



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS THE MOST MERCIFUL

UNDERSTANDING INNOVATIONS OF THE DEEN (BID'AH)

INTRODUCTION

Many Muslims are practising the Deen of Islam by following their parents or grandparents, or some cultural practices that have made the acts of worship become a norm, even though NO ONE ever did any research if the prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam every did them, or the sahabah did them, or had Allah Ordered them in the Qur'an. So, for example:

1. Reciting surah Yaseen on Thursday nights/ Friday
2. Doing tahlil on Thursday nights
3. Reciting Al Fatihah when they hear news of a death
4. Inviting others into their homes when someone in the family passed away after 40days, one year, etc
5. Making loud intention before every prayer

Everyone is doing these acts because they are "normally done by everyone". We have to be very careful because the punishments of these acts of worship which is known as "bi'dah" or "innovation" are very severe in the Hereafter.

Allah has Completed the Deen when He revealed the verse in surah 5 verse 3, right after the LAST SERMON was delivered by prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam:

"... This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion..."

So, clearly, the teachings of Islam was completed over 1,400 years ago. Most of the things which are meant for us to know and understood was revealed in the Qur'an and through the practices and actions of the prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. In fact, in his last sermon, prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam left us important instructions for us to follow. One of them is:

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"I am leaving you 2 things - you will never be led astray if you cling on to them tightly. These are the Qur'an and my sunnah".

If we still insist on doing these deeds which has not been found in the Qur'an or in authentic hadeeth, then we are implying several things:

1. Perhaps prophet Muhammad SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam has forgotten, or
2. Perhaps I am better than him (SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam), or
3. I know better than Allah, or his Messenger (SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam)

Doing an innovation has severe consequences. Firstly, let's look at how our deeds are Accepted by Allah, because WITHOUT deeds being accepted by Him, then we would just be wasting our time and effort doing these deeds.

HOW ARE DEEDS ACCEPTED

1. Tawheed

And indeed it has been revealed to you, as it was to those (Allah's Messengers) before you: "If you join others in worship with Allah, (then) surely (all) your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers." 39: 65

"So whosoever hopes for the meeting with His Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of His Lord." [Al-Qur'an 18:110]

2. Intention

'Umar ibn al-Khattab relates that he heard the Messenger of Allah, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, say, "Verily actions are by intentions, and for every person is what he intended. So the one whose hijrah was to Allah and His Messenger, then his hijrah was to Allah and His Messenger. And the one whose hijrah was for the world to gain from it, or a woman to marry her, then his hijrah was to what he made hijrah for." [Agreed upon]

"For the ones whose concern is this world Allah will scatter his affair, and place poverty between his two eyes. And he will not get from the world except what is written for him. And for the one whose intention is the hereafter Allah will gather for him his affair and place contentment in his heart, and the world will come to him willingly." [Ibn Majah, *Sahih al-Jami'* no. 6386]

And Yahya ibn Abu Kathir said, "Learn your intention for it is more serious than the action."

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Zayd ash-Shami said, "Verily I like that I have an intention for everything even if it be eating and drinking."

And he also said, "Have intention for everything, desiring the good, even if it be leaving for the toilet."

Sufyan ath-Thawri said, "I have not treated anything more difficult than my intention, because it keeps changing."

Yusuf ibn Asbat said, "Purifying the intention from its corruption is harder upon the workers than long striving (i.e. in their work)."

Ibn al-Mubarak said, "Maybe a small action is made great by its intention, and maybe a great action is made small by its intention."

Ibn 'Ijlan said, "The action is not acceptable except by three: *taqwa* of Allah, and good intention, and correctness (i.e. conformity to the *Sunnah*)."

Fudayl ibn Iyadh said, "Allah wishes from you only your intentions and desires (*iradah*)."

3. Following strictly the Qur'an and sunnah

It was narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever does any action that is not in accordance with this matter of ours (i.e., Islam), will have it rejected." (Narrated by Muslim, *al-Aqdiyyah*, 3243).

Ibn Rajab (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "This hadeeth (narration) forms one of the most important principles of Islam. It is like a scale for weighing up deeds according to their outward appearance, just as the hadeeth 'The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions' is the means of weighing up the inner nature of deeds. Just as every action which is not intended for the sake of Allah brings no reward to the one who does it, so too every deed which is not in accordance with the command of Allah and His Messenger will also be rejected and thrown back at the one who does it. Everyone who innovates in Islam something for which Allah and His Messenger have not granted permission, that thing has nothing to do with Islam.

(*Jami' al-'Uloom wa'l-Hikam*, part 1, p.176)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enjoined following his Sunnah (ways) and teachings, and made them binding. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "You have to follow my Sunnah (way) and the way of my rightly-guided successors (al-khulafa' al-rashidoon); bite onto it with your eyeteeth (i.e., cling firmly to it)." And he warned against bid'ah (innovation), as he said: "Beware of newly-invented matters, for every newly-invented matter is a going astray." (narrated by al-Tirmidhi, *al-'Ilm*, 2600; classed as saheeh/authentic by al-Albani in *Saheeh Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, no. 2157)

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Ibn al-Qayyim said: "Allah has made devotion of worship to Him alone and following the Sunnah the means of deeds being accepted; if these conditions are not met, then deeds are unacceptable."

(*al-Rooh*, 1/135)

THE MEANING OF BID'AH

Bid'ah is taken from the word Al-Bada' meaning to create something without precedence. One needs to distinguish between the two kinds of bid'ah. The first type is innovation in matters of the world in technology, medicine, computers, etc. This is allowed because it involves matters of life. The second kind of bid'ah is innovation in matters of religion, and this is the bid'ah which this article is focusing on.

Linguistically Bid'ah (innovation) means 'a newly invented matter'.

The Sharee'ah definition of Bid'ah is: "A newly invented way [beliefs or action] in the religion, in imitation of the Sharee'ah (prescribed Law), by which nearness to Allaah is sought, [but] not being supported by any authentic proof - neither in its foundations, nor in the manner in which it is performed." Al-I'tisaam of ash-Shaatibee (1/37).

The Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said: "Every innovation is misguidance and going astray" Reported by Abu Daawood (no. 4607), at-Tirmidhee (no. 2676) and it is saheeh. Ibn Hajr authenticated it Takhreej Ahaadeeth Ibn ul-Haajib (1/137).

And he (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) also said: "... and every innovation is misguidance and all misguidance is in the Hellfire." Reported by an-Nasaa'ee (1/224) from Jaabir bin Abdullaah and it is saheeh as declared by Shaikh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah in Majmoo' ul-Fataawaa (3/58).

The Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) also warned against the People of Innovation, from befriending, supporting or taking from them saying: "Whoever innovates or accommodates an innovator then upon him is the curse of Allaah, His Angels and the whole of mankind." Reported by Bukhaaree (12/41) and Muslim (9/140)

And in his footsteps, we find the Noble Companions and the Taabi'een after them warning from the danger of innovations upon the Ummah, its people and their unity, since it is innovations which have divided the Ummah and split it asunder.

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'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood (RA), said, "Follow and do not innovate, for you have been given that which is sufficient and every innovation is misguidance."
Reported by Abu Khaithamah in Kitaab Ul-'Ilm (no. 540) and declared saheeh by Shaikh al-Albaanee.

One of the early scholars, Al-Barbahaaree, one of the companions of Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, said, "Beware of "Bid'ah", because every "Bid'ah" started out as something small and resembling the truth and people were fooled by it and followed it until it became bigger and bigger and were trapped by it and it took them out of Islaam."

Knowing what is in the Qur'an and Sunnah helps us from falling into bid'ah. Prophet Muhammad (SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) warned us about what will happen when we do not have knowledge. He (SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, "*Allah does not erase knowledge by erasing the knowledge from slaves. Rather He erases knowledge through the death of scholars. When He leaves (the earth) without scholars, people will take the ignorant as leaders. They will be asked and then give religious rulings without knowledge. Then they will be led, and will lead (others) astray.*" (Ahmad)

We might find people opposing us if we turn away from customary acts and other deeds (such as Mawlid (Milad), having 786 as Bismilllah Hir Rahman Nir Raheem, saying one's intention out loud before prayer, etc.) which people have incorporated with Islam, but we know Muhammad (SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said the following: "*Islam started as something strange, and it would go back to being strange, so good tidings for the strangers.*" (Muslim) and in another narration, "*So give glad tidings to the strangers, those who put right what the people have corrupted of my Sunnah.*" (Tirmidhi)

From the hadeeths

'Aisha(R) reported Muhammad(SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "*Whoever innovates into this affair of ours something that we have not commanded it is to be rejected*" (Bukhari and Muslim)

Jaabir (R) narrated Muhammad(SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, "*To proceed: The best speech is the Book of Allah and the best guidance and example is that of Muhammad, and the worse of all things are the newly invented things (in the religion), for every innovation is a error and a misguidance.*" (Muslim)

"...Every innovation is a going astray and every going astray is in the fire." (Tirmidhi)

This shows us there are no acceptable innovations in Islam. People often point to

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the statement of Umar (R) when talking about the tarawih prayer in Ramadan, "What a good bid'ah this is." We can see Umar (R) simply revived the praying of tarawih and it was not something which he did which was not done by Muhammad (S). We can not do something in Islam which was not done by Muhammad (S) and the Sahaba (companions of Prophet Muhammad (S)).

From the Quran

Allah warns us about blindly following somebody.

"When it is said to them, 'Follow what Allah has sent down.' They say, 'No! We shall follow what we found our fathers following. What! Even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance?' (Al-Baqarah 2:170)

Allah also says (what means):

"If you were to follow most of them on earth they will lead you away from the way of Allah. They follow nothing but conjecture, they do nothing but lie." (Al-Anam 6:116)

So whenever we do an act pertaining to Islam, we should know why we are doing that act. We should know the proofs from the Qur'an and the Sunnah to save ourselves and to better educate people.

Allah Ta'aala has informed us that he has perfected the Deen (religion: way of life) for us, and as such there is no need for any additions or deletions to or from Islam: " This day have those who reject faith given up all hope of your religion: yet do not fear them but fear Me. This Day have I perfected your Deen for you, completed My Favours upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your Deen" (Surah Al-Maaidah 5:3)

Understanding this aayah (verse) is vital to all combat against innovations and sticking to the revealed way. It is failure to appreciate the import of this aayah that enables a sincere person to succumb to innovating and innovations and it is imperative that a Muslim who cares about saving himself from the Fire does not labour under any misconceptions regarding it.

The famous tafseer (exegesis) of Ibn Katheer quite clearly explains that in the completion and perfection of the Deen lies the greatest blessing which Allah taala has bestowed upon the Muslim Ummah (nation). After this there no longer remains any need for a new way, nor of a new Prophet, but all that is Halaal (allowed by Allah) has been made Halaal and all that is Haraam (forbidden by Allah) has been made Haraam. The Deen (way of life) contains no falsehood and all we are informed of is correct and true, its orders and prohibitions are fair and accepting the Deen is ones life makes Allah be pleased with us and that He loves the Deen (as it is preserved in the Quraan and the Sunnah). Thus the above

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aayah was revealed so we may be grateful to Allah and not deviate, having the full satisfaction of possessing the complete manner and the absolutely perfect way to worship Allah.

This aayah was revealed on the Day of Arafah and no Halaal and haraam was revealed after it till our Messenger SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam passed away, which was according to the Tafseer of Ibn Jareer eighty one days after it. When this aayah was revealed, Umar (RA) wept so the Messenger said to him, "What makes you weep?" He said, "I wept since we used to be in receipt of increase in our Deen, however, if it is completed, then that which is complete can only decrease (thereafter)." So he said "You have spoken truthfully."

Umar (RA) understood that if the revelation has ceased concerning recommendation, command and prohibition pertaining to worshipping Him, then the Messenger was soon to leave this world, and how true he was in observing that only decrease in guidance can take place is borne out by the fulfilment of the Hadeeth where the Messenger SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam informed us, "Verily Islam began as a stranger and will return as a stranger - therefore give glad tidings to the strangers."

Now it has become a struggle to practice the Sunnah since it is looked upon by the vast majority to be an oddity at best and on the other scale something to be covered up for the sake of practice as established by a particular school of thought. Reinforcing the Sunnah is taken as an affront to civilisation and the culture of the Muslims, and the one blindly following his mentor resents it as an attack upon his "religion"! Innovations have lodged itself so strongly that countering them with the Sunnah is widely hated and deplorable terms are coined to label those who in their humble ways try to revive the way of the Messenger SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam so their efforts can be rendered ineffective, but the sublime way of the Messenger SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam cannot be dimmed by their transparent lies.

The people and their favourite condescending "scholars" have simply not cared to do justice to this aayah. Even the accursed Jews recognised the significance of this aayah and thus approached Umar and exclaimed, as occurs in Bukhaaree, "You read a verse which if it had been revealed to us we would have taken it as an Eid (a public holiday for celebrations)." So Umar (RA) said, "I know when it was revealed and where it was revealed and where the Messenger was when it was revealed: The Day of Arafah and by Allah I was at Arafah." In a similar narration in Musnad Ahmad, Umar further states that it was in the evening of Arafah being the Day of Jumu'ah Ali said, " This aayah was revealed to the Messenger while he was standing in the evening (between Asr and Maghrib) of Arafah." (reported by Ibn Mardawaih)

Comment [H1]:

WHAT CAUSES BID'AH OR INNOVATIONS?

1. Shaytan

"O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of Shaitan (Satan). And whosoever follows the footsteps of Shaitan (Satan), then, verily he commands Al-Fahsha' [i.e. to commit indecency (illegal sexual intercourse, etc.)], and Al-Munkar [disbelief and polytheism (i.e. to do evil and wicked deeds; to speak or to do what is forbidden in Islam, etc.)]. And had it not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure from sins. But Allah purifies (guides to Islam) whom He wills, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower."
24: 21

Bid'ah is also one of the main traps of shaytan, as the person doing the bid'ah would not have known he or she did an act of bid'ah, because he or she was led to think that it is a good act done for Allah's sake.

2. Lack of knowledge

Many people do not seek knowledge but simply follow others. On the Day of Judgment it will be of no excuse for these people who do not seek knowledge and they end up doing many acts of bid'ah.

3. Culture

Many cultural practices carried out acts of worship under the banner of Islam, but without an evidence in the Qur'an or authentic hadeeths. Simple examples include saying "Al-Fatihah" upon hearing the news of a death, or having a gathering in houses annually after a death of a deceased.

4. Too afraid to question the elders/teachers/shaykhs

5. Desire to conform and follow the majority - do not want to be labelled as "ignorant" or "stupid"

Allah Reminded us NOT to follow the majority:

"And if you obey most of those on earth, they will mislead you far away from Allah's Path. They follow nothing but conjectures, and they do nothing but lie."
6: 116

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6. Ignorance - The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Allah does not erase knowledge (from earth) by erasing knowledge from slaves (hearts). Rather, He erases knowledge through the death of scholars. When He leaves (earth) without scholars, people will take the ignorant as leaders (and scholars). They (the ignorant) will be asked and then give Fatawa without knowledge. Then, they will be lead, and will lead astray." [Ahmad]
7. Following desires - Allah says: "But if they answer you not O Muhammad, then know that they only follow their own lusts. And who is more astray than one who follows his own lust (desires) without the guidance from Allah" [Noble Quran 28:50]

Have you seen him who takes his own desires as his god, and Allah knowing (him as such) left him astray, sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah." [Noble Quran 45:23]

8. Blind following - Allah said what translated means: "Follow what Allah has sent down." They say: "Nay! We shall follow what we found our fathers following. Even though their fathers did not understand anything, nor were they guided." [Noble Quran 2:170]
9. Imitating the disbelievers - Adopting their celebrations and practices. An example in the time of the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) when the companions asked him to give them an "Anwar Tree" and Prophet (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Allahu Akbar! It is the Sunan (traditions of the Mushrikun). You said by He who has my soul in His hand, what the children of Israel said to Moses: "Make for us gods as they have gods. He said: 'Verily! You are a people who know not." [7:138] and he (peace be upon him) said: You will follow the traditions of those before you (Jews and Christians)" [at-Tirmidhi]

e.g. one minute silence as remembrance of death, wearing black during funerals, decorating the graveyard, putting flowers on graveyards, visiting graves during Eid, lighting candles for vigilance, wearing the Qur'an around the neck instead of a cross for the christians

10. lack of taqwa. If one lacks taqwa, then one is not Granted Furqan by Allah, which is the criterion to differentiate between truth and falsehood.

"O you who believe! If you obey and fear Allah, He will grant you Furqan a criterion [(to judge between right and wrong), or (Makhraj, i.e. making a way for

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you to get out from every difficulty)], and will expiate for you your sins, and forgive you, and Allah is the Owner of the Great Bounty". 8: 29

Consequence of falling into bid'ah

- 1) Thinking you are getting closer to Allah - Allah accepts the actions of those who make their intentions for Him alone and according to His ways.

Shaytan loves Bid'ah because people rarely repent from it thinking they are on the right path getting closer to Allah.

- 2) Dividing the Ummah - Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: "...my Ummah will be fragmented into seventy-three sects. All of them will be in hell fire except one sect. They (the Companions) said: Allah's Messenger, which is that? Whereupon he said: It is one to which I and my companions belong." [At- Tirmidhi]

A Muslim of the Sunnah will be forced to stay away from the practice of Bid'ah and will therefore be separated from other Muslims.

- 3) Destruction of the Sunnah - Ibn Abbas said, "When Bid'ah is created then the Sunnah dies and this continues until that Bid'ah is living and the Sunnah is dead."

And also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Islam began as something strange, and it shall return as something strange as it began. So give glad tidings to the strangers." It was asked, "Who are the strangers?" He replied, "Those that purify and correct what the people have corrupted of my Sunnah" [at-Tabarani]

This corruption is Bid'ah, where people have changed the religion of Allah until the Sunnah has become corrupted.

- 4) Committing Shirk - An example from one Muslim country when they lay the foundation of a new house they put up a flag pole and raise a piece of cloth like a scarf or something to protect the house from the evil eye during the time it is being built. Some even place a car tire on the pole to protect them. They also dip their hand in henna and make a hand print with the henna on the new walls of the house to protect it from the evil eye. This is Shirk!

e.g. hanging verses of the Qur'an as protection, reading horoscopes, flipping coins, playing "scissors paper, stone" or "head-tail" to make

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decisions

5) Damaging the image of Islam - For the Ummah as a whole, Bid'ah hurts the spreading of Islam and Dawah for the sake of Allah. Honor killings (the killing of a daughter for committing fornication) is an example. There is nothing in Islam that allows a family to execute the Islamic Shari'ah their own way. There is a process for dealing with adultery, and for the unmarried person it is in fact 100 lashings, not death. People, ignorant of Islam believe that this is how our religion is and those guilty of this form of Bid'ah, in fact guilty of one of the worst of major sins, taking the life of a Muslim, are harming the way the non Muslims view Islam.

6) Bid'ah is the cause of Fitnah or severe punishment for this Ummah - As Allah says: "For those people who are differing from the commands of Prophet Muhammad, there will come to them either a Fitnah (test or trial from Allah) or a severe punishment." [Noble Quran 24:63]

And you can look in the Muslim countries where Bid'ah is rampant.

Celebrating the Prophet's Birthday.

Reading Quran for the dead e.g. Chapter Yasin or celebrate 40 days after a person's died.

Putting head stones or monuments over the grave.

Asking the dead to make Du'a for them or relay the message to Allah.

7) Bid'ah is a stepping stone to disbelief - Allah says: "The way of those on whom thou hast bestowed thy grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray." [Noble Quran 1:7]

This verse refers to the Christians and the Jews. They introduced new laws into the religion and this took them away from the true message of the Prophets Musa and Issa (peace be upon them). They took to rulings of their priests and rabbis over the words of Allah and his Messengers.

8) Individually, Bid'ah destroys the hereafter of the person - Narrated Ayshah: Allah's Apostle said, "If somebody innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that thing is rejected."

9) May lead to lying on Allah and His messenger - The Prophet Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Whoever knowingly lie upon me, then let him

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occupy his seat in the fire (of hell)". [Bukhari, Muslim & others]

People will twist or fabricate Hadiths or references from the Quran in order to justify their actions. This is known to be one of the things that can take you out of Islam!

Allah tells us about doing something other than the way Muhammad (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) did:

"And let those who oppose the Messenger's way beware, lest some conflict befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them." (Al-Noor 24:62)

Allah has warned us by telling us what happened to the people of the Book.

"Say, O people of the Book exceed not the bounds in your religion, trespassing beyond the truth. Nor follow the vain desires of people who went astray in times gone by, who mislead many and strayed from the even way. Curses were pronounced on those among the children of Israel who were disbelievers, by the tongue of David and of Jesus son of Mary, because they disobeyed and persisted in excesses." (Al-Maidah 5:77-78)

We can also see another consequence of falling into bid'ah by the following hadith, Muhammad (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, *"Verily I shall proceed you to the Fountain (Al-Kawthar). Whosoever will pass by me shall drink (from it) and never get thirsty. People whom I know and who will know me will certainly come to me for drink but there will be a barrier between them and me. Then I will say, "Verily they are of me.' It will be said, 'You certainly do not know what bid'ah (innovation) they made after you.' Then I shall say, "Be off those who made bid'ah after me.' (Bukhari and Muslim)*

Advice from the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)

1. Abdullah Ibn Masood narrated, "The Messenger of Allah (S) drew a line for us and then said, *'This is Allah's Straight Path.'* Then he drew lines to its right and left, then he said, *'These are paths, upon every one of them there is a devil calling towards it.'* (Ahmad)

Then he (Muhammad (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)) recited (from the Qur'an (what means)):

"Verily this is My Straight path, so follow it and follow not (other) paths, they will separate you away from His path. This He has ordained for you that you may become pious." (Al-Anam 6:153)

2. We have been warned that our Muslim Ummah would be split as Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Those evils that befell the children of Israel shall befall my Ummah, so much that

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if there was one amongst them that openly committed fornication with his mother there would be one among my Ummah who would do that too. And the children of Israel split into seventy-two sects and my Ummah shall split into seventy-three sects all of them in the fire except one group." The Sahaba asked, 'Which one is that O Messenger?' He said, "It is the one to which I and my companions belong." (Tirmidhi)

3. RASULULLAH'S (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) LAST MESSAGE

Taroktu fikum amroini lantadhillu matamassaktum bihima kitabillahwa sunnatin nabiyyi

"I am leaving you 2 things: you will never be led astray if you cling tightly to them: THE BOOK OF ALLAH (THE QUR'AN) AND MY SUNNAH

Sahabah's opinion regarding bid'ah

Amr ibn Yahya narrated his father told him, "We used to sit at Abdullah Ibn Masood's house before Fajr prayer. If he exited we would follow him to the masjid. Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari then came to us and asked us, 'Did Abu Abur-Rahman (Abdullah Ibn Masood) come out yet?' We said, 'No', so he sat with us till he emerged. We all stood up when he exited.

He (Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari) said, 'O Abu Adur-Rahman, I just saw something which I did not recognize, and I did not see, all thanks to Allah, but good.' He (Ibn Masood) said, 'What is it?' He (Abu Musa) said, 'If you live you will see it. I saw in the masjid people sitting in circles waiting for the prayer. In each circle there is a leader, and they have stones in their hands. He (the leader) would say, 'Say Takbir (Allahu Akbar) 100 times', so they say Takbir 100 times. He (the leader) would then say, 'Say Tahil (La Ilaha Illa Allah) 100 times', so they say Tahil 100 times. He (the leader) would then say, 'Say Tasbih (Subhana Allah) 100 times', so they say Tasbih 100 times.

Ibn Masood said, 'Did you not order them to count their evil deeds, and guarantee them that none of their good deeds will be lost?' Then he and us left till we reached one of the circles. Then he (Ibn Masood) stood next to the circle and said, 'What are you doing?' They said, 'O Abu Abdur-Rahman, (these are) stones that we count our Takbir, Tahil, tasbih, and Tah'mid (Alhumdu'lillah).'

Ibn Masood said, 'Count your evil deeds, for I guarantee that none of your good deeds will be lost. What is the matter with you, O nation of Muhammad? How soon you come to your destruction! The companions (of Muhammad) are still many, these are his clothes still not worn out and his cookware did not break yet.

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By whom my soul is in His Hands, *you are either following a religion better than Muhammad's or followers of a way of evil.*'

They said, 'By Allah, O Abu Abdur-Rahman, we sought only what is good.' Ibn Masood said, 'Many people seek good, but they do not reach it. The Messenger told us some people who read the Qur'an will not have the Qur'an leave their throats (to their hearts). By Allah I do not know if most of you are from them.' Then he left them. Amr Ibn Salamah said, '*We saw most of those people fighting against us, in the battle of Nahrawan with the Khawarij.*'" (Tirmidhi)

Once a man sneezed in the presence of Ibn Umar and said, "Praise be to Allah and peace be upon the Messenger.' Ibn Umar chastised the man and said, "The Prophet has only taught us to say Alhumdu'lillah." (Tirmidhi)

Bid'ah hasanah

IN the first part we discussed Bid'ah in matters of religion and its prohibition in Islam; the difference between Aadah and Ibadah, and that all types of Bid'ah are only prohibited in the category of Ibadah. In this part we will check the most common arguments that support 'good innovations' or 'Bid'ah Hasana' in the religion, though the evidence and proof cited earlier is in itself clear.

The reference people give for the validity of Bid'ah Hasana is usually Umar Ibn Al-Khattab's statement on Taraweeh prayers. During his caliphate, Umar (may Allah pleased with him) saw people in the masjid praying Taraweeh separately or in different groups. He united them into one congregation under one Imam and said, "Ni'matu Bid'atu Hadhihi (What a good innovation this is!)." (Al-Bukhari, vol. 3, book 32, no. 228)

On the face of it, it does seem to be confusing a little. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has warned several times that all types of Bid'ah are prohibited, and the great Sahabi Umar says something different?

Firstly, what Umar did was not at all a Bid'ah; on the contrary, he revived a Sunnah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) led Taraweeh prayers for three nights during Ramadan. Each night the congregation increased in number. The fourth night, when many more had gathered, the Prophet (peace be upon him) intentionally did not come out to the masjid to lead the prayers. He explained following morning after Fajr prayer, "O people, by Allah, all praise is due to Him, I was not unaware of your presence last night, but I only feared that the night prayer (Qiyam) would become an obligation upon you, which you would be incapable of fulfilling." (Al-Bukhari, Muslim and others)

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) cited the reason: he feared that it may be made obligatory and then it would be difficult for his Ummah to fulfill it. That was the considerate nature of our Prophet (peace be upon him). However, after his death, this reason ceased to exist, as no more revelation would come down, the religion was complete and nothing else could be made obligatory or otherwise. So what Umar did was not an innovation, but a revival of the Sunnah.

Secondly, scholars have explained that Umar did not mean the Bid'ah in Shariah terminology; he was only saying it in a literal sense. Remember that the word Bid'ah doesn't necessarily mean the Bid'ah in religion. It's an Arabic word, it can be used in different contexts, and Arabs do use it in different contexts, and that's how all languages are. So, Umar's reference is purely linguistic, meaning something new, but not 'innovation in religion.' (Refer to "A clarification of doubts regarding innovation" by Sheikh Saleh Al-Fowzan, extracted from his book Kitab Al-Tawheed)

In conclusion, it is best to present some of the statements of our pious predecessors regarding Bid'ah, which makes the issue crystal clear:

u Al-Irbad Bin Saireyah narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "I advise you to hear and obey, even if an African slave rules over you, and indeed whomsoever from you lives will see many differences, so hold firmly to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me; hold on to it with your molar teeth and beware of newly invented matters (in the religion). Verily every newly invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance and every misguidance is destined for the Fire." (Sahih - Abu Dawood no. 4607, Al-Tirmidhi no. 2676, Ibn Majah no. 43-44, Ahmad 4/126)

u Abdullah Bin Mas'ood said: "Follow and do not innovate, for you have been given what is sufficient and every innovation is misguidance." (Reported by Abu Khaithamah in Kitabal- 'Ilm, Sahih)

u Abdullah Bin Umar said: "Every innovation is misguidance even if people regard it to be something good." (Reported by Ad-Daarimee with an authentic transmission)

u Imam Sufyan Ath-Thawri said, "Innovation is more beloved to Iblees than sin, since a person makes repentance of sin but does not repent from innovations (because he thinks Bid'ah is from the religion)." (Al-Laalika'ee in As-Sunnah, no.238)

u Imam Malik said: "He who innovates something in Islam regarding it as something good has claimed that Muhammad has failed to deliver the Message which he was entrusted to do as Allah says:

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Today I have Perfected your Deen for you. (Qur'an, 5:3)

Whatever was not Deen at the time of the Prophet cannot be considered to be a part of the Deen today." (Reported by Ash-Shaatibee in Al-I'tisaam)

ISSUE ONE

THE QUR'AN

1. Kissing the Qur'an
2. Reciting Qur'an in bathroom

Is it permissible to recite the holy quran while in the toilet?(without taking the book itself in).

Answer:

Praise be to Allaah.

The Qur'aan is the best book that mankind has ever known, because it is the Word of the Lord of the Universe, which was brought down by the trustworthy Spirit [i.e., Jibreel] to the heart of the noble Messenger, to bring mankind forth from darkness into light, and guide them to the straight path. It is the Book whose miracle abides, the proof of which is constantly renewed; Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it, (it is) sent down by the All Wise, Worthy of all praise (Allaah)

[cf. Fussilat 41:42]

There are kinds of etiquette that have to do with this Book, to which attention should be paid when reciting it. One of these rules is that the place where it is recited should be clean. In his valuable book *al-Tibyaan*, Imam al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) mentioned some of the etiquette which the Muslim should pay attention to when reciting the Book of Allaah. He mentioned the issue of reciting Qur'aan in bathrooms and toilets, and he quoted the views of scholars on this matter. He said:

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"It is mustahabb to recite Qur'aan in a place that is clean and suitable. Hence a number of scholars regarded it as mustahabb to read Qur'aan in the mosque because it is both clean and a honourable environment... With regard to reciting Qur'aan in the bathroom, the salaf differed as to whether it is makrooh. Our companions _ i.e., the Shaafa'is _ said that it is not makrooh. This was quoted by Abu Bakr ibn al-Mundhir in *al-Ishraaf* from Ibraaheem al-Nakha'i and Maalik, and it is the view of `Ata'.

Some regarded it as makrooh, such as `Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allaah be pleased with him). This was narrated from him by Ibn Abi Dawood.

Ibn al-Mundhir narrated from a group of the Taabi'een _ including Abu Waa'il Shaqeeq ibn Salamah, al-Shu'bi, al-Hasan al-Basri, Makhool, Qubaysah ibn Dhu'ayb, and from Abu Haneefah (may Allaah be pleased with them all) that al-Shu'bi said: it is makrooh to recite Qur'aan in three places: bathrooms, toilets It was narrated that Abu Maysarah said: Allaah should not be remembered except in good (clean) places."

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked:

Is it permissible to remember Allaah (dhikr) in the bathroom?

He replied:

A person should not remember his Lord inside the bathroom, because this place is not appropriate for that. If he remembers Him in his heart there is nothing wrong with that, but he should not utter the words out loud. It is better not to speak the words out loud in this place, and to wait until he has come out of it. With regard to places for doing wudoo' that are outside the toilets where one relieves oneself, there is nothing wrong with remembering Allaah there.

My questions relate to Bida'a. At the Mosque I attend I see brothers performing actions which I think are Bida'a but require confirmation with sources. I would like to try correct these practices, Inshallah with Hickma, if there are incorrect.

1. Blowing on fingers and wiping eyes with thumbs after making Dua'a.
2. Always ending Dua'a with Al-Fatiha.
3. Kissing the Qu'ran when picking it up and before putting it down.
4. Swaying while sitting in Salat or reading Qu'ran.

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Answer:

Praise be to Allaah.

Any act of worship must be based on evidence (daleel) from the Qur'aan or saheeh Sunnah. One of the principles of this religion is that Allaah cannot be worshipped except in the ways that He has prescribed, and He cannot be worshipped in innovated ways (bid'ah). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever innovates something in this matter of ours [i.e., Islam] that is not part of it, will have it rejected," i.e., his deed will be unacceptable to Allaah. There is no evidence in either the Qur'aan or Sunnah for ending du'aas with al-Faatihah. Similarly, there is no evidence for blowing onto one's fingers and wiping the eyes with them after making du'aa'. Al-Shuqayri (may Allaah have mercy on him) mentioned the bid'ah of kissing the thumbnails and wiping the eyes with them after making du'aa' following salaah, or bunching the fingertips together and touching them to the eyes after prayer, and reciting certain things whilst doing so; he said that these are silly innovations. (*Al-Sunan wa'l-Mubtada'at*, p. 71). With regard to the question of kissing the Mus-haf (copy of the Arabic text of the Qur'aan), the Fatwa Standing Committee (*al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah li'l-Iftaa*) answered a question on this matter with the following fatwa: "We know of no basis for kissing the Qur'aan." In another response to a similar question, they said: "We know of no evidence that prescribes kissing the Qur'aan, which was revealed to be recited, respected, understood and acted upon." (*Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah*, no. 4172)

In *Al-Aadaab al-Shar'iyah* (2/273, Al-Risaalah edition), Ibn Muflih says:

"It was reported that he (Imaam Ahmad) did not give an opinion [??] on this matter (kissing the Qur'aan) and touching it to one's forehead and eyes."

Al-Qaadi said in *al-Jaami' al-Kabeer*: "He did not give an opinion on that, although it contains an element of respect and honour, because in the case of deeds intended to draw closer to Allaah, if there is no comparable precedent in the Sunnah, then it is better not to do it. Do you not remember when `Umar saw the Black Stone, he said: `You cannot do any harm or any good. If it were not for the fact that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) kissed you, I would not kiss you.'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 1597; Muslim, 1270).

As for swaying when reciting Qur'aan or praying, this is habit of the Jews in their worship, so the Muslim should not do it deliberately. (See *Bida' al-Qurra'* by Bakr Abu Zayd, p. 57). One of the ways of wisdom (hikmah) in da'wah and

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combatting wrongdoing, to which you refer in your question, is to ask people for the evidence for what they are doing, because it is not permissible to worship in ways for which there is no evidence, as we have pointed out above. The burden of proof rests on the person who is doing the deed, not on the one who is seeking to correct him. May Allaah give us and you the strength to do good. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad.

Saying "sadaq Allaahul-'Adtheem" after finishing reading the Qur'ân

Question: What is the ruling regarding the saying of "sadaq Allaahul-'Adtheem" after finishing reading of the Qur'ân?

Response: All Praise is for Allaah, the One, and prayers and salutations upon His Messenger, his family and his companions. To proceed:

The saying of "sadaq Allaahul-'Adtheem" after finishing reading of the Qur'an is an innovation. The Prophet (sal-Allaahu `alayhe wa sallam) did not do this and nor did the Rightly Guided Khulafaa, nor any of the (other) Companions (radhiyallaahu 'anhum) and nor the Imaams of the (Pious) Predecessors (rahimahumullaah). This being with their vast reading and assistance in spreading it's (the Qur'ân's) message and knowing it's rulings. So the saying of this and adhering to it after finishing the reading (of the Qur'ân) is an innovation. It has been confirmed on the authority of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu `alayhe wa sallam) that he said:

((Anyone who introduces something into this matter of ours (i.e. Islaam), that which is not from it, will have it rejected)) - this (narration) is agreed upon (by both Imaam al-Bukhaaree and Imaam Muslim).

This is the answer Sheikh Bin Baz gave to a question on the status of saying "sadaqa allahu al-atheem" after reciting Qur'an according to the way of the Salaf-us-Salih:

"Praise be to Allah.

I do not know any basis for the people's habit of saying "sadaqa allahu al-atheem" when they finish reading Qur'an, so it should not be taken as a habit. Indeed according to the principles of sharee'ah it is more like bida'a, if any believes it is sunnah. So this should not be done and shouldnot be taken as a habit.

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With regard to the ayat: "Say O Muhammad: Allah has spoken the truth"

(Al-Imran 3:95) - this is not speaking about this matter. Rather Allah was commanding him to explain to the people that Allah has spoken the truth in what he has said, in His books, the Tawrat, etc., and that he has spoken the truth in all that He had said to His slaves in the Tawrat the Injeel and all other revealed books.

And he was speaking the truth in all that he said his slaves in his book the Qur'an.

But this is not evidence that it is mustahabb to say "sadaqa allahu al-atheem" after reading the Qur'an or after reading some ayahs or a surah.

This is not reported or known from the Prophet (SAW) or his companions (radi allahu anhum).

When Ibn Masood recited to the Prophet (SAW) from the beginning of surat ul nisa'a until he reached the ayat:

"How will it be then, when we bring from each nation a witness and we bring you o Muhammad as a witness against these people?"

the Prophet (SAW) said to him "Enough"

Ibn Masood said: "I turned and saw that his eyes were filled with tears", i.e. he was weeping of the mention of this great status on the Day of Resurrection which is mentioned in this ayat, Where Allah says: "How will it be then, when we bring from each nation a witness and we bring you - O Muhammad - as a witness against these people" (i.e. his ummah)

The point here is that there is no basis in sharee'ah for adding these words "sadaqa allahu al-atheem" when finished reading the Qur'an. What is prescribed is not to do this, in accordance with the example of the Prophet (SAW) and his companions (radi allahu anhum). But if a person does that sometimes, without intending to, it doesn't matter, for Allah speaks the truth in all matters, may he be glorified and exalted. But making a habit every time one reads the Qur'an, as many people do now adays, has no basis, as stated above."

ISSUES TWO

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Laylat al-Nusf min Sha'baan (the middle of Sha'baan)
should not be singled out for worship

By Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid

Praise be to Allaah.

There is no saheeh marfoo' report that speaks of the virtue of the middle of Sha'baan that may be followed, not even in the chapters on al-Fadaa'il (chapters on virtues in books of hadeeth etc.). Some maqtoo' reports (reports whose isnaads do not go back further than the Taabi'een) have been narrated from some of the Taabi'een, and there are some ahaadeeth, the best of which are mawdoo' (fabricated) or da'eef jiddan (very weak). These reports became very well known in some countries which were overwhelmed by ignorance; these reports suggest that people's lifespans are written on that day or that it is decided on that day who is to die in the coming year. On this basis, it is not prescribed to spend this night in prayer or to fast on this day, or to single it out for certain acts of worship. One should not be deceived by the large numbers of ignorant people who do these things. And Allaah knows best.

Shaykh Ibn Jibreen.

If a person wants to pray qiyaam on this night as he does on other nights - without doing anything extra or singling this night out for anything - then that is OK. The same applies if he fasts the day of the fifteenth of Sha'baan because it happens to be one of the ayyaam al-beed, along with the fourteenth and thirteenth of the month, or because it happens to be a Monday or Thursday. If the fifteenth (of Sha'baan) coincides with a Monday or Thursday, there is nothing wrong with that (fasting on that day), so long as he is not seeking extra reward that has not been proven (in the saheeh texts). And Allaah knows best.

Congregational dhikr

Fatwa

By Sheikh `Abd al-Rahmân al-Barrâk

Question: Can we perform dhikr congregationally and in unison? If yes, when, where, how, and at what time? If no, what about the numerous hadith stating that the Companions used to remember Allah in groups? [For instance: Riyâd as-Salihîn of Imam al-Nawawî (Arabic & English) under the topic "On Remembrance in Company" (chapter 246, page 661)]

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Answer: When it comes to acts of worship, they have to be clearly and precisely established by the Qur'ân and Sunnah. Anything else is an unlawful innovation (bid`ah). The burden of proof, therefore, is upon the one claiming that some act is an act of worship.

There is no authentic hadith in existence that claims that we are supposed to perform dhikr in unison. Therefore, it is an innovation to do so.

None of the hadith you refer to indicate in any way that the Companions engaged in dhikr congregationally. They simply say that the Companions used to remember Allah in groups.

This does not imply that they did so in concert with each other and with one voice. For example, Muslims in the mosque are together engaged in the remembrance of Allah, while in fact some of them are reading Qur'ân. Some may be engaged in teaching or learning the Qur'ân. Others may be praying while some may be praising Allah and remembering him using the forms of remembrance taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Some may be holding study sessions wherein they are indeed participating together in the remembrance of Allah, but not by chanting in unison.

Wearing verses of the Qur'ân

Fatwa

By Sheikh Humûd al-Harbî

Question: Wearing amulets containing Quranic verses are allowed by some scholars but prohibited by others. Those who prohibit these things say that it is just like seeking refuge with other than Allah who is our only Protector. What is the truth about this matter? Is it really a form of polytheism?

Answer: There is nothing in Allah's book or in the Sunnah that permits the wearing of any part of the Qur'ân on one's body or hanging verses of the Qur'ân about the place. It was not a practice of any of the Companions, though they were the staunchest followers of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Most of the Successors forbade this practice as well. Ibrahîm al-Nakhî`î said: "They disliked all kinds of amulets whether they were extracted from Qur'ân or not." Therefore, the practice of wearing the Qur'ân should be avoided.

However, wearing the Qur'ân in this way does not classify the one who does so

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as a polytheist. Prayer is also lawful behind people who do this or believe in the permissibility of doing so. The Qur'ân is the speech of Allah and as such, it is one of His attributes.

Some of the scholars permitted wearing passages of the Qur'ân such as Sa`îd b. al-Musayyib, `Ata' and others.

Wearing amulets other than the Qur'ân is another matter. It is definitely a form of polytheism and a form of reliance on other than Allah.

And Allah knows best.

CONCLUSION

□□Allah says in the Quran: "This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion" [Noble Quran 5]

□□Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "I have left behind me two things, if you cling to them you will never go astray. They are the book of Allah and my Sunnah" [al-Hakim] and "...so cling to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided caliphs after me, even if it be with your teeth" [Bukhari]

MAY ALLAH GUIDE US TO FOLLOW THE RIGHT PATH IN ACCORDING TO HIS TEACHINGS IN THE QUR'AN AND THE TEACHINGS OF OUR BELOVED PROPHET MUHAMMAD SALLALLAHU 'ALAYHI WA SALLAM.