

Introduction:

- It is one of the basic concepts in political science & also a very important **pillar of democracy**.
- Liberty is required for everyone & its absence is an injustice to mankind.
- It is one of the ideals that inspires everyone & which has led to many revolutions- e.g. French revolution was fought for upholding the ideals of liberty, equality & fraternity.
- **The terms liberty & freedom are synonyms.**

Introduction contd...

- The term liberty is derived from the Latin word “**Liber**” meaning “**free**”. So liberty means freedom.
- **Liberty is the freedom available to develop the human personality.**
- Some people defines it as the absence of restrictions to do as one pleases.

Negative & Positive Liberty:

- Liberty has two aspects- negative & positive liberty.
- Negative liberty means that **the individual must be left alone to enjoy maximum liberty.**
- In other words, it is the absence of restraints.
- CDH Cole, Laski, Seeley and others support negative liberty.
- On the other hand, positive liberty implies **the creation of those conditions which help man to develop his personality to the maximum extent.**
- In other words, it provides an atmosphere which helps the individuals to do their best.
- Thus liberty is the priceless treasure of every man.

Definitions:

- “Liberty is the freedom of the individual to express without external hindrances to personality.” - **CDH Cole.**
- “Liberty is the opposite of over government” –**Seeley.**
- “Liberty is the power of a man to do anything that does not injure others” - **UDHR.**
- “Liberty is the positive power of doing & enjoying those things which are worthy of enjoyment & work.” - **Gettel.**

Nature of Liberty:

- Above definitions reveal the nature of liberty as given below-
- 1. It is a condition without which human beings cannot **develop their personality**.
- 2. Liberty indicates the **absence of special privileges**. Everyone should enjoy it.
- 3. It has both **positive & negative aspects**.
- 4. Liberty is **closely connected to rights**, there can be no rights without liberty & also liberty without rights.
- 5. Liberty is **also closely connected to law**. Law promotes the enjoyment of liberty.
- Thus, liberty is not just “the absence of restraints” nor the imposition of limits by the state but the synthesis of both so as to provide for maximum liberty to the maximum number .

Kinds of Liberty:

- The concept of liberty is not static but dynamic & it has undergone many changes over the years. So there are different varieties of liberty. They are-
- **1. Natural Liberty:** it implies the unrestrained freedom to do what one pleases.
- Natural liberty cannot exist in a state but created prior to the creation of the state.
- The three social contractualists like **Hobbes, Locke & Rousseau** speak of natural liberty in the state of nature.
- **It leads to anarchy & to the survival of the fittest.**

2. Personal/Civil Liberty:

- It is **granted by the law of the state** & hence, limited and protected by the law of the state.
- It is **called as personal as it is enjoyed by a person** in his capacity as an individual in the society.
- Personal liberty is understood as a person's right not to be subjected to imprisonment, arrest or other physical coercion in any manner contrary to the legal procedures.
- **Civil liberty includes personal freedom** which is of tremendous importance to the individual, e.g.-right to life, liberty, education, property, religion, family, speech, etc.
- In totalitarian states, civil liberty is denied to the people, but in **democratic society which guarantee civil liberty** and people do not tolerate any kind of encroachment on it.

3. Economic Liberty:

- All other types of liberty has no meaning without economic liberty.
- Economic Liberty means freedom from wants, hunger & insecurity.
- So economic liberty implies that **a person should have his basic necessities like food, clothing and shelter if he has to truly enjoy his civil or political liberty.**
- Political right has no meaning to a person who is starving or unemployed.

Economic liberty contd...

- Without economic liberty democracy will be meaningless.
- Examples for economic liberty are-
 1. Right to work,
 2. Equal pay for equal work .
 3. Right to adequate Rest & Leisure.
 4. Right to social security measures for disabled, sick, old, unemployed & so on.

4. Political Liberty:

- **It is the foundation of democracy.**
- **Any citizen who enjoys political liberty is capable of taking part in the political affairs of the state.**
- Leacock calls political liberty as constitutional liberty and Gilchrist regards political liberty as practically synonymous with democracy.
- Political liberty being the product of political rights include the following- right to vote, contest for elections, hold public office, criticize the government, freedom to form political parties, freedom of press, etc.

5. National Liberty:

- It means the liberty of the nation or **national freedom/independence.**
- National liberty indicates the internal & external sovereignty of the state.
- **Every free nation enjoys this freedom to determine its own political destiny both internally & externally.**
- National liberty has to be ensured first in order to realize the political, civil & economic liberties.
- National liberty is a collective sense of liberty enjoyed by the nation as a whole.

Importance of Liberty:

- Some of its significance are as follows-
- **I. Development of Personality:** It is essential for the development of individual's personality.
- Liberty ensures the availability of opportunities for development to everyone in society.
- In the absence of liberty, a person remains weak as his initiative & enthusiasms are curbed.

2. Rights are meaningful only with liberty:

- Rights & liberty are inseparable.
- Rights exist due to the promotion of liberty.
- All the rights become significant if connected to liberty.
- Liberty be comes meaningful only if they are transformed into rights & protected by the state.

3. Liberty provides a sense of satisfaction:

- Liberty is a highly valued possession of every man.
- There is none in the world who does not want who does not want liberty.
- Many wars and revolutions were fought to achieve liberty.
- Thus liberty is regarded as a great value for which people are ready to give up anything. It is a self satisfying ideal.

4. Leads to creation of democratic states:

- Democracy is not merely a form of government, but also a way of life.
- An individual enjoys complete freedom only in a democratic government.
- It is the love of liberty by majority of people leads to struggle for freedom & creation of democratic states.

5. Liberty creates self Responsibility:

- Liberty of one man has to be consistent with the liberty of others.
- Each individual enjoys liberty only if he respects the liberty of others in society.
- Liberty unaccompanied by reasonable restraints ceases to be called as liberty.
- Thus, liberty creates personal & group responsibilities.(Rodee Anderson)