conflict of ideologies, the clash of cultures and the development of Internationalism have brought a host of new problems. Islam allows everyone to solve these problems as it is ever-evolving religion. So Ijtihad is also important for Islam in the modern times.

- iv Commercial transaction: Insurance, right of ownership, etc. all

require Ijtihad

Today the Muslims are entangled in issues related to transaction, banking, ownership of property and Nationalism all require Ijtihad.

v. Muslim world is replete with injustice - can be curb through Ijtihad

Quran's central value is justice - justice in all areas of life. We need theology with a vision to fulfill the Quran's ~~vision~~ mission. It is a high time that through Ijtihad we can counter injustices in almost every aspect of life.

v. **Analysis:**

Ijtihad is the need of the hour. It has been emphasized by almost all of the scholars and philosophers. One of those is Allama Mammad Iqbal. In his book

"The re-construction of religious thoughts in Islam" he strongly emphasized the need of Ijtihad. He says that teachings of Quran advise us the universe is a process of progress. He strongly condemned the act of closing the Gate of Ijtihad.

He was really pleased with Turkey that how they shifted their power from individualism to a collective authority. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey successfully transferred the power to the people because this was the need of the hour.

VI Conclusion:

In short, Ijtihad is to make sure that problem is solved through an utmost effort according to the principles of Quran and Sunnah. There is a serious need of Ijtihad in the

Contemporary world Islamic governments and jurists should provide the environment for Ijtihad in order to revive the great Muslim history.

According to **Muhammad Syed Abul Ala Maududi**,

"Although Shariat is essential for renaissance of Islam, this is not enough and something more is required to achieve final success."

He further says that

"Only source of guidance in this age is Quran and Sunnah, thus in the light of these an independent power of Ijtihad is needed."