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# EVERY RELIGIOUS INNOVATION IS MISGUIDANCE



Abd Ar-Rahman bin  
Abd Al-Kareem Ash-Sheha





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In the name of Allah,  
the Beneficent, the Merciful



## Dear Reader,

Islam is a complete and integral Divine religion, as well as a way of life. It has a complete code of ethics for both a happy life, and a peaceful life after death.

Islam is pure from all imperfections and defects. It is the perfect way of life.

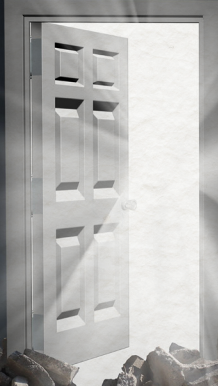
Hence, any deviant or abnormal behavior observed in a Muslim should have no bearing on the religion itself. The reason for such deviation or bad behavior is generally due to ignorance of the religion, or weak faith.

It is unjust and unreasonable for Islam to be assessed or evaluated based on the behavior and attitudes of any one person, with the exception of the Prophet Muhammad, who is the example and role-model.

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# FOREWORD







All praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds, the Creator of the heavens and earth and all creatures living in them. May God grant peace and blessings to Prophet Muhammad, God's final Messenger, whose message brought mercy to all mankind. May He also give His blessings to all the prophets and messengers whom He sent to guide mankind out of darkness and into light.

At the Osoul International Centre for Islamic Advocacy, every new release that we produce gives us a great opportunity to interact with our readers. All our releases have the same overall objective; to present Islam to mankind, as it truly is. We aim to make people aware of Islam's fine aspects and profound teachings and to show clearly that it is the only faith that provides practical and effective solutions to all the problems faced by humanity. Islam gives clear and solid answers to all of the questions that have troubled people over many generations, such as: How did we come into existence and why do we exist? Where do we go from here? Furthermore, Islam is the only religion that requires its followers to love and respect all the prophets God sent, particularly Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them both).

We take great care to provide solid and rational proofs for our arguments, so as to give our readers the reassurance they need, and our releases also refute the accusations levelled against Islam and provide clarification to people's misunderstandings of Islamic teachings.

By God's grace, Islam is the fastest growing religion in our time, as confirmed by a study undertaken by the Pew Research Center<sup>(1)</sup>, and our motive is to make this great divine faith known to all people.

This book, ***Every Religious Innovation is Misguidance***, defines deviation from the essence of Islam and its true teachings and explains its various types. It explains the negative consequences of deviation on Muslims and their life, and highlights the fact that deviation is bound to give non-Muslims a distorted view of Islam. The author describes the proper attitude towards any unwarranted element that is introduced into the religion of Islam, quoting a number of major scholars and Qur'anic commentators, and outlines the role of Muslims in discarding all deviation, according to their abilities. This is based on the Prophet's clear injunction: "Whoever among you sees evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then with his tongue (by speaking out against it). If he is unable to do so, then [he should hate it in] his heart, and that is the weakest level of faith." (Muslim)

We hope that readers will find this book useful in adding to their knowledge and understanding of Islam.

**Executive Director**

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(1) "The Future of the Global Muslim Population", Pew Research Center, 27 January 2011, Available at: <http://goo.gl/k0FJ8Y>



01

## TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS BOOK

(Taken from Sheik Mahmoud Murad's book, *Common Mistakes in Translation*)

**1. RUBB:** Some prefer to translate the term “Rubb” into the word “Lord”. Besides the fact that the latter is a Biblical term referring to the alleged divinity of the Prophet Jesus, the word “lord” can never convey the conclusive significance of the term “Rubb”. Besides the typical connotations associated with the term lord, like master and ruler, the term “Rubb” also means, the Creator, the Fashioner, the Provider, the One upon Whom all creatures depend for their means of subsistence, and the One Who gives life and causes death.

**2. DEEN:** The Arabic word commonly translated as religion is “Deen”. In Arabic though, this conveys a complete way of life, which is both private and public. It is a comprehensive term covering: acts of worship, political practice, and a detailed code of conduct, including hygiene or etiquette matters.

**3. ﷺ** Sal'lal'laaho a'laihi wa sal'lam. Some translate it as “peace be upon him”. This translation though is incomplete, if not altogether incorrect. A more complete translation is, “May Allah exalt his mention, and render him and his household safe and secure from every derogatory thing”.

All praise is due to Allah, Whose aid we implore, and Whose forgiveness, guidance, and protection against our own sinful acts we seek. He whom Allah guides aright, none can lead astray; and whom He leads astray, none can guide aright. I testify that there is no true god worthy of being worshipped except Allah alone Who has no partner, and I testify that Muhammad ﷺ is the servant of Allah, and His Messenger. May Allah exalt his mention and render him and his household, his Companions, and those who follow their way, safe from every evil and grant them security on the Day of Resurrection.



Matters pertaining to Deen must be accepted without the slightest doubt. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.” [59:7]

The Muslim is required to abstain from falsely alleging an issue or matter as being part of the Deen; for this would lead one astray, and eventually lead him to Hell.

One must follow the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ in these matters, and should not prefer any opinion over a clear reference in the revelation. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“Say, [O Muhammad], ‘If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.’” [3:31]

One of the nullifiers of Iman (Faith) as stated by the Prophet ﷺ is not following his guidance. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“All of my community will enter Paradise except for those who refuse.” They asked, “O Messenger of Allah, who will refuse?” He replied, “Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise. Whoever rebels against me has refused.” (Al-Hakim)



A significant number of those who claim to be Muslims do acts of worship which contradict the teachings of Islam.

The Muslim is required to abstain from falsely alleging an issue or matter as being part of the Deen; for this would lead one astray, and eventually lead him to Hell. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever innovates a matter in the Deen, which is not from it, would have it rejected.” (Bukhari)

A significant number of those who claim to be Muslims do acts of worship which contradict the teachings of Islam, or they practice certain innovated rites which have no basis in the Deen of Allah. In reality, these people follow their whims and desires. They are condemned by the words of Allah, the Exalted:

“Have you seen the one who takes as his god his own desire? Then would you be responsible for him?” [25:43]

Were the danger of practicing these innovated rites isolated to the individual practicing them alone, the matter would be less dangerous. But in reality, innovated practices negatively influence the general assembly of Muslims, such that some

would approve and agree with the innovation ignorantly, or sympathize with the one who practices it.

Innovated practices introduced in the Deen of Allah would lead to the deterioration of Muslims, and would lead them away from the Deen of Allah. Furthermore, innovated practices would negatively influence non-Muslims. When they see people who call themselves Muslims practicing and observing illogical practices and behaving in an irrational manner which contradicts with the true spirit of Islam, it would dissuade them from Islam, and they would regard Islam as any other religion which is based on falsehood and illogical beliefs.

People who practice innovations can be categorized into three categories:

**1<sup>st</sup> CATEGORY:** People who observe innovated practices due to their ignorance in matters of Deen. Islam does not generally excuse such people, since the cure and solution for ignorance is asking those who have knowledge. One simply cannot observe practices according to his whims! Allah says:

“So ask the people of the Message if you do not know.” [21:7]

People who observe innovations while blindly following those before them are also included in this category. Allah says:

“And when it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has revealed,’ they say, ‘Rather, we will follow that upon which we found our fathers.’ Even if Satan was inviting them to the punishment of the Blaze?” [31:21]

Due to their observance of innovated practices which contradict the Shari’ah (Islamic Jurisprudential Law) these people are misguided; their observance of innovated practices would not benefit them. Observing fewer acts of worship, in accordance to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ is better and more rewarding than observing many innovated practices. Allah says:

“Working [hard] and exhausted. They will [enter to] burn in an intensely hot Fire.” [88:3-4]

Were the danger of practicing these innovated rites isolated to the individual practicing them alone, the matter would be less dangerous.



Innovated practices introduced in the Deen of Allah would lead to the deterioration of Muslims, and would lead them away from the Deen of Allah.

**2<sup>nd</sup> CATEGORY:** People who seek materialistic gain. These people rely upon the ignorance of people in order to attain their goals. These people are the farthest from the Deen, and some even falsely claim to be Muslims, when in fact, Islam is innocent of them! They distort and mar the image of Islam with their innovated practices. The Prophet ﷺ said about these people:

The worst servant is he who seeks worldly gain by observing practices which should be done sincerely for the sake of Allah.

“The worst servant is he who seeks worldly gain by observing practices which should be done sincerely for the sake of Allah. The worst servant is he who sticks to doubtful issues and legalizes the unlawful.” (Haakim)

**3<sup>rd</sup> CATEGORY:** The enemies of Islam and those who try their best to disseminate innovated religious practices in order to divide the Muslim Ummah (nation). They devoutly support the people of innovation financially and otherwise in order to create new sects which differ with Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah in terms of Aqeedah (creed) and methodology. With this the enemies of Islam would achieve their goal - to keep Muslims away from their Aqeedah and Deen.

Innovation in Deen is one of the methods Shaitan (Arabic name for Satan) uses to lead people astray. Ibn Ab’bas, with whom Allah is pleased, said concerning the exegesis of the words of Allah:

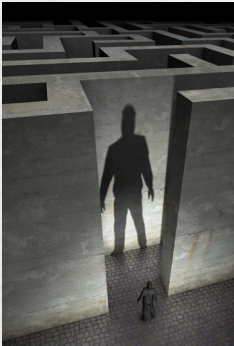
“And they said, 'Never leave your gods and never leave Wadd or Suwa' or Yaghuth and Ya'uq and Nasr.'” [71:23]

“These are names of pious men from the people of Noah. When they died, Shaitan encouraged them to build statues in their sitting places so that they could remember them, and they named these figures by their names, and they were not worshipped until these people passed away, and this was forgotten.” (Bukhari)

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said<sup>(1)</sup>:

“Shaitan tries to destroy the son of Adam in one of seven pitfalls. Some of them are more intense than others. Shaitan would

(1) Madaarij as-Saalikeen pg. 254-256.



Innovation in Deen is one of the methods Shaitan uses to lead people astray.

not try to destroy him in the next pit-fall until he fails to destroy him in a previous one. These pit-falls are:

**1<sup>st</sup> PIT-FALL:** The phase of disbelief in Allah, His Deen, His perfect attributes, and in what the Prophet ﷺ informed us about, and the fact that we will be resurrected. If Shaitan is successful in misleading the servant in this phase, his enmity towards him would diminish and he would take rest. If the servant succeeds, and survives in this phase, Shaitan would try to destroy him in the next phase.

**2<sup>nd</sup> PIT-FALL:** The phase of Bid'ah (religious innovation), whether it pertains to believing in other than the truth which the Messenger ﷺ was sent with or by worshipping Allah in a manner which He didn't reveal. Shaitan enjoys that a person succumbs in this phase, as Bid'ah conflicts with the nature of the Deen and compels one to reject it. Furthermore, the one who observes innovated religious practices would not repent from his actions; rather, he would invite people to his Bid'ah causing it to spread!

Observing innovated religious practices would compel one to forge lies against Allah and speak without knowledge; thus it openly clashes with the Sunnah. Observing minor Bid'ah practices would lead one to observing major Bid'ah practices in the long-run. In this manner, a person would eventually exit the fold of Islam.

Scholars and people of knowledge best know the real dangers of Bid'ah practices. If a person succeeds and survives in this phase by adhering to the Sunnah, and understanding its texts as the Pious Predecessors understood them, Shaitan would seek to destroy him in the next phase.

**3<sup>rd</sup> PIT-FALL:** The phase of major sins. If he is able to destroy the servant in this phase, he would beautify the deed that he is doing and probably compel him to say the following: "No sin would harm the Tawheed (monotheism) as no good deed would benefit a man who has fallen into Shirk (associating partners

Observing innovated religious practices would compel one to forge lies against Allah and speak without knowledge; thus it openly clashes with the Sunnah.



Scholars and people of knowledge best know the real dangers of Bid'ah practices.

with Allah).” If the person is successful and survives this phase, Shaitan would seek to destroy him in the next phase.

**4<sup>th</sup> PIT-FALL:** The phase of minor sins. Shaitan would compel a person to belittle these sins, by whispering to him, “There is no fear upon you as long as you keep away from major sins. Don’t you know that the minor sins would be expiated by staying away from major sins?” Shaitan would convince him that there is no harm in doing minor sins, until he regularly practices it. The person who has done a major sin, and has repented and is fearful of what he has done, would be better off than him; for regularly doing a minor sin would change it to a major sin! Constant repentance eliminates sins, but no minor sin remains as such when a person regularly does it.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Beware of minor sins! Their likeness is like a people who stopped over in a valley, and the people spread out each bringing a stick, until they made a fire and cooked their bread. Whenever a person practices a minor sin regularly it would destroy him.” (Ahmed)

If the servant succeeds and survives in this phase, by being careful and repenting continuously to Allah, and observing righteous deeds, Shaitan would seek to destroy him in the next phase.

**5<sup>th</sup> PIT-FALL:** The phase of indulging in lawful things in which there is no sin. Shaitan would busy a person by compelling him to indulge excessively in lawful things in order to keep him away from worshipping Allah. He would then lead him to abandon the Sunnah practices, and later lead him to abandon the obligatory practices. If the servant succeeds and survives in this phase by understanding the greatness of acts of worship, Shaitan would seek to destroy him in the next phase.

**6<sup>th</sup> PIT-FALL:** The phase of busying the servant with deeds which are lesser in reward. Shaitan would encourage the servant to observe certain acts of worship and beautify them to him, and show him the great reward of doing those acts of





worship in order to busy him with it and to keep him away from deeds which are more beneficial. When Shaitan fails to mislead the servant and deprive him from receiving any reward he tries to deprive him from receiving the full reward. Therefore, he busies him with the lesser deeds and keeps him away from the greater deeds, in terms of reward, and also keeps him away from the most beloved deeds to Allah and busies him with lesser beloved deeds to Allah.

**7<sup>th</sup> PIT-FALL:** If Shaitan fails in the above six phases, he would resort to harming the person in any way possible; by summoning his men and followers and riling them against this individual. The Prophets and Messengers were not left unharmed by this. One should bear patiently, for victory and success are tied with patience.

The worst thing that results from Bid'ah is forging lies against Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. This is a grave sin, the Prophet ﷺ said: "To forge a lie against me is not like forging a lie against anyone else. Whoever forges a lie against me, let him be assured of his seat in Hell-Fire." (Bukhari)

The great Companion, Abdullah ibn Masood, with whom Allah is pleased, said: "Follow the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ and do not innovate, for you have been sufficed."

How great are the words of Abdullah ibn Masood, with whom Allah is pleased. The intellectual should think about his statement. Indeed the authentically reported sayings, actions and approvals of the Prophet ﷺ would suffice a person in every way, and there would be no reason for him to resort to any Bid'ah.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"A deed would be observed with zeal for a period of time. So whoever observes my Sunnah zealously would be guided, and whoever observes other than that would be destroyed." (Ibn Khuzaimah)

**Abdurrahmaan ibn Abdul-Kareem ash-Sheha**



02

## IS THE DEEN OF ISLAM COMPLETE?

The Sunnah includes the Prophet's statements, actions and approvals provided that it has been narrated to us with a sound chain of narration.



The innovator in Deen believes that the Deen of Allah is incomplete, and indirectly he is saying that he is completing the Deen of Allah with his innovation!

It is known by necessity that the Deen of Islam is complete, as Allah, the Exalted, says:

“This day, I have perfected your Deen for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your Deen.” [5:3]

It addresses every issue that concerns man in this life and in the Hereafter, Allah says:

“And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good tidings for the Muslims.” [16:89]

Whatever aspect of Shari’ah that has not been clarified in the first source of Islamic Law, which is the Qur’an, has been clarified in the second source of Islamic Law, which is the Sunnah. The Sunnah includes the Prophet’s statements, actions and approvals provided that it has been narrated to us with a sound chain of narration. Allah says:

“And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought.” [16:44]

The Prophet ﷺ clarified and showed his Ummah every good and warned them from every evil. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“There was no Prophet before me, except that it was incumbent upon him to clarify to his Ummah the good that he knew of, and warn them from the evil that he knew of.” (Muslim)

Whoever believes otherwise would certainly have disbelieved in the text of the Qur’an which was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ.

The innovator in Deen believes that the Deen of Allah is incomplete, and indirectly he is saying that he is completing the Deen of Allah with his innovation!

The innovator in Deen would in effect be blaming the Prophet

ﷺ for treachery because he did not convey the Message which he was charged with. He would be indirectly saying: “Islam is in need of this innovation, which the Prophet was aloof of, therefore, I will complete the Deen with this innovation!”

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“I have left you on a clear path, its night is like its day, and no one would stray from it except a person who would be ruined.”

(Hakim)

The innovator in Deen would in effect be blaming the Prophet for treachery because he did not convey the Message which he was charged with.



## THE RULING OF ADDING SOMETHING TO THE DEEN WHICH IS NOT LEGALIZED BY ALLAH OR THE PROPHET ﷺ

Allah, the Exalted, says:

“Yes [on the contrary], whoever submits his face in Islam to Allah while being a doer of good will have his reward with his Rubb. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.” [2:112]

This means that the one who sincerely performs righteous deeds for the sake of Allah, and does them in accordance to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ ...they alone are the ones who would enter Jannah (the Heavenly Gardens).<sup>(2)</sup>

Imam Ahmed, may Allah have mercy on him, narrated on the authority of Abdullah ibn Masood, with whom Allah is pleased, that he said: “The Prophet ﷺ drew a line, and then said, ‘This is the Path of Allah.’ And then he drew small lines on the right and left of this line, saying, ‘These are paths, upon each path there is a devil calling people.’ He then recited the words of Allah: ‘And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way.



The one who sincerely observes practices for the sake of Allah, and does them in accordance to the Sunnah of the Prophet ...they alone are the ones who would enter Jannah.

(2) *Tayseer al-Kareem ar-Rahman fi Tafseer Kalam al-Man'naan*; Sheik as-Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him.

This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.”  
[6:153] (Ibn Hib'ban)

The Prophet ﷺ also said:

“Indeed the most truthful of speech is the Book of Allah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad ﷺ and the most evil of matters are the innovated ones, and every (religious) innovation is a Bid'ah, and every Bid'ah is a means of deviation, and every deviation would lead to the Fire.” (Ibn Khuzaimah)

The danger and seriousness of talking without knowledge in religious matters is very clear from the Qur'an and the Prophetic ahadeeth. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them. And leave [the company of] those who practice deviation concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing.” [7:180]

Allah, the Exalted, also says:

“And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all of those will one be questioned.” [17:36]

Allah, the Exalted, also says:

“Or have they other deities who have ordained for them a religion to which Allah has not consented?” [42:21]

Whoever innovates a religious rite or practice in the Deen of Allah, while legalizing something illegal in Islam, or prohibiting something legal, he would become a disbeliever if he does not repent, as reported in the Hadeeth of the Prophet ﷺ in which he explained the words of Allah:

“They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their god besides Allah.” [9:31]

Explaining this further, he said:

“Even though they did not worship them (openly), but they would deem lawful whatever their rabbis and monks made lawful,

The danger and seriousness of talking without knowledge in religious matters is very clear from the Qur'an and the Prophetic ahadeeth.



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and deem unlawful whatever their rabbis and monks deemed unlawful.” (Tirmidhi)

This stern warning encompasses those who follow them in proclaiming things as lawful or unlawful when they are not.

The scholar, Sheik Abdurrahmann as-Sa’di, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “They (i.e. rabbis and monks) would legalize for their people laws and verbal statements which go against the Deen of the Messengers, and people would follow them. They would aggrandize their religious teachers, and pious people, to such an extent that they would take them as gods besides Allah. It reached the point where people would even offer sacrificial animals, beseech and supplicate them.”<sup>(3)</sup>



## WHAT IS BID’AH?

In order to understand the meaning of Bid’ah, we must know what Sunnah implies.

Imam Ibn Rajab, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “Sunnah is a followed path. It includes what the Prophet ﷺ and his rightly-guided Caliphs adhered to from creedal beliefs, observance of practices, and sayings...this is the complete Sunnah.”<sup>(4)</sup>

Observing and adhering to the Sunnah, whether in creedal beliefs, actions or sayings is obligatory, Allah says:

“Truly, you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent role-model for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.” [33:21]

The Prophet ﷺ also stressed the importance of observing his Sunnah. He said:

“I advise you to fear Allah, and to listen and obey, even if an Abyssinian servant has authority over you, for indeed those



Sunnah is a followed path. It includes what the Prophet and his rightly-guided Caliphs adhered to from creedal beliefs, observance of practices, and sayings.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ja-mi al-Uloom wal-Hikam 1/120.

of you who live shall witness many differences, so adhere to my Sunnah, and to the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliphs who come after me. Adhere strictly to it. Bite on it with your molars. Beware of innovations. Every (religious) innovation is a deviation and every deviation leads to Hell-Fire.” (Ibn Hibban)

Muhammad was sent to man and Jinn at large, to clarify matters that pertain to Deen, such as creedal beliefs, aims of Shari’ah and the like.

Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said:<sup>(5)</sup> “Muhammad ﷺ was sent to man and Jinn at large, to clarify matters that pertain to Deen, such as creedal beliefs, aims of Shari’ah and the like. [After him], no Aqeedah (creedal belief) would be accepted except his Aqeedah, and no Shari’ah would be accepted except his Shari’ah. No one would attain nearness to Allah, His pleasure, and Jannah, except by submitting and completely following him in his sayings, actions, and creedal beliefs, while believing in matters that pertain to the unseen world, and observing acts of worship and abstaining from sinful acts.”



Taqwa is achieved when man observes acts of worship, in accordance to the Sunnah, and renounces disobedience to Allah in accordance to the Sunnah, fearing Allah’s punishment.

Allah, the Exalted, says:

“Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing Allah. For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words of Allah. That is the great attainment.” [10:62]

Allah, the Exalted, says:

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.” [49:13]

Taqwa (i.e. piety) is achieved when man observes acts of worship, in accordance to the Sunnah, and renounces disobedience to Allah in accordance to the Sunnah, fearing Allah’s punishment. A Wali (pious person) would not attain nearness to Allah unless he observes the Fard (obligatory) acts and duties, and also observes the Nafil (supererogatory) acts. Allah says:

(5) *Fatawa al-Kubra* pg. 178-179.

“The most beloved thing by which My servant comes nearer to Me, is what I have enjoined upon him. And My servant keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (supererogatory acts) till I love him...” (Bukhari)

Bid’ah: (linguistically) refers to an innovation, novelty; anything originated, or invented, which did not exist before. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“The Ba’dee<sup>(6)</sup> of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: ‘Be!’ - And it is.” [2:117]

Sheik Abdurrahmaan as-Sa’di, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “The term Ba’dee means: its Originator and Creator, such that He created them perfectly.”<sup>(7)</sup>

Allah also says:

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘I am not something original among the messengers ...’” [46:9]

Meaning: I am not the first who came with a message from Allah to mankind. Rather, I am preceded by many Messengers. And when it is said: “So and so innovated a Bid’ah,” it means that he has initiated a method preceded by none before.

05

## ‘BID’AH CAN BE DIVIDED INTO TWO CATEGORIES:

**1<sup>st</sup> CATEGORY:** Religious Bid’ah (innovation). This includes innovations in the Deen of Allah, which oppose the guidance of our Prophet ﷺ and the path of the Pious Predecessors, whether it concerns creedal issues, or acts of worship. This type of Bid’ah is deemed unlawful by Qur’anic texts. Allah says:

“And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has

(6) Taken from the root word ba-di’aa, i.e. to originate.

(7) *Tayseer al-Kareem ar-Rahman fi Tafseer Kalam al-Man’naan*, by Sheik as-Sa’di, may Allah have mercy on him; pg. 725.

Bid’ah: (linguistically) refers to an innovation, novelty; anything originated, or invented, which did not exist before.



Whoever worships Allah in a manner that is not legalized by Allah or His Messenger, or practiced by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, then this person is an innovator.

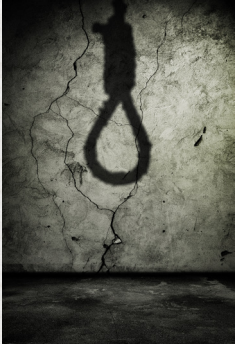
become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers - We will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell, and evil it is as a destination.” [4:115]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“All of my Ummah would enter Jannah, except him who refuses to enter it.” It was said, “Who would refuse to enter it?” He replied, “Whoever obeys me would enter Jannah, and whoever disobeys me has refused to enter it.” (Bukhari)

Sheik Islam ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “That is why Allah, the Exalted, has ordered us to say in each prayer: ‘O Allah, guide us to the Straight Path. The path of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the path) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray.’ Those who earned the anger of Allah are the ones who know the truth and oppose it, and those who went astray are those who worship Allah without knowledge, while knowing that it opposes the Book of Allah and the Sunnah.”<sup>(8)</sup>

Those who earned the anger of Allah are the ones who know the truth and yet oppose it.



Those who went astray are those who worship Allah without knowledge, while knowing that it opposes the Book of Allah and the way of His Messengers.

06

## RELIGIOUS INNOVATIONS CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THREE CATEGORIES:

**A.** Bid’ah which is tantamount to disbelief, which would take one out of the fold of Islam. Such Bid’ah pertains to credal issues, such as one who offers acts of worship to other than Allah, and one who circumambulates a grave, and one who beseeches and seeks the help of other than Allah in matters that they cannot help. Allah says:

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘Verily, my Salah (Prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Rubb of the worlds.’” [6:162]

**B.** Bid’ah which is not tantamount to disbelief, but leads to disbelief; such as building structures on graves, and praying

(8) Fatawa al-Kubra pg. 194.



and making Du'aa (supplication) near it. That is why the Prophet ﷺ forbade his Ummah to frequently visit his grave, for the fear that it would be worshipped to the exclusion of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Do not make your homes like graves, and do not make my grave a place for celebration, and exalt my mention, for it would reach me\* wherever you may be.”<sup>(9)</sup> (Abu Dawood)

- C.** Bid'ah which are equal to sinful acts; such as celibacy (to avoid marriage), and to fast the days continuously and to pray throughout the nights. Anas, with whom Allah is pleased, reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Three people came to the houses of the Prophet’s wives ﷺ and asked about his worship. When they were told, they considered it as too little, and said, “We are unlike the Messenger of Allah. Allah has forgiven his past and future sins!” One of them said, “As for me, I shall never marry.” The other said, “I shall fast and not break my fast.” The other said, “I shall pray the night prayer continuously.” When the Prophet ﷺ heard this, he called them and said:

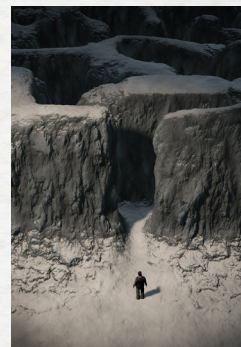
“Are you the ones who said this? Indeed I am the most pious and God-fearing of you, but I pray and sleep, fast and break it, and marry women. Whoever does not follow my Sunnah, he is not from me.” (Bukhari)

From this, it is clear that whoever worships Allah in a manner that is not legalized by Allah or His Messenger ﷺ, or practiced by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, then this person is an innovator. For the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allah. Whoever rebels against me has rebelled against Allah. Whoever obeys those I appoint to lead has obeyed me. Whoever rebels against those I appoint to lead has disobeyed me.” (Bukhari)

**2<sup>nd</sup> CATEGORY:** Worldly innovations, which have no relation to the Deen, such as inventions and the like. They are not called

The Prophet said, “Indeed I am the most pious and God-fearing of you, but I pray and sleep, fast and break it, and marry women. Whoever does not follow my Sunnah, he is not from me.”



(9) Meaning - don't burden yourselves to visit my grave to exalt my mention, for your supplication would reach me wherever you are.

“Bid’ah,” even though they are considered as such from a linguistic perspective. The Prophet ﷺ did not warn and caution people from this type of “Bid’ah”. All customs, worldly affairs and transactions are lawful, as long as there are no proofs that point to their prohibition. This category is not considered a “religious innovation” because they are not considered as acts of worship.

Worldly innovations, which have no relation to the Deen, such as inventions and the like, are not called “Bid’ah,” even though they are considered as such from a linguistic perspective.



## THE STANCE OF SHARI’AH REGARDING RELIGIOUS INNOVATIONS



One should know that the second Testimony of Faith, “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah,” obliges the person to obey him, and believe in what he has informed us about and to stay away from that which he has forbidden. It also requires that a person worship Allah in the allowed and sanctioned manner, not in any way he desires or wishes.

It is a must upon the person to reject every religious innovation. Allah says:

“So let those beware who dissent from the Prophet's order, lest a calamity or painful punishment strike them.” [24:63]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“He who innovates a thing in our Deen, it shall be rejected.”

(Bukhari)

Hudhaifah ibn al-Yamaan, with whom Allah is pleased, said:

“People were usually asking the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about goodness and good things, yet I would ask him about evil, for the fear that I would witness such things. I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, we in the past were living in ignorance, and Allah guided us with this goodness, so will there be evil after this goodness?’ He replied, ‘Yes.’ I said: ‘Is there goodness after that evil?’ He replied, ‘Yes, with some trials and tribulations.’ I said, ‘What sort of trials and tribulations?’ He replied, ‘People who follow

All customs, worldly affairs and transactions are lawful, as long as there are no proofs that point to their prohibition.

other than my Sunnah, and my guidance, you will be familiar with some of the practices, and you will be unfamiliar with some others.' I asked him, 'Is there any evil after that goodness?' He replied, 'Yes; callers to the gates of Hell-Fire, whoever answers them would be thrown into it.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, what should I do, if I witness this?' He replied, 'Stick to the general assembly of Muslims and their Imam.' I said, 'What should I do if there is no general assembly of Muslims, nor any Imam?' He replied, 'Forsake all the parties and groups, even if you hang on to a branch of a tree until death overcomes you.'" (Bukhari)

Abdullah ibn Masood, with whom Allah is pleased, said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"I will be the first near the Hawdh<sup>(10)</sup>, and people will be brought forth and they will be prevented from drinking, and I would say: 'My Rubb, [these are] my Companions!' It would be said: 'You do not know what they innovated after you.'" (Bukhari)

Abdullah ibn Abbas, with whom Allah is pleased, said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"Allah will not accept the deeds of a man of Bid'ah until he abandons the Bid'ah he practices." (Ibn Majah)

The Prophet ﷺ has informed us that there would be great Fitan (trials and tribulations) that would occur after him. The way a person would safeguard himself from these Fitan is by adhering to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ. A person would not safeguard himself by innovating matters in the Deen!

Ali, with whom Allah is pleased, said that the Prophet ﷺ said:

"There will be Fitnah." I said: "How can one safeguard himself from it?" He said: "The Book of Allah contains the stories of those before you, and news of future happenings, and how people should judge among themselves, and it is the criterion; any ruler that casts it aside, Allah would humble him and break his pride.



The Prophet has informed us that there would be great trials that would occur after him. The way a person would safeguard himself from these trials is by adhering to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger.

(10) The pool or cistern in the Hereafter which Allah granted the Prophet ﷺ; whoever drinks from it once, will never feel thirsty thereafter.

Umar ibn al-Khat'taab said, "Beware of people who stick to their opinions (and disregard textual proofs) for they are the enemies of the Sunnah."



Whoever speaks [with the Quran] would have spoken the truth, and whoever acts upon it, would receive a reward, and whoever rules by it, would have observed justice, and whoever calls to it, would be guided to the Straight Path.

Whoever seeks guidance from other than it, Allah would lead him astray, and it is the firm 'rope' of Allah, and it is the decisive reminder, and the Straight Path. One would not be lead astray by his whims when following it, nor would its recitation bring up any doubts. Its wonders cease not to exist and the scholars do not get their fill of it. It caused the Jinn to ponder and ask, 'Indeed we have heard an amazing Qur'an, which calls to the guidance.' Whoever speaks it would have spoken the truth, and whoever acts upon it, would receive a reward, and whoever rules by it, would have observed justice, and whoever calls to it, would be guided to the Straight Path." (Tirmidhi)

08

## STATEMENTS OF SCHOLARS WHO CONDEMNED BID'AH PRACTICES

Umar ibn al-Khat'taab, with whom Allah is pleased, said: "Beware of people who stick to their opinions (and disregard textual proofs) for they are the enemies of the Sunnah. They could not learn, memorize and understand the Hadeeth, so they stuck to their opinions, and lead themselves and others astray."<sup>(11)</sup>

Ibn Ab'baas, with whom Allah is pleased, said about the words of Allah from [3:106]:

"A day faces would be brightened and darkened...' As for those whom their faces will be brightened, they are the followers of the Sunnah, and the people of knowledge. But, 'As for those whom their faces will be darkened,' they are the people of Bid'ah and misguidance."<sup>(12)</sup>

Umar ibn Abdul-Aziz, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ established Sunnah practices, and his rightly guided Caliphs revived Sunnah practices. Observing these practices would point to the veracity of one's belief in the Book of Allah, and one's complete will to obey Allah, and one's

(11) Fath al-Bari 13/302.

(12) Usool al-l'tiqaad 1/72.

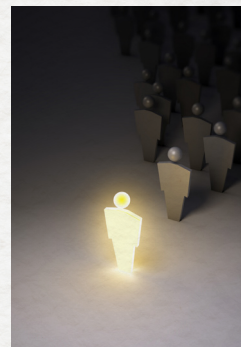
strength in the Deen of Allah. No one can distort or change these Sunnah practices, nor observe anything which opposes it. Whoever observes these practices would be guided aright, and whoever seeks the victory of Allah through it, would become victorious, and whoever opposes it, and follows a path other than that of the believers, Allah would keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell, and what an evil abode it is.”<sup>(13)</sup>

Al-Fudail ibn A’yaad, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “If you see a man of Bid’ah walking on a road, take another road. No deed of a man of Bid’ah will be accepted by Allah, and whoever helps a man of Bid’ah, would have certainly helped in destroying Islam.”<sup>(14)</sup>

Sufyan al-Thawri, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “Innovations are more beloved to Satan than sin. Since a sin may be repented from, but innovation is [most often] not repented from (as the person sees it as a good act).” And this is based upon the hadith of the Messenger of Allah (Sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam), “Indeed, Allah does not accept the repentance of an innovator, until he stops the innovation.” (At-Tabarani)<sup>(15)</sup>

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “If the heart is busied with Bid’ah practices, that person would abandon Sunnah practices.”<sup>(16)</sup>

Al-Fudail ibn A’yaad, said, “Whoever helps a man of Bid’ah, would have certainly helped in destroying Islam.”



Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, said: “If the heart is busied with Bid’ah practices, that person would abandon Sunnah practices.”



## PROOFS USED BY SOME TO SUPPORT THEIR DEVIUS PRACTICES

**1<sup>st</sup> Proof:** Some who have little knowledge in Shari’ah claim that the words of the Prophet ﷺ :

“Whoever initiates a good Sunnah in Islam, he would receive

(13) *Igaathatul Lahfaan* 1/159.

(14) *Talbees Iblees* pg. 14.

(15) *ibid.*

(16) *Igaathatul Lahfaan* 1/213.

its reward and the reward of those who practice it; while the rewards of those who practice it would not be lessened. Whoever initiates an evil practice in Islam, he would receive its sin and the sin of those who practice it, while the sins of those who practice it would not be lessened.” (Muslim)

Refutation: The Prophet ﷺ said: “Every Bid’ah is a means of deviation.” It is impossible that the Prophet ﷺ utters a tradition which contradicts another. The scholars are unanimous on this matter.

It is impossible that the Prophet utters a tradition which contradicts another. The scholars are unanimous on this matter.

To clarify this further, the Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever initiates a good Sunnah in Islam...” Bid’ah practices are not part of Islam! Furthermore, the Prophet ﷺ described the Sunnah as “good,” whereas, Bid’ah cannot be described as such. This tradition is also understood to refer to “reviving a Sunnah practice,” but does not mean “initiating and establishing a false Bid’ah practice!”

The meaning of this narration is further clarified in the circumstances behind the Hadeeth: a group of destitute people came to the Prophet ﷺ, so he ﷺ called people to give them whatever they could afford. A man from the Ansar came to the Prophet ﷺ holding a pouch full of silver which was quite heavy, and he placed it in front of the Messenger ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ was extremely happy, and said:

“Whoever initiates a good Sunnah in Islam would receive its reward and the reward of those who practice it until the Day of Resurrection...” (Ahmed)

This man had initiated a good deed, setting an example to those around him and encouraging, through his deed, others to give in charity. This is how he initiated a good deed, but the nature of the deed itself was already part of the Sunnah.

Another Example: If a scholar goes to a country where the Qur’an or the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ is not taught and he sits in the Masjid and teaches people the Qur’an and Sunnah, or sends teachers to that country to teach its people, this would be considered reviving a Sunnah act.



Whoever innovates a religious rite or practice in the Deen of Allah, while legalizing something illegal in Islam, or prohibiting something legal, he would become a disbeliever if he does not repent.

Also, if a person goes to a country where people shave off or shorten their beards, and he teaches people to stop shaving their beards, he would have revived the Sunnah in this regard. He would receive the reward equal to the reward of those who were guided through his efforts.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Trim the mustaches, and allow the beards to grow, and differ from the polytheists.” (Agreed Upon)

When a person grows out his beard and calls others to grow out their beards and they listen to him, he would have revived the Sunnah in this regard. The above mentioned Hadeeth does not refer to one who innovates religious matters, for every religious innovation is a means of deviation. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Beware of innovated matters in Deen, for every innovated rite is a Bid’ah, and every Bid’ah is a means of misguidance.” (Tirmidhi #2600)

2<sup>nd</sup> Proof: The words of Umar ibn al-Khat’taab, with whom Allah is pleased:

“What a good Bid’ah this is!”

Refutation: Umar, with whom Allah is pleased, said these words when he gathered the people in Taraweeh (Night Prayer) under one Imam. He meant the linguistic, not the legal, sense of the word.

Keep in mind that the Taraweeh prayer already has an origin in the Shari’ah! Umar, with whom Allah is pleased, did not innovate it; rather, he revived the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ prayed it with the Companions for three nights and then he stopped praying it in congregation, because he feared that it would become obligatory on his Ummah. He said: “I fear that it will become incumbent upon you, and you would not be able to do it.” (Bukhari)

The Companions, with whom Allah is pleased, prayed Taraweeh during the Prophet’s lifetime, and continued doing so

If a scholar goes to a country where the Qur’an or the Sunnah of the Prophet is not taught and he sits in the Masjid and teaches people this would be considered reviving a Sunnah act.



When a person grows out his beard and calls others to grow out their beards and they listen to him, he would have revived the Sunnah in this regard.

after his death. Some would pray together in small groups in the Prophet's Masjid.

Umar, with whom Allah is pleased, gathered people under one Imam, for what the Prophet ﷺ had feared would no longer come to pass. The Shari'ah was completed with his death, and thus, nothing could be added to it. That then is why he remarked, "What a good Bid'ah this is!"

The Bid'ah practice itself may reach the level of Kufr. Then it is a must upon people to boycott that person.



## OUR STANCE REGARDING PEOPLE OF BID'AH

Allah, the Exalted, says:

"Follow, [O mankind], what has been revealed to you from your Rubb and do not follow other than Him." [7:3]

### THE MAN OF BID'AH

The person of Bid'ah can be categorized according to the Bid'ah practice which he observes into one of two categories:

**1<sup>st</sup> CATEGORY:** The one who observes an innovation or devious practice due to his ignorance, and it has not spread amongst people. This person should be taught and the truth made clear to him that his actions and deeds oppose the Shari'ah.

**2<sup>nd</sup> CATEGORY:** The one who observes an innovation or devious practice because he is following his whims and desires. This person should be reminded of the stern punishment of Allah, and the truth should be made clear to him in a wise and appropriate manner. If he refuses to accept the truth, and adamantly persists and chooses to practice his Bid'ah, people should be cautioned and warned about this man and his devious Bid'ah practices, so that they would avoid it.

### THE ACT OF BID'AH

The Bid'ah practice itself may reach the level of Kufr. In the



If the Bid'ah practice is not tantamount to Kufr and boycotting him would cause him to return to the Sunnah, then he should be boycotted.



case where it does reach the level of Kufr (disbelief), then it is a must upon people to boycott that person after he has been given sincere advice and has refused to accept it.

If the Bid'ah practice is not tantamount to Kufr and boycotting him would cause him to return to the Sunnah, then he should be boycotted. But if doing so would not benefit, then he should not be boycotted, since boycotting him would cause him to stray farther from the Sunnah. He should be given sincere counseling and advice in a wise and beautiful manner. The Prophet ﷺ said: "It is not lawful for a Muslim to boycott his brother for more than three days." (Bukhari)

The Pious Predecessors, with whom Allah is pleased, would clarify and refute every Bid'ah in light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. This is not a duty confined to the scholars alone; rather it is a duty upon every Muslim who witnesses an innovation in the Deen of Allah, which has no basis in the Shari'ah. If the individual can clarify the truth, he should do so, otherwise he should refer the matter to the scholars, who would clarify this matter to the people, and eliminate the false "proofs" used by the people of Bid'ah to support their innovations.



## REASONS FOR THE SPREAD OF BID'AH

\*Not applying the Shari'ah of Allah, and being content with other than it. Allah says:

"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result." [4:59]

\*Not applying the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and abandoning it. The more a person strays away from the observance of Sunnah practices, the closer he would be to the Bid'ah. The Sunnah

The Pious predecessors would clarify and refute every Bid'ah in light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. This is not a duty confined to the scholars alone; rather it is a duty upon every Muslim.



If the individual can clarify the truth, he should do so; otherwise he should refer the matter to the scholars.

of the Prophet ﷺ is rich with his actions, statements and approvals. There is no need for a person to resort to applying Bid'ah practices. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“I have indeed left two things by which you will not go astray: the Book of Allah and My Sunnah. They will not part until I meet them at the Hawdh.” (Haakim)

Reasons for the spread of Bid'ah include not applying or pondering the meanings of the Qur'an, and using it only as a means of attaining blessings.

\*Not applying or pondering the meanings of the Qur'an, and using it only as a means of attaining blessings. Also, abandoning the remembrance of Allah, and not wanting to educate oneself in matters of Deen. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“And whoever is blinded from remembrance of the Most Merciful - We appoint for him a devil, and he is to him a companion.” [43:36]

\*Rejecting the truth, and not accepting it. Allah says:

“And when it is said to him, ‘Fear Allah,’ pride in the sin takes hold of him. Sufficient for him is Hellfire, and how wretched it is a resting place.” [2:206]

\*Appointing pseudo-scholars. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah does not remove knowledge by snatching it from his servants. He does so by collecting scholars (by death) until when no scholar is left, people will take for themselves ignorant leaders who will be consulted, and they will issue Fatawa (religious verdicts) without knowledge. They will misguide people and they themselves will be misguided.” (Bukhari)

\*Seeking knowledge from books alone and not attending the sessions of scholars. It has been said, “Whoever's mentor is his book (i.e. he depends solely on books to gain knowledge), his errors would be more than his accuracies.”

One should abstain from reading books which raise doubtful points. Umar ibn al-Khat'taab, with whom Allah is pleased, was reading a letter which he had received from some of the People of the Book, and the Prophet ﷺ was angry and said:

“Are you uncertain about [the Deen], O son of Khat'taab? By the



One should abstain from reading books which raise doubtful points.

One in Whose hand is my life, I have brought to you the Shari'ah which is clear-cut and chaste. Do not ask them about anything, for they may inform you with the truth and you would disbelieve it, or they would inform you with falsehood and you would believe it. By the One in Whose hand is my life, were Moses alive today, he would have no choice but to follow me." (Ahmed)

\*Not spreading sound knowledge, such as when scholars would remain aloof from people, silent and not convey the knowledge that they have. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"Indeed, those who conceal what We sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear for the people in the Scripture - those are cursed by Allah and cursed by those who curse. Except for those who repent and correct themselves and make evident [what they concealed]. Those - I will accept their repentance, and I am the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful." [2:159-160]

\*Extremism and fanaticism in Deen. This is one of the reasons why Bid'ah and Shirk (polytheism) spread among people. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Beware of extremism in Deen, for indeed those before you were destroyed due to their extremism in Deen." (Ibn Hib'ban)

\*Depending on the intellect to deduce rulings in matters of Deen. Allah, the Exalted says:

"It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error." [33:36]

\*Following one's whims and desires, Allah says:

"Have you seen the one who has taken his own desire as his god, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? So who will guide him after Allah? Then will you not be reminded?" [45:23]

Extremism and fanaticism in Deen is one of the reasons why Bid'ah and Shirk (polytheism) spread among people.



Among the reasons for the spread of Bid'ah is depending on the intellect to deduce rulings in matters of Deen.

\*Blindly following men's opinions and imitating people in matters of Deen, especially when these opinions are not based on knowledge and proper guidance. Also, not referring these issues to the Book of Allah, and the Sunnah of his Prophet ﷺ.

Allah says:

“And when it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has revealed,’ they say, ‘Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing.’ Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?” [2:170]

\*Befriending evil people and keeping evil company. Allah says:

“And the Day the wrongdoer will bite on his hands [in regret] he will say, ‘Oh, I wish I had taken with the Messenger a way. Oh, woe to me! I wish I had not taken that one as a friend. He led me away from the remembrance after it had come to me.’ And ever is Satan, to man, a deserter.” [25:27-29]

\*Not ordering with the good and forbidding evil. Allah says:

“And let there arise from you a nation inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.” [3:104]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“No Prophet was commissioned among previous nations except that he had helpers and companions who would follow that Prophet's Sunnah and implement his commands. After them came a people whose statements were contrary to their actions, and whose actions were contrary to their commands. So whoever strives against them with his hands, he is a believer, and whoever strives against them with his [speech], he is a believer, and whoever strives against them with his heart, he is a believer, and there is no Iman beyond that.” (Muslim)

\*Following dubious texts in the Shari'ah, which the general public does not understand. Allah says:

“It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muhammad], the Book.

Among the reasons for the spread of bid'ah are the blind following of men's opinions and imitating people in matters of Deen, specifically when these opinions are not based on revealed knowledge.



Reasons for the spread of bid'ah: Befriending evil people and keeping evil company.

In it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah. But those firm in knowledge say, 'We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Rubb.' And no one will be reminded except those of understanding." [3:7]

\*Leniency in the issue of al-Wala and al-Bara (affiliation and detachment for the sake of Allah). It includes loving and affiliating with the enemies of Allah, for this love would lead to emulating them. Abu Waqid al-Laithi, with whom Allah is pleased, said:

"When the Prophet ﷺ conquered Makkah, we went out with him (before the battle with the tribe of Hawazin) until we passed by a lote-tree called 'Dhat Anwaat' which the unbelievers were beseeching and calling upon. We said: 'O Messenger of Allah, assign for us 'Dhat Anwaat' as they have!' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Allah is the Greatest! The Children of Israel asked Musa, 'Assign for us a god similar to theirs! Indeed you are a people who know not.' Thereafter, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Indeed you will emulate and follow those before you.'" (Ibn Hib'ban)

\*Exerting effort to reach a ruling or conclusion in issues which do not require such, and deducing issues from textual proofs which are not relevant. It should also be known that there are Hadeeth which are not authentic which one should be aware of and should not spread around, nor use as proof in any issue.

There are also the weak Hadeeth. Some scholars legalized using these Hadeeth to encourage people to do virtuous deeds, as long as these Hadeeth do not contradict authentic Hadeeth. But these weak Hadeeth cannot be used in establishing acts of worship. Acts of worship can only be established through the Quran and those Hadeeth which have been authentically narrated from the Prophet ﷺ.

Reasons for the spread of bid'ah: Not ordering the good, nor forbidding evil.



Reasons for the spread of bid'ah: Following dubious texts in the Shari'ah, which the general public does not understand.

12

## CONDITIONS FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF GOOD DEEDS

If a person worships Allah for a certain reason which is not recognized in the Shari'ah, his action would be considered as a rejected Bid'ah.



The act of worship should agree with the Shari'ah in its type.

The deeds of servants will not be accepted unless two conditions are met:

**1<sup>st</sup> CATEGORY:** Sincerity. Deeds must be done sincerely for the sake of Allah. Allah says:

“And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and to give zakah. And that is the correct religion.” [98:5]

Allah, the Exalted, says in the Hadeeth Qudsi<sup>(17)</sup>:

“I have no need for partners. Whoever does a deed while associating partners with Me, I would leave him and his Shirk.” (Muslim)

**2<sup>nd</sup> CATEGORY:** To follow the example of the Prophet ﷺ by observing all acts of worship precisely as he did. This condition would not be correct unless six things are considered:

**A.** Reason for the act of worship: If a person worships Allah for a certain reason which is not recognized in the Shari'ah, his action would be considered as a rejected Bid'ah.

Example: Some people observe certain acts of worship during the 27<sup>th</sup> night of Rajab. They claim that the Prophet ﷺ was taken on the Night Journey in this night. Night prayer is a valid act of worship, but the reason it is initiated during this night is not acknowledged in Shari'ah. This is one point that can be used to clearly differentiate between Bid'ah and Sunnah acts.

**B.** Its type: The act of worship should agree with the Shari'ah in its type. If a person worships Allah by an act of worship which is not acknowledged in the Shari'ah it would not be acceptable.

(17) Hadeeth Qudsi: A statement of the Prophet ﷺ wherein he quotes Allah directly though it is not Quran, nor is rewarded like reading the Quran.

Example: If a person slaughters a horse as a sacrificial animal during the month of Dhul-Hijjah (12<sup>th</sup> month in the Islamic calendar). Though the timing of this person's sacrifice is valid, the sacrificial animal itself is invalid, and in violation of the Shari'ah, since the sacrificial animal can only be a camel, cow, goat or sheep.

- C.** Its number: If a person wants to perform the Dhuhr prayer with five units (rak'aat), his prayer would not be accepted since the number of units for every prayer are fixed. In the same manner, various acts of worship have a specified number associated with them, and this number must be conformed to consistently.
- D.** Its sequence: If a person makes wudhu and washes his feet first and then wipes his head, we say that his wudhu is null and void, since one must make wudhu in sequence. The same can be said of the sequence of the prayer.
- E.** Its time: If a person or community decides to gather for the sermon and prayer on Sunday instead of Friday, or even to do it on Friday but in the evening instead of the early noon, that would not be accepted since it was not done in the appropriate time.
- F.** Its place: If a person decides to make pilgrimage to other than the sacred mosque of Makkah, then this act would be rejected.<sup>(18)</sup>



## DANGERS OF BID'AH

There is immense danger in observing acts of Bid'ah. It allows the enemies of Islam to attack Islam and Muslims through it. So every Muslim should be cautious so that he would not be used as a tool to harm the Deen or the Muslims in any manner. Furthermore, a Muslim should not cover up or hide a man of Bid'ah.

The enemies of Islam have been able to divide the Muslims

(18) *Al-Ib'daa fi Kamaal ash-Shar'* by Sheik Muhammad ibn Uthaimin.

If a person wants to perform the Dhuhr prayer with five units (rak'aat), his prayer would not be accepted since the number of units for every prayer are fixed.



If a person makes wudhu and washes his feet first and then wipes his head, we say that his wudhu is null and void, since one must make wudhu in sequence.

with these devious acts of Bid'ah. Whenever an act of Bid'ah becomes widespread, an act of Sunnah would be abandoned by people...eventually the observance of Bid'ah practices would lead to one's abandonment of the Deen of Allah! The Prophet ﷺ said:

“My Ummah will be divided into seventy three sects, the sect with the most adherents would be a sect whose people give precedence to their intellects and draw analogies to claim the lawful prohibited and the unlawful permitted.” (Haakim)

Therefore a person should make sure that all acts of worship he wants to observe are in compliance with the Shari'ah. Whatever is congruent with it should be accepted, and whatever is not should be rejected. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“I have left with you two things; you would not go astray on account of them: the Book of Allah and my Sunnah. They would not part until they gather with me at my Hawdh (cistern) on the Day of Resurrection.” (Haakim)

In order for a person to safeguard himself he should refrain from doing whatever goes against the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“To forge a lie against me is not like forging a lie against anyone else. Whoever forges a lie against me, let him be assured of his seat in Hell.” (Muslim)

Whoever wants to be successful, and hopes for the reward of Allah, he should follow the example of the Prophet ﷺ. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“Say, if you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins, and indeed Allah is all forgiving and merciful.” [3:31]

A person should not emulate or follow any other individual for they are not infallible; they make mistakes, and have worldly desires and may follow their whims.

A Muslim should be cautious so that he would not be used as a tool to harm the Deen or the Muslims in any manner.



A person should make sure that all acts of worship he wants to observe are in compliance with the Shari'ah.





## WARNING AND ADMONITION

Abdullah ibn ad-Dailami said:

“It has reached me that the Deen would fragment and become lost by abandoning the Sunnah. People would abandon Sunnah practice after Sunnah practice, just as a rope would become weaker and weaker.” (Ad-Darimi)

Each one of us should adhere to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and try his best to apply it and to disseminate it amongst people. Goodness can only be anticipated when one applies the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, whether the Sunnah be a statement or an action, and when he casts aside all innovated acts in the Deen of Allah. It is also a must upon each of us, if he hears something which opposes the Shari’ah, to give sincere counseling and advice, and clarify it so that he can have the great honor of defending the Deen of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Convey from me even one Ayah (verse) and there is no sin upon you if you relate the stories of the Children of Israel; and whoever forges a lie against me, let him be assured of his seat in the Hell-fire.” (Bukhari)

Eliminating Bid’ah is a collective duty upon the community.

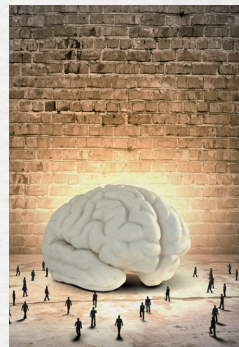
The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever of you sees a wrong, let him change it with his hand, but if he cannot, then let him speak out against it, but if he cannot then let him abhor it in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith.” (Muslim)

A person should give Da’wah and call to the path of Allah as mentioned in the words of Allah:

“Invite to the way of your Rubb with wisdom and fair preaching and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Rubb

Whoever wants to be successful, and hopes for the reward of Allah, he should follow the example of the Prophet.



Each one of us should adhere to the Sunnah of the Prophet, and try his best to apply it and to disseminate it amongst people.

knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He is fully aware of those who are guided.” [16:125]

- Religious matters should not be taken for granted from every preacher and person who claims to have knowledge and understanding. The Deen should be taken from those who are trustworthy in their Deen, knowledge and piety. The Prophet

ﷺ said:

“Indeed the scholars are the heirs of the Prophets. The Prophets did not leave behind a Dinar or Dirham<sup>(19)</sup>, rather they left behind knowledge, so whoever takes it and learns it, would have taken a grand, hefty share.” (Ibn Hib’ban)

We should be mindful of the words of the Prophet ﷺ:

“Whoever calls to guidance, he would receive reward equal to the rewards of those who followed him, while their rewards would not be decreased. And whoever calls to a misguidance, he would receive sin equal to the sins of those who followed him, while their sins would not be decreased.” (Muslim)

Also, whoever guides people to an evil - and Bid’ah is certainly a type of evil - he would receive its sin and the sin of those who follow it. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Indeed the most truthful of speech is the Book of Allah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, and the most evil of matters are the innovated ones, and every [religious] innovation is a misguidance and every misguidance would lead to Hell.” (Ibn Khuzaimah)

As mentioned above, the danger and seriousness of innovating matters in the Deen of Allah is apparent, so whoever wants to practice an action, he should take note as to whether this action is endorsed by the Shari’ah. If it is, then he should put it into practice and guide people to it. But, if it opposes the Shari’ah then he should abandon that action and warn people against it.

(19) These are the names of gold and silver coins respectively.

Religious matters should not be taken for granted from every preacher and person who claims to have knowledge and understanding.



Whoever guides people to an evil - and Bid’ah is certainly a type of evil - he would receive its sin and the sin of those who follow it.



## GLOSSARY

1. **Aqeedah:** Creed.
2. **Bid'ah:** An innovation or novelty; in this book it refers to religious innovations.
3. **Dinar & Dirham:** A type of money; gold and silver coins respectively.
4. **Fareedhah:** An obligatory act of worship.
5. **Fitnah:** Trial, strife and tribulation.
6. **Hadeeth:** Prophetic Tradition.
7. **Hawdh:** The Pool which Allah, the Exalted, has granted our Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever drinks from it once, would never feel thirsty again.
8. **Hudood:** Castigatory punishments in Islam.
9. **Hukum:** Ruling.
10. **Ijtihad:** The exertion of effort. In this book, it refers to the exertion of a scholar's effort to reach a ruling in an issue.
11. **Iman:** Belief.
12. **Jannah:** This is the Heavenly Abode or Heavenly Gardens which Allah grants the pious servants in the Hereafter. It is sometimes translated as "Paradise".
13. **Kufr:** Disbelief.
14. **Nafil:** Supererogatory acts of worship.
15. **Shaitan:** Satan.
16. **Shari'ah:** Islamic Jurisprudential Law.
17. **Shirk:** Associating partners with Allah.
18. **Sunnah:** Has more than one meaning. It may refer to:
  - A. Prophetic Traditions.
  - B. A type of legal ruling; meaning that the act is endorsed by the practice of the Prophet.
19. **Taraweeh:** Night prayers which are prayed during Ramadhan.
20. **Taqwah:** Piety; obeying Allah to avert His punishment.
21. **Ummah:** Nation or community.
22. **Wali:** The pious, god-fearing, upright Muslim who is mindful of Allah, observes acts of worship, and abstains from the unlawful.



### THE MESSENGER OF GOD MUHAMMAD

An account of the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The book introduces us to the Prophet's noble character, his humble life and his conduct with his family at home, his companions and all people in society. It tells us how he strove to fulfill the task God assigned to him and contemplates how he dealt with his enemies, the exceptional magnanimity he showed to all and his simple, but highly effective, method of advocating his message.



### THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING ISLAM

This book explains how Islam is a code of living that covers all aspects of life. It comprises a set of acts of worship which play important roles in placing morality on a solid foundation and strengthening good qualities in people so that they are keen to follow the right path. The book cites many examples and speaks about the importance Islam attaches to knowledge. It mentions a number of recent scientific discoveries that the Qur'an has referred to 14 centuries ago.



### THE MESSAGE OF ISLAM

*The Message of Islam* begins by reminding the reader that Islam, its worship, the rules governing people's transactions and all its teachings have always remained the same as they were taught by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). No change or alteration has been introduced into the religion, though some Muslims have changed. The book discusses and sheds light on a number of rights to which Islam attaches great importance.



### ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF PEACE

*Islam is the Religion of Peace*, shows with perfect clarity that Islam is the religion of peace and that the spread of Islam means the spread of peace throughout the world. Muslims must always be true to their promises and covenants and treat others with justice and compassion.



### EASE AND TOLERANCE IN ISLAM

This book explains that Islam admits no rigidity and making things easy is a general feature of all aspects of the Islamic faith. It is a religion God revealed that can be implemented by people with different failings, feelings and abilities. Islamic law takes all this into account and addresses human nature and appeals to it. God says: "He has laid no hardship on you in anything that pertains to religion." (22: 78)



### HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

*Human rights in Islam* are outlined in the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). They aim to make man lead a life of compassion and dignity, so that he acquires all good qualities and deals with others in the best manner. The book clarifies the misconceptions that are often expressed regarding the different aspects of freedom and responds to criticism in a calm and objective way.



### BILAL THE ABYSSINIAN

This book tells the history of Bilal ibn Rabah, a former slave who became a companion of the Prophet. The book expounds Islam's attitude to racial discrimination, highlighting significant events that show the Prophet took care of many of those who were persecuted, protected them and gave them their rightful status in the Muslim community.



### THE PATH TO HAPPINESS

*The Path to Happiness* explains that the way of life Islam provides for its followers is divine and intended to ensure that people enjoy real happiness in this present life and in the life to come. Islam establishes the concept of true and everlasting happiness, which makes Muslims aspire to the sublime through obedience of God and earning His pleasure.



### WOMEN IN ISLAM

This book discusses the status of women prior to Islam and how women were ill-treated and humiliated in many cultures. It explains how Islam put an end to all this injustice, established women's rights and gave women their rightful status.



### ROMANCE IN ISLAM

This book highlights the great importance Islam attaches to love. It shows that the love of God is the best and the most noble love. When it is rooted in a person's heart, it sets that person's behaviour on the right footing, elevates his emotions and feelings and removes selfishness. A person who truly loves God extends feelings of love and compassion to all creatures.



### ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON SEX

This book discusses the Islamic approach to sex and how to satisfy the sexual desire in the proper and beneficial way. The proper way to satisfy sexual desire is within marriage and according to Islam, marriage is a necessity for the individual to achieve personal fulfillment. For society, marriage is the way to progress, development and stability.



### JESUS IN THE QURAN

After first discussing people's need to receive the divine message through prophets, this book relates the story of Jesus, son of Mary (peace be upon him). It starts well before his birth, then goes on to discuss his message and the opposition he had to endure. The book also discusses the Qur'anic account of Jesus, which makes clear that he enjoys a very high position with God Almighty.



### GLAD TIDINGS

*Glad Tidings* explains the nature of Islam and clarifies the error of people who rely on information on suspect sources. The book highlights the main features of Islam and tells everyone who embraces Islam that God erases all their past sins and errors. As the Prophet makes clear: "Islam wipes away all past sins."



### MY FIRST STEPS IN ISLAM

This book explains for non-Muslim readers how to embrace Islam and shows that this does not require much effort. To new Muslims, the book explains the essential elements of Islam and outlines the character of Prophet Muhammad, his qualities and the message he delivered to mankind. It goes on to discuss the various acts of worship Muslims are required to offer, as well as their purposes and significance.



### THE PURITY

Under Islam, the concept of purification is not limited to personal and physical purity; it includes purifying oneself of sin and all disobedience of God. This book discusses the detailed rules of physical purification, including ablution, grand ablution, the removal of impurity, dry ablution, etc.



### HISN AI-MU'MIN

*Hisn Ai-Mu'min* speaks of the causes of reversals and misfortunes that people encounter. It highlights how one can ensure the protection and preservation of God's favours and blessings, as well as preventing harm and reducing the effects of personal tragedies and calamities. The book teaches the ways and means to fortify oneself against the effect of such tragedies, the most important being remembrance of God and glorifying Him at all times. This book explains the best forms of such remembrance and glorification.



### THE BEGINNING AND THE END

Questions of the creation, existence and progress of the universe have been raised by communities throughout the ages. Yet from its earliest days, Islam addressed these questions in a most direct and clear way. This book explains that the ultimate objective of creation is for all creatures to submit themselves to God and worship Him alone. All aspects of life in the universe inevitably end in death then will be brought back to life on the Day of Resurrection when they receive due recompense for their actions.



### EVERY RELIGIOUS INNOVATION

This book defines and explains the various types of deviation from the essence of Islam and its true teachings. It reveals the negative consequences of deviation on Muslims and their life and how deviation is bound to give non-Muslims a distorted view of Islam. Finally, the book describes the role of Muslims in discarding all deviation, according to their abilities.





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# EVERY RELIGIOUS INNOVATION IS MISGUIDANCE

This book defines deviation from the essence of Islam and its true teachings and explains the various types, and the negative consequences, of deviation on Muslims and their lives.

It also highlights how deviation is bound to give non-Muslims a distorted view of Islam and the proper attitude towards any unwarranted thing that is introduced into the religion of Islam, quoting a number of major scholars and Qur'anic commentators.

*Every Religious Innovation is Misguidance* goes on to outline the role of Muslims in discarding all deviation, according to their abilities, based on the Prophet's clear instructions, "Whoever among you sees evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then [he should change it] with his tongue. If he is unable to do so, then [he should reject it] in his heart, and that is the weakest level of faith."

We trust that you will enjoy reading this book and we will be happy to receive your comments and observations.

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