

In the name of Allaah, Indeed all praise is due to Him and peace and blessings be upon the best of mankind, our Prophet Muhammad – sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam.

Due to the lack of authentic evidences, the people of innovation use various methods in trying to justify their innovation. Amongst the methods used, is selectively transmitting sections of the speech of the people of knowledge. Recently, an image has been broadcast selectively quoting the words of Ibn Taymiyyah, challenging the “Wahabis” to “atleast [sic] listen to your leaders.”

Even more strange is that the Soofiyyah would seek to quote the words of Ibn Taymiyyah, whose opposition to them and their innovations is known.

Below is a translation of the words of Ibn Taymiyyah followed by points of benefit from his speech.

He said in his book: ‘Iqtidhaa as-Siraat al-Mustaqeem’ under the Chapter: ‘Innovated Festival Periods – Taking the birthday of the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam) as an ‘Eid emulating the Christians in the Eid of the birthday of ‘Eesa (alayhi salaam)’:-

((What some of the people have innovated, either emulating the Christians in the birthday of ‘Eesa (alayhi salaam) or out of love for the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam) and honouring him. Perhaps Allaah might reward them for this love and their striving to come to a decision, but not for the Bid’ah (innovation) of taking the day of the birth of the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam) as an ‘Eid. Along with the difference between the people with regards to his birth, this (celebration) was not done by the early generations of pious scholars even though factors that would have necessitating [the Mawlid] were present and there was a lack of any factors that would prevent them from doing so if it had indeed been good.

If this [the Mawlid] was genuinely good or the correct opinion then the pious scholars of the early generations (may Allaah be pleased with them) would have been more entitled to it than us. They had greater love for the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam) and were more honouring of him than us; they were more eager upon goodness.

Indeed, from the perfection of loving and honouring him is in following him, being obedient to him, following his command, reviving his Sunnah both in secrecy and open, spreading that which he was sent with, striving regarding that with one’s heart, hand and tongue. For indeed this is the path of the first of the early generations [who accepted his message] from the Muhaajiroon and the Ansaar, and those that followed them in goodness.

Most of them who you find eager upon such innovations (Bid’ah) despite their good intention and striving – for these two things reward is hoped (i.e. their good intention and striving) – however you find them weak in following the command of the Messenger (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam) in that which they were commanded to be energetic and enthusiastic. They are like a person who adorns the Mus.haf (a copy of the Qur’an) yet does not read what is in it; or they are like somebody who reads [what is in the Qur’an] but never follows it; or somebody who adorns the Masjid yet does not pray in it or only prays a little in it; or like a person who takes extravagant prayer beads and mats. Such apparent adornments which have not been legislated and are accompanied with showing off, pride and being pre-occupied away from what is actually legislated – this all corrupts the state of the person who is like this.

Know that from the actions are those that have some good in them, due to including types of legislated actions and also they include evil such as innovations and other than that. So this action would be good due to what it includes of good and [at the same time] evil due to what it contains of turning away from the religion in its entirety – such is the state of the hypocrites and disobedient people. This is what most of the Ummah has been afflicted by in the later times...))
[to the end of the Chapter]

Points of Benefit from Ibn Taymiyyah:

1. Ibn Taymiyyah wrote the above words under the chapter: 'Innovated Festival Periods.' This shows that he considered the Mawlid as a Bid'ah (innovation) and not a Sunnah. He compared it to the action of the Christians towards 'Eesa (alayhi salaam)
2. The Soofiyyah left his clear speech whereby he named the Mawlid as an innovation and clarified that nobody from among the pious generations celebrated it – even though they could have done it and there was nothing preventing them.
3. Those who celebrate the Prophet's birthday are ignorant with regards to its innovated nature, and they might be rewarded for their good intention of loving the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam) – not the innovated act of the Mawlid.
4. True love and devotion to the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam) is demonstrated through following his Sunnah, reviving it and spreading it among the people
5. Those who are eager upon such innovations are often weak and feeble in following the established Sunnah of the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam)
6. The example of such people is like a person who adorns a copy of the Qur'an yet never reads it.
7. An action may have some reward and also some punishment in it. The reward is for any good in it (like the intention of loving the Prophet but not the innovated Mawlid) and the sin and punishment is for the evil in it (due to the actual innovation).

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the words of Ibn Taymiyyah that he does not approve of the innovated Mawlid and the possible reward he mentioned is only for the intention of an ignorant person in loving the Prophet – and not the actual action of the Mawlid, which is sinful and therefore punishable.

Finally it is important to note, had Ibn Taymiyyah actually approved of the Mawlid, the other scholars of Ahlus Sunnah would have also disapproved of his statement as the Sunnah is more beloved to us than any individual.

I ask Allaah to guide the ignorant to the Sunnah of His Messenger (sal Allaah alayhi wa sallam). O Allaah, we ask you beneficial knowledge, righteous actions and lawful provision. May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, his family, companions and all those who follow his guidance.

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