

The position of  
**Ahlu-Sunnah  
wal-Jamaa'ah**  
as it was understood by  
the earliest generations  
of Muslims, free from  
latter day additions,  
deletions and  
distortions



حكم الإحتفال  
بالمولد النبوي



THE ORIGINS OF THE  
CELEBRATION OF THE  
**PROPHET'S  
BIRTHDAY**

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

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One of the most talked about, hotly-debated and controversial subjects of discussion amongst Muslims for a long time has been whether or not it is permitted to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم). In this short booklet, we hope to shed light on this practice that has been celebrated by a body of Muslims for centuries.

To enable oneself to eventually come to a conclusion in this subject, we must be certain of the fact that the earlier one goes back in history, the purer the religion gets, until we reach the era of the Companions of Allaah's Messenger (رضي الله عنهم), to whom the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم) said, **"I have left you upon clear proof, its night is like its day, no one deviates from it except that he is destroyed - and whomsoever amongst you lives for long will see great differing and controversy. So cling to what you know from my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Orthodox Rightly-Guided Caliphs after me. Bite on to that with your molar teeth!"**

So when Muslims differ and fall into controversy, they must return to clinging to the Sunnah of the Prophet and the Sunnah of his noble Rightly-Guided Companions. So this brief booklet has been compiled in light of this principle.

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# THE ORIGINS OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY



All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the worlds - may the salutations of Allaah, His peace and blessings be upon the Most Noble of all of the Prophets and Messengers, Muhammad, and upon his family, his Companions and all those who follow them precisely until the establishment of the Hour.

One of the most talked about, hotly-debated and controversial points of discussion amongst Muslims for a long time has been whether or not it is permitted to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet (ﷺ). In this short booklet, we hope to shed light on this practice that has been celebrated by a group of Muslims for centuries.

One fact that Muslims on both side of the 'fence' agree upon is that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) did not celebrate his own birthday, nor did he encourage anyone else to do so. The Rightly Guided Caliphs after him, Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan and 'Alee (رضي الله عنهم), likewise did not celebrate his birthday, and nor did they celebrate their own birthdays, and nor of any Prophet that came before our noble Prophet (ﷺ). It's obligation, allowance or recommendation is not stated in any verse from the Book of Allaah, nor in the authentic sayings of His Messenger (ﷺ). Both sides, proponents and opponents alike, also agree that the term 'Eid (i.e. celebration) was never used for the

occasion of the birth of the Prophet (ﷺ). However, the opponents of singling out a day of remembrance and celebration say: The mere mention of the event of the Prophet's birth and his nobility and virtue over the rest of creation, which is accepted by every Muslim, is not a proof for the permissibility of celebrating his birthday, as will be made clear in this discussion (*inshaa'Allaah*).

The generation that followed the Companions known as the *taabi'een* and then those who followed them, likewise did not celebrate the Messenger's (ﷺ) birthday, nor the birthday of Prophet Jesus the son of Mary (عليه السلام) nor the birthday of other than them. So those who were the most closely connected to the Prophet (ﷺ) from his immediate family, his wives, his children, his grandchildren and his Companions - those who knew his virtue, his birth and his sending, those who defended him more than those who came in the later generations, those who loved him more than the later generations, those who knew him better than any of mankind - none of them singled out the day of his birth as a celebration, not even one of them.

Additionally not one of the four well-known Imaams celebrated his birthday, not Abu Haneefah (died 150AH), Malik bin Anas (died 179AH), Shaafi'ee (died 204AH) or Ahmad bin Hanbal (died 241AH) and nor any of their well-known students. Till this day, over fourteen centuries since the passing away of our noble Prophet, not one verse or *hadeeth* (Prophetic Tradition) has been authentically established proving the validity of this religious

act, not in the six famous books of *hadeeth*<sup>1</sup> and not other than them. Yes, there is mention of his birth in various authentic narrations, that is not under dispute just as there is mention in the Qur'aan of the birth of Maryam (may Allaah be pleased with her) and the miraculous birth of her son, 'Eesaa, or Jesus (عليه السلام). However there is a clear absence of any narration mentioning the singling out of a particular day or week, once a year, for the celebration of his birth date.

We must make clear from the outset that the love of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم) is a binding obligation upon every believer; whereas opposing his guidance and opposing his example is forbidden. This has been explicitly stated by our Lord in the Qur'aan:

***“And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers (i.e. the Companions of the Prophet) - We will leave in the path he has taken and drive him into Hell, and evil it is as a destination.”***<sup>2</sup>

Introducing new acts of worship or rituals that were not performed by the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم) and his Companions (رضي الله عنهم) by which a person seeks nearness to Allaah is forbidden in

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<sup>1</sup> The six famous books of Prophetic Tradition being: al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, Abu Dawood, at-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah and an-Nasaa'ee. The most authentic of these without question are the collections of al-Bukhaaree and Muslim. The remaining four are not considered to be free from containing weak narrations. In this era the great *hadeeth* scholar, Shaikh al-Albaanee (رحمته الله) has checked the authenticity of these works using the principles of the early *hadeeth* scholars and has separated the weak narrations from the authentic ones.

<sup>2</sup> The Noble Qur'aan, an-Nisaa: 115.

our religion. These acts are termed as *bid'ah* (religious innovations). Acts of worship are legislated by Allaah through His Law, the *Sharee'ah*, so no one has a right to legislate in Allaah's Religion. Allaah, the Most High, stated:

**“Or have they set up associates alongside Allaah who legislate for them in the Religion, that for which they have been given no authority.”<sup>3</sup>**

Imaam al-Awzaa'ee (died 157AH رَحِمَهُ اللهُ), one of the illustrious scholars of the second century, made a tremendous statement in which he said:

**“Have patience upon the Sunnah and stop where the people before you stopped. Speak with that which they spoke, and hold back from what they held back. Tread upon the path of your Pious Predecessors (Salafus-Saalih), for whatever sufficed them will suffice you.”<sup>4</sup>**

This statement of Imaam al-Awzaa'ee is fully in agreement with the saying of our noble Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) wherein he stated:

**“Whoever introduces into this affair of ours (i.e. Islaam) that which is not from it, then it will be rejected.”<sup>5</sup>**

A person may claim, “but I did not introduce this birthday celebration, I just follow others in this deed, so I am free of any blame.”

<sup>3</sup> The Noble Qur'aan, ash-Shoorah: 21.

<sup>4</sup> See *Sharh Usool al-I'tiqaad* of al-Laalikaa'ee, 2/154.

<sup>5</sup> Bukhaaree, no. 2697, Muslim, no. 1718.

The answer to this doubt is yet another saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) in which he said:

**“Whosoever does a deed that is not from this affair of ours (i.e. Islaam) then it will be rejected.”<sup>6</sup>**

So whether one introduces a new affair himself or one merely acts and follows others in an affair that is not from Islaam (i.e. has no specific evidence for it) is rejected by Allaah, the Most High, and rejected by Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ). This means Allaah will not reward the one who does any religious act that was not performed by the Prophet and his Companions. Rather, Allaah has threatened to punish the doer if he persists upon it after the truth has been conveyed to him. The Messenger (ﷺ) clearly stated in an authentic narration:

**“The best of speech is the Speech of Allaah, the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The most evil of all affairs are the newly invented matters [introduced into Islaam] and every newly invented matter is an innovation (a bid’ah) and every bid’ah is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire.”<sup>7</sup>**

So innovations in the Religion lead to Hell, and Allaah’s refuge is sought from it. So whilst a person believes he is doing good, he is in fact collecting for himself sins that will be a cause for his regret in the Hereafter. So these are the commands of the Messenger (ﷺ) and Allaah, the Most High, stated:

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<sup>6</sup> Muslim, no. 1718.

<sup>7</sup> Reported by an-Nasaa’ee, and in *al-Mishkaat*, no. 137.

**“And whatever the Messenger gives you, then take it and whatever he forbids for you, then keep away from it.”<sup>8</sup>**

So we are commanded to keep away from innovations in the Religion by the direct command of the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Indeed a person is threatened with punishment from Allaah for disobeying the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

**“Let those beware who disobey the Prophet’s order, lest fitnah (tribulation) strikes them or a painful punishment.”<sup>9</sup>**

And even if a person was to come along and quote a religious scholar in his opinion in support of the innovation of celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), then that is not a proof in the Religion at all, and it cannot override the revelation. Evidence for religious beliefs and acts is established in the Qur’aan and the Sunnah (i.e. the Prophet Tradition). And if two Muslims differ in any affair, even if they be scholars of *ahlus-Sunnah*, then they are obligated to accept the Judgement of the Qur’aan and Sunnah in order to prove who is correct and who is in error:

**“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.”<sup>10</sup>**

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<sup>8</sup> The Noble Qur’aan, al-Hashr: 7.

<sup>9</sup> The Noble Qur’aan, an-Noor: 63.

<sup>10</sup> The Noble Qur’aan, an-Nisaa: 59.

So now we see the Sufees<sup>11</sup> and others taking the *Mawlid* (i.e. the Prophet's birth date) as a Religious festival, an 'Eid, and an annual day of special worship. So in this situation we are all obligated to take this differing back to the Book and Sunnah to see which position is supported by Revelation and which is not. The reader can clearly see from what has been mentioned above that the *Mawlid* celebration and ritual is not supported by any Religious text. Indeed there is not one scholar of *ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* from the first three centuries who celebrated this birthday or even encouraged its celebration. So the quotation of an odd Scholar centuries later who may have, according to the misguided Sufees, allowed its celebration does not make the celebration a part of our perfected and completed Religion. If a person was to appear from among the ranks of the Sufees and decide to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet 'Eesa, Moosaa or any other Prophet (ﷺ) or the birthday of a Companion (رضي الله عنه), then our response would be the same: "Please bring your proof for this act of yours from the Book and Sunnah if you are indeed truthful. Please show us an authentic narration where the Prophet or his Companions or the four Imaams would single out

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<sup>11</sup> An old religious esoteric sect that is prevalent today in the ranks of the Muslims. Their main traits include seeking intercession through deceased 'holy righteous men' by calling upon them. Many embark upon special pilgrimages visiting the graves of the pious, often prostrating in front of the gravesite and performing *tawaaf* around it. They believe that the dead have an effect upon the living, so they seek aid and assistance from them. They also engage in innovated practices of chanting the name of Allaah and the Prophet (ﷺ) in a manner that was never practiced by the Prophet of Allaah (ﷺ) and his Companions. For more detailed information visit: [tawhidfirst.com](http://tawhidfirst.com), [bidah.com](http://bidah.com) and [barelwis.com](http://barelwis.com).

one day in a year for the celebration of this event which you call 'Eid Milaad an-Nabee?'"

Dear reader, know that a Religion that is perfect and complete requires no further additions or rituals, Allaah, the Most High, stated:

***“This day I have completed for you your Religion and perfected my favour upon you and am pleased with Islaam as your Religion.”***<sup>12</sup>

So after this verse was revealed there were no further new acts of worship revealed, and all praise is due to Allaah. What followed from Revelation after this verse was the confirmation of what was already present. So the Messenger (ﷺ) died after conveying the complete and clear message, and he did not leave off any affair that leads to Paradise except that he explained that to his followers, and likewise he did not leave off an affair that would distance his followers from Hell except that he warned them from it. Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) stated:

***“Allaah did not send a Messenger except that he was duty-bound to direct his Nation to whatever he knew of good for them, and to warn them from whatever he knew to be evil for them.”***<sup>13</sup>

He (ﷺ) also stated:

***“By Him in whose hand is my soul, I have not left anything which brings you closer to Paradise and distances you from the Fire except that I have commanded you with it. And I have not left anything***

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<sup>12</sup> The Noble Qur'aan, al-Maa'idah: 3.

<sup>13</sup> Saheeh Muslim from Abdullaah bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنه).

**which brings you closer to the Fire and distances you from Paradise except that I have prohibited you from it.”<sup>14</sup>**

Those people who encourage others with rituals and religious deeds that were not performed by Allaah’s Messenger and his noble Companions are in essence saying that the Prophet (ﷺ) failed, forgot or neglected to inform his nation about the importance of celebrating his birthday annually, and the lighting of candles and decorative lights for the occasion, along with singing, parading in the streets, dancing with joy, visiting the graveyards, eating and drinking, handing out sweets to children, exchanging gifts and engrossing in long sessions of *dhikr*! All of this, he (ﷺ) either neglected to tell his nation, or forgot to tell them, and such a notion is of course absurd. Or are we to believe that the great Companions such as Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmaan and ‘Alee (رضي الله عنهم) who had positions of leadership after the death of the Prophet (ﷺ) hid this information, or that the great scholars of Prophetic *hadeeth* such as al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, Abu Dawood and others neglected this yearly practice and therefore did not include it in their *hadeeth* collections?! Or do these innovators believe that the noblest of all the Prophets of Allaah (تبارك وتعالى), who would not speak and act except upon Revelation gave them the right to invent new rituals and acts of worship for which Allaah, the Most High, gave them no authority? Allaah (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) stated:

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<sup>14</sup> Related by Imaam Ahmad and Ibn Khuzaymah.

**“Or have they set up associates alongside Allaah who legislate laws for them in the Religion, that for which they have been given no authority.”<sup>15</sup>**

His Message was completed and encompassed complete guidance, leaving nothing to one’s own imagination and whims! A complete non-deficient guide to Allaah’s Pleasure and Paradise. He (ﷺ) guided his *Ummah* to what was best for them and forbade them from newly invented acts and rituals of worship and newly invented celebrations. Truly, had this event of the *Mawlid* (the Birthday) been something good, then the noble Companions would have been the first to race to it, and they would never have left this ‘noble deed’ for the later centuries. Ibn Taymiyyah (died 728AH) said:

**“Taking particular occasions that are not reported in the legislation of the Qur’aan and Sunnah such as certain nights in the month of Rabee’ al-Awwal, which it is said is the Birthday [of the Prophet], or certain nights in Rajab, or the 18th of Dhul-Hijjah, or the 8th of Shawwaal, which is entitled by some as the ‘Eid of the Pious Ones - then all of these are innovations which were not recommended or performed by the Righteous Predecessors - and Allaah, the Most Perfect, knows best.”<sup>16</sup>**

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<sup>15</sup> The Noble Qur’aan ash-Shoorah: 21

<sup>16</sup> See *Mu’jam al-Bid’ah*, p. 981. See also Ibn Taymiyyah’s tremendous work, *Iqtidaa as-Siraat al-Mustaqeem li Mukhaalifati as-Haab al-Jaheem*, (2/619 *Maktabatur-Rushd*), wherein he clearly states that people are rewarded for their love of Prophet and striving in that regard, but they are not rewarded for innovations. Then he goes on to show how these innovators have opposed the early pious generations in the celebration of the *Milaad*.

Ibn al-Haaj al-'Abdaree (died 737AH) stated:

**“And from what they have introduced from the affairs of bid’ah along with their belief that this is from the greatest of the acts of worship and the most manifest of signs, is what they practice in the month of Rabee‘ al-Awwal: the birthday of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). And it encompasses a body of innovations and forbidden acts.**

**From these [innovations and forbidden deeds practiced on this day]: their utilisation of singers and performers with musical instruments. So look, may Allaah have mercy upon us and you, at the opposition to the Pure Sunnah, how it is disfigured and made unsightly, and dragged into the forbidden. Do you not see that when they oppose the Pure Sunnah and perform the birthday [of the Prophet], they do not simply limit themselves to only the act itself? Rather they increase upon it with numerous futile deeds, as has been mentioned. So joy and happiness is for the one who tightens his handhold in following the Book and the Sunnah and the path that connects to that - and that lies in following the Salaf that have preceded, may Allaah be pleased with all of them, because they were more knowledgeable of the Sunnah than us, more acquainted with the sayings and had better understanding of the affairs.”<sup>17</sup>**

The first people to innovate this celebration of the birthday of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) were the tribe of Baneh

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<sup>17</sup> Al-Madkhal, 2/30 and others. See *Mu’jam al-Bid’ah*, p. 981.

'Ubaid al-Qaddaah<sup>18</sup>, those who called themselves the *Faatimids*, and they claimed ascription to the children of the Prophet's cousin, 'Alee bin Abee Taalib (رضي الله عنه) and his wife Faatimah (رضي الله عنها), the daughter of Allaah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم).

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<sup>18</sup> 'Ubaid bin Maymoon al-Qaddaah was the founder of the state of the 'Ubaidiyyah in Tunis, North Africa at the end of the 3rd century Hijrah. Imaam al-Dhahabee said in *as-Siyar* (15/141): "Ubaidullaah Abu Muhammad, the first of the Caliphs of the Kharijite 'Ubaidee Baatinees who overturned Islaam, proclaimed [the religion of] *ar-Rafd* (the Shi'ah rejection and hatred of the Companions) whilst concealing the doctrine of Isma'eeliyyah. They sent out callers to misguide the ignorant and the mountain dwellers. This leader claimed he was a *Faatimee*, from the offspring of Ja'far as-Saadiq." This 'Ubaid was the son of Maymoon, a Persian Jew of Magian influence. He ruled the 'Ubaidee state until 322AH. It was then ruled over by his son, Abul-Qaasim al-Qaa'im bi-Amrillaah until 334AH, then his son al-Mansoor Isma'eel until his death in 341AH, and then his son Abu Tameem al-Mu'izz li-Deenillaah who expanded the Isma'eelee Baatinee state into Egypt in the year 358AH. Many wars took place between the Sunni rulers and these Isma'eelee Baatinees. Al-Mu'izz himself was an astrologer believing in the influence of the stars, and he also established tombs and taught the people to seek *tabarruk* (blessings) from them, leading to the introduction of *shirk* (directing acts of worship to other than Allaah) into Egypt. Al-Haakim bi-Amrillaah, the ruler who came after al-Mu'izz claimed divinity for himself. It was the likes of these who innovated the celebration of the Prophet's birthday and making it a day of 'Eid, thus including it amongst the other celebrations of the Shi'ah such as the day of *Ghadeer*, and the birthdays of Alee, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn and also the celebration of Christmas, as is established from them by al-Maqreezee in *al-Khitat*. The 'Ubaydee state was set up to spread disbelief and to fight against the Sunni Muslims, their rulers and their states, using the veil of Shi'ism as a cover. (Refer to [bidah.com](http://bidah.com))

They appeared during the Abbaside Caliphate and ruled Egypt from 360AH onwards for two centuries, and were a sect of the Shi'ites known as the *Isma'eelees*, due to their connection to Isma'eel Muhammad bin Ja'far - and it is for this reason they are called *Isma'eelees*. They had many oppositions to the Islamic belief and to Islamic monotheism (*Tawheed*), and they committed clear unbelief, to the point that their leaders claimed divinity for themselves and were worshipped by their followers. And from them was their Ruler, al-'Ubaidee. The Muslim historians mention that their real origins are far from Faatimah and 'Alee (ﷺ) - rather their origins lie with the Magian fire-worshippers of Persia and to the tribe of 'Ubaid al-Qaddaah. So it is more appropriate that they be called *'Ubaidees* and *Isma'eelees*, and they remain till this day. They used to believe that Allaah is in-dwelling in His creation, in the concept that the Revelation has hidden esoteric meanings that are only known to their own scholars and 'saints', leading them to be considered as unbelievers by the great Scholars of *ahlus-Sunnah* of that time.

Before them, there was no celebration of the *Mawlid* of Allaah's Messenger<sup>19</sup>. Imaam Ahmad bin 'Ali, Taqiyy ad-Deen al-Miqreezee (died 845AH) known as the Shaikh of the historians of Egypt has a work famously entitled *Kitaab Khitat al-Miqreeziyyah*. He lists in this work<sup>20</sup> those Days which the Isma'eelee Shi'ah would take as days of celebration, and the condition of the people during these periods and what they would do. So throughout the year they would single out days for festivities, rituals and

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<sup>19</sup> See *Kashf ash-Shubuhaat*, explanation of Shaikh Saalih al-Fawzaan and the explanation of Shaikh Saalih bin 'Abdul-Azeez Aalush-Shaikh. See also *al-Khitat al-Miqreeziyyah* 1/490.

<sup>20</sup> See *al-Khitat al-Miqreeziyyah* 1/490.

celebrations. From them, he mentions (just to list a few from those quoted in his work):

New year celebrations, 'Aashoorah festivities, the birthday of the Prophet (ﷺ), the birthday of 'Alee bin Abee Taalib, the birthday of al-Hasan and al-Husain, the birthday of Faatimah daughter of the Prophet (ﷺ), the birthday of the present ruler, the first night of the month of Rajab, the middle night in the month of Rajab, the first night of the month of Sha'baan, the middle of Sha'baan, the commencement of Ramadhaan, the last night of Ramadhaan, 'Eid al-Fitr, 'Eid al-Adhaa<sup>21</sup>, the celebration of the conquest of the Gulf, the Persian new year, the Day of Epiphany and so on.

And he mentions several others, but this list should suffice the respected reader and cause him to reflect upon the origins of this innovated practice of the *Mawlid*. So it was these Isma'eelee Shi'ah who unleashed these false celebrations upon the *Ummah* of Muhammad (ﷺ). And who would choose to imitate them except the ignorant Muslim, who is deceived by the Shaikhs of his Sufee Sect, or one who believes the path of these Isma'eelee Baatinee Shi'ah is more befitting to be followed than that of the Companions of Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ)?

So now that the sincere Muslim knows the origin of this celebration, will he now celebrate it? Will he still claim that there is such a thing as a 'Good *Bid'ah*'? If one continues to celebrate this day, then there is nothing that should prevent him from celebrating all the other celebrations that the Isma'eelee Shi'ah celebrated. If a *bid'ah* is truly good in Islaam, then why not? Why

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<sup>21</sup> 'Eid al-Fitr and 'Eid al-Adhaa are the only two from this list that are actually legislated in the Qur'aan and Sunnah!

stop just at the *Mawlid* (or birthday) of the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ)? Why not Jesus (ﷺ), ‘Ali, Faatimah, Hasan, Husain (ﷺ)? Why not New Years’ Day and Persian New Year? Why not Mothers’ Day, Fathers’ Day, Valentines Day, Christmas Day also? And make it an endless year of daily celebrations! Are many of these not seemingly good innovations?

As for the people of Sunnah, those who love Allaah, the Most High, and love His Messenger and follow the early believers, then for them it is sufficient what the Prophet (ﷺ) stated when he migrated to Madeenah and found the people celebrating two days of ‘Eid, one of which they took from the Persians. When the people of Madeenah informed the Messenger (ﷺ) that these are two days of celebration, he said to them:

**“Indeed Allaah has replaced them with two days that are better than them: the Day of Adhaa and the Day of Fitr.”<sup>22</sup>**

So the Prophet (ﷺ) replaced all other celebrations with these better ones, so these are better than the *Mawlid*, or New Year, or other than them. And as Ibn al-Haaj (رحمته الله) stated above, it is not only the fact that these people introduce a misguided and forbidden action and then claim it is from Islaam, they further compound this misguidance with further sins and transgressions such as: free mixing between the sexes, dancing innovated Sufee and Dervish dances, playing of musical instruments, walking and chanting in the streets in large groups, lighting candles and lanterns for days and weeks before and after

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<sup>22</sup> Reported by Abu Dawood, an-Nasaa’ee, see *as-Saheehah*, no. 2021. *Adhaa* is the ‘Eid celebration after Hajj, and *Fitr* is the ‘Eid celebration after the month of Ramadhaan.

the *Mawlid*, filling their homes and places of worship with decorations and festive lights just like the Christians at Christmas, partaking in *dhikr* gatherings that were unheard of in the time of Prophethood, loud chanting repeating continually the words ‘*Yaa Muhammad!*’ (O Muhammad!) over and over, or reciting selected verses from the Qur’aan over and over again, calling upon deceased ‘holy saints (peers)’ who are buried thousands of miles away in some cases, seeking aid and intercession from them, which constitutes supplication (*du’aa*) and thus worship of other than Allaah. Some will also visit the graves of these ‘saints’ and ‘peers’ and ‘*awliya*’ and prostrate to them and seek from them either direct help and deliverance or they seek intercession by way of supplication to them. All of this violates the Monotheistic belief in Allaah (i.e. the *Tawheed* of the worship of Allaah alone)<sup>23</sup>.

Others will fast only one Monday in the year in the month of Rabee al-Awwal and celebrate in the evening, thinking that it is from the Sunnah to fast only one Monday in the year in celebration of the birthday of Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ), and by doing so completely misunderstanding the words of the Messenger (ﷺ) wherein he was asked about fasting on a Monday, to which he replied:

**“That is the day on which I was born, and the day upon which I started to receive Revelation.”<sup>24</sup>**

So the ignorant people imagine that this is a proof that enables them to celebrate and party once a year, whereas the

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<sup>23</sup> See *al-Baa'ith* of Abu Shaamah 110, *al-Madkhal* of Ibn al-Haaj 2/5-16, *al-Ibdaa' fi Madaar al-Ibtidaa'* of Ali Mahfooth.

<sup>24</sup> Reported by Muslim in his *Saheeh*, and Ahmad bin Hanbal in his *Musnad*.

Messenger (ﷺ) here is discussing the weekly fast on a Monday, which he (ﷺ) himself used to fast himself along with Thursdays as is clearly reported in authentic narrations.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, the Messenger (ﷺ) did not call Monday a Day of 'Eid ever. Nor did he make it a 'once in a year' event! Rather he would fast on Mondays and Thursdays, and it is an established Sunnah to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. The reader should be completely aware that there is no day of celebration, ritual or worship for the birthday of Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) reported in any authentic text, and it was not practiced in the earlier generations until the emergence of the Baatinee, 'Ubaidee, Isma'eelee, Shi'ites, the misguided ones who introduced it.

If one claims it is a *bid'ah hasanah* (a praiseworthy or good innovation), then we say to them that there is no such thing in Religion as a praiseworthy innovation. If one says that some of the later Scholars used this term, then we say that when we analyse the sayings of many of those scholars, then we quickly realise that they only held the term good innovation to be applied linguistically or in the worldly affairs, but not in the Religious sense, such as the case when the second Caliph 'Umar bin al-Khattaab (رضي الله عنه) saw the people praying the *Taraweeh* night prayer in the month of Ramadaan in congregation, he said, **“What an excellent innovation this is.”** So was this a good innovation religiously speaking or linguistically speaking?

Then when we simply look into the issue, we quickly realise that 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) was talking linguistically. How do we know? Well due to the fact that the *Taraweeh* prayer in

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<sup>25</sup> See *al-I'tisaam* of ash-Shaatibee, 2/23.

congregation was already legislated and established by Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) in his Mosque years earlier as has been reported by numerous Companions. Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) led his Companions in night prayer during the month of Ramadaan, **“and the people prayed behind him”**, then he (ﷺ) left it off saying, **“I feared that it would be made obligatory upon you and that you would not be able to manage it.”** And Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said: **“So Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) died and the situation remained like that.”**<sup>26</sup>

Then years later during the time of the Caliphate of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), 'Umar himself entered the Mosque and saw the people praying in separate groups So 'Umar said, **“I think it would be better if I gathered them behind a single reciter,”** just as they did when they prayed behind Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ). So 'Umar gathered them following the example of the Prophet from years earlier. When he saw them a few nights later praying behind one reciter, he then made the well-known statement: **“What an excellent innovation this is.”**<sup>27</sup>

So did 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) introduce something new that was not previously established in the time of Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ)? Then one can see that clearly he revived the Sunnah, and did not innovate any new Religious act! So when he said, **“What an excellent innovation this is,”** he clearly was

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<sup>26</sup> Reported by Bukhaaree, 3/220 and Muslim, no. 761.

<sup>27</sup> Reported by Bukhaaree, 4/218, Maalik, 1/114.

speaking linguistically, i.e. that it is new in this time. So he was not justifying religious innovations, and all praise is due to Allaah.<sup>28</sup>

And this is absolutely without any shadow of a doubt the meaning of that which has been ascribed to Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee (died 204AH): Al-Bayhaqi reports with his chain in *Manaaqib ash-Shaafi'ee* (1/469) from ash-Shafi'ee (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) that he said:

**“Newly-invented matters are of two types: The first of them is what opposes the Book, or the Sunnah, or a narration [from the Companions], or the consensus - this is the misguided innovation. And the second is what has been introduced of goodness and there is not a single scholar who opposes it. This is newly-introduced yet not blameworthy and Umar (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) had said about the night prayer in the month of Ramadaan, ‘What an excellent innovation this is,’ meaning, that it is newly-introduced and was not previously done.”**<sup>29</sup>

Meaning the *Taraweeh* in congregation was a new affair in the time of ‘Umar (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ), not that it was new to Islaam! It is beyond comprehension that this isolated report from al-Bayhaqee is used by the innovators to justify the *Mawlid*, whilst ash-Shaafi'ee himself gives a clear example of what he intends by a good newly-introduced affair linguistically.

Furthermore, innovations in the worldly affairs, such as cars, airplanes, phones, etc. are also good innovations so long as

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<sup>28</sup> See *Iqtidaa as-Siraat al-Mustaqeem* of Ibn Taymiyyah, p. 275-277, *al-I'tisaam* of ash-Shaatibee, 1/193-195, and *Salaat at-Taraweeh* of al-Albaanee, p. 52-54.

<sup>29</sup> See Bidah.com.

they do not oppose the Qur'aan, Sunnah and the Consensus (*ijmaa'*).<sup>30</sup> And al-Haafidh Ibn Katheer said in his *Tafseer*<sup>31</sup>:

**“And bid’ah is of two types. Sometimes it can be a legislative innovation, such as his (ﷺ) saying, ‘Every newly-invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance,’ and sometimes it can be a linguistic innovation, such as the saying of the Leader of the Faithful, ‘Umar bin al-Khattaab, (رضي الله عنه) about his bringing them together for the Taraawih prayer and their continuance upon that, ‘What an excellent innovation this is’.”**

So all of this should be sufficient for the heart that is sincere, that seeks the truth, that is not bound by the shackles of blind-following, a heart that is free from those blameworthy people who Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, described in His Book:

**“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.”<sup>32</sup>**

And all praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the worlds, and may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon His Messenger, his family and his Companions.

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<sup>30</sup> See *Tahdhir al-Muslimin anil-Ibtidaa' wal-Bida' fil-Din*, Dar al-Imam al-Bukhari, of Ahmad bin Hajar Aal Butaamee (died 1423AH), who is Shafi'ee in *fiqh*, 1428H, p. 114, refer to Bidah.com.

<sup>31</sup> *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, Dar Tayyibah, 1422H, 1/398, refer to Bidah.com.

<sup>32</sup> The Noble Qur'aan, al-Baqarah: 170.