



## 16- Refuting the claim that celebrating the Mawlid is a good Bid`ah

**Q: Our question is about celebrating the Mawlid (the Prophet's birthday), is it Bid`ah (innovation in Islam)? I heard in some places and from some scholars that it is a good Bid`ah and Allah knows best, may Allah bless you!**

A: Celebrating the birth of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and righteous people is Bid`ah which began in recent centuries, after the best three centuries of Islam: the first, the second and the third centuries after Hijrah. It is one of the Bid`ahs which some people have introduced into Islam out of love for such celebrations, thinking that it is a good thing to do. The correct opinion, according to verifying scholars, is that such celebrations are Bid`ah. All birthday celebrations, including but not limited to celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (peace be upon him), are Bid`ah. Why is this so? Because the Prophet (peace be upon him), his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet), the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the early generations of Islam did not do it. Certainly, goodness lies in following their steps and not following the invented practices which succeeding generations introduced into Islam. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **«Beware of newly-introduced matters (in religion).»** He (peace be upon him) also said: **«The most evil of matters are those which are newly-introduced (in religion), and every Bid`ah is a Dalalah (deviation from the right).»** Furthermore, he (peace be upon him) said: **«Anyone who introduces anything**

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**into this matter of ours (Islam) that is not part of it will have it rejected.»** And: **«Anyone who does an action which is not in accordance with this matter of ours (Islam) will have it rejected.»** It means that it will not be accepted from them. Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) explained faith in detail and pointed out that newly-introduced matters in Islam are condemned, and no one is allowed to introduce into Islam what Allah has not permitted. Allah, the Almighty, dispraised such acts in His statement: **«Or have they partners (with Allāh — false gods) who have instituted for them a religion which Allāh has not ordained?»** Celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and that of the righteous is a newly-introduced act not sanctioned by Allah, or His Messenger (peace be upon him), or the Sahabah who are the best people after the Prophets, the most beloved to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the keenest to do goodness; however, they did not celebrate birthdays. Neither Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, `Aly, the rest of the Ten Companions Given Glad Tidings of Entering Paradise, the rest of the Sahabah, nor the Tabi`un (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet) ever celebrated such birthdays. According to some historians, this Bid`ah was introduced by the Fatimid Shiites in Egypt during the fourth century. Later, it was practiced towards the end of the sixth century of Hijrah and in the beginning of the seventh century by those who thought that such celebrations are good acts; and thus, practiced them. However, they are innovations in Islam, because they constitute a form of worship which Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) did not legislate. The Messenger (peace be upon him) conveyed all matters clearly and did not conceal anything that Allah legislated. He (peace be upon him) delivered all the Laws that Allah laid down as he was commanded to deliver to the people. Allah (Exalted be He) states: **«This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islām**

as your religion.) Therefore, Allah completed and perfected the religion. There is nothing in this divinely-perfected religion called celebration of birthdays. Accordingly, they are condemned Bid`ah that cannot be described as good, since there is nothing in Islam referred to as a good Bid`ah.

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All acts of Bid`ah are misguidance and evil. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: **(Every Bid`ah is a Dalalah (deviation).)** Hence, it is not permitted for a Muslim to say: "There are good kinds of Bid`ah", whereas the Messenger (peace be upon him) said that every Bid`ah is misguidance. This is contradiction and opposition to the Messenger (peace be upon him). It was authentically reported that he (peace be upon him) stated: **(Every Bid`ah is a Dalalah (deviation).)** Hence, it is not allowed for us to say a different opinion from that of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It should be noted that there are some practices which have been established by Islam, yet people think that they are Bid`ahs, but they are not; some of these are compiling the Qur'an into one book and transcribing copies of it, and offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) in congregation. Such acts are not categorized as Bid`ahs; rather, they have been established and legislated in Islam, and thus, including them under the term "Bid`ah" is baseless. As for what was reported from `Umar that he said regarding Tarawih Prayer: "What a good Bid`ah", is a reference to the linguistic meaning of the word Bid`ah and has nothing to do with its Islamic perspective. Moreover, the statement of `Umar did not disagree with what the Messenger (peace be upon him) practiced or contradicted it. The statement of the Messenger (peace be upon him) takes priority over all other opinions and claims, as his statement: **(Every Bid`ah is a Dalalah (deviation).)** And: **(Beware of newly-introduced matters (in religion).)** The Prophet (peace be upon him) further said in Friday Khutbah (sermon): **(Ama Ba`d (Now then), the best of speech is the Book of Allah, the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (peace be upon him), the most evil of matters are those which are newly-introduced (in religion), and every Bid`ah is a Dalalah (deviation from the right).)** This is the judgment of the Messenger (peace be upon him). This Hadith is reported by Muslim in the Sahih, and thus, it is not for a Muslim to go against what Allah legislated or to be stubborn regarding that which the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) brought from Allah; rather, one should surrender and submit to the Law of Allah and abstain from all Bid`ahs and sins. We ask Allah to guide us all to the right way and straight path!

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**Q: Is it allowed to celebrate the Mawlid (the Prophet's birthday)? Please guide us.** 

**A:** We have previously given many answers to this question in this program and others and we have compiled many writings regarding this subject. Celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and similar celebrations are, according to people of knowledge and verifying scholars, Bid`ah. Therefore, it is not allowed to celebrate the birthday of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), or any other Prophet, or righteous people. The celebrations held on the occasion of the birthday of the Prophet (peace be upon him), Al-Badawy, Shaykh `Abdul-Qadir, Al-Hasan, Al-Husayn or any other are Bid`ahs that are not permitted to be practiced.

The duty of a Muslim towards the righteous is to ask Allah to be pleased with them, follow their good example; and to frequently invoke peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him), follow his Sunnah, encourage others to follow it, convey his religion to people, fulfill his rights by obeying his commands and avoiding what he prohibited, and patterning one's life after his life (peace be upon him). This is the obligation upon Muslims. The Almighty states: **(Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to mankind): "If you (really) love Allâh then follow me (i.e. accept Islâmic Monotheism, follow the Qur`ân and the Sunnah))** He did not say: "Then commemorate my birth"; rather, Allah states:

﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to mankind): "If you (really) love Allāh then follow me (i.e. accept Islāmic Monotheism, follow the Qur'ān and the Sunnah), Allāh will love you﴾ Therefore, the sign of loving the Prophet (peace be upon him) is following him, implementing his commands and avoiding his prohibitions. As for celebrating birthdays and practicing newly-invented acts which have not been sanctioned by Islam, it is not allowed; rather, they are a means to Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Many of those who celebrate such birthdays fall in Shirk by supplicating to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and seeking help from him, and others fall in the Bid`ah of beseeching Allah by virtue of the status of the Prophet (peace be upon him) which is not allowed. As for asking Allah by their love for the Prophet (peace be upon him) and by their belief in him, there is no blame in this.

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There is nothing wrong with saying: O Allah, I ask You by my love for Your Prophet and belief in him to forgive my sins. As for supplicating to Allah by virtue of the status of the Prophet or by his high rank, it is Bid`ah which has no evidence; rather asking Allah by love for the Prophet (peace be upon him), belief in him and adherence to his teachings is the Islamically lawful Tawassul (supplicating to Allah in the name of .../by virtue of the status of). The point is that celebrating such birthdays are Bid`ah, whether it is celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (peace be upon him) or others Prophets, the righteous, the Sahabah or other than them. All these types of celebrations are Bid`ah. Similarly, celebrating the fifteenth night of the month of Sha`ban, the twenty-ninth night of the month of Rajab (which is thought to be the night of Isra' [Night Journey] and Mi`raj [Ascension to Heaven]), the first night of the month of Rajab and the first Friday of the month of Rajab on which they offer Salat-ul-Ragha'ib (Prayer for great bestowals or wishes) are also Bid`ah. Thus, celebrating occasions which Allah has not legislated in order to draw closer to Allah are acts of Bid`ah which were not practiced by the Prophet (peace be upon him) who was the most truthful, the sincerest in giving advice, and the one who taught and invited the Muslim Ummah (nation based on one creed) to every kind of goodness. He never celebrated his birthday during his lifetime, and he stayed in Al-Madinah for ten years as the head of the believers and their uncontested leader. He was succeeded by Al-Siddiq (Abu Bakr) who became the Caliph after him, then by `Umar then by `Uthman then by `Aly and then by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, but none of them celebrated the birthday of the Prophet (peace be upon him). If it was a good thing, they would have been the first to do it. It must be emphasized that the earliest best three generations of Islam did not introduce birthday celebrations, but they were innovated by the Fatimid Rafidah (a Shiitic group) during the fourth century after Hijrah and some Muslims followed them out of ignorance and unawareness.

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**Source: Fatwas of Nur `Ala Al-Darb**