

Should we Celebrate Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (Salallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

by
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Allah in the Name of, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah who has guided us to follow the Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*), the leader of the Messengers; Who has granted us the capacity to remain steadfast on the pillars and essential principles of Deen Al-Islam; Who has made it easy for us to follow the footsteps and way of our pious predecessors, to the extent that our hearts have been illuminated with the knowledge of the *Shari'ah* and the conclusive argument in favour of the evident truth; and Who has kept our internal souls free from the contamination of falsehood.

We praise and thank Him for having blessed us with the light of certainty, and for having granted us strength and courage to continuously hold fast to His strong rope. These favours are all out of His Bounty and Grace. We testify that there is no deity besides Almighty Allah, Who is alone, and has no partner or associates, and that, without doubt, our Beloved Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) is the Servant and Messenger of Allah, the Leader of those who are first and those who are last. May Allah send His Salaams and Blessings upon him, his Household and Progeny, his Companions and those who follow their path until the Day of Judgement (*ridwanullahi ta'ala ajma'in*).

Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala says in the Holy Qur'an: "*O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and (always) say a word directed to the Right*".

Allah's Messenger (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) said: "*Whoever believes in Allah and the Hereafter should either say what is good, or otherwise remain silent*".

It is every Muslim's duty to show people the truth in anticipation that they would follow it clearly and evidently and certainly not blindly. For truth is as clear as the sun in broad daylight. This brief introduction is due to what we have been hearing recently, as far as the celebration of the birthday of our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) is concerned. Falsehood is regretably attributed to such a noble event and mischief is stated as to the illegitimacy of celebrating such an esteemed occasion. Thus leaving ordinary people in a state of confusion not knowing whether they should partake in celebrating the event or otherwise. This is so, since the people who raise objection to the Meelad feel that they are at liberty to fabricate events in Islamic history and the traditions of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*).

Therefore, we felt that it is incumbent upon us, and upon those who possess knowledge of *Shari'ah*, to clearly explain to the Muslim masses the truth about Meelad.

PART ONE

IGNORANCE AND LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) said: "*Whoever brings forth an innovation into our religion which is not part of it, it is rejected*".

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) also said: "*Beware of inventive matters for every invention is an innovation and every innovation is evil*".

Those who quote these two Ahadith claim that the word "Kul" which means "EVERY" or "ALL" which is mentioned in the above two Ahadith is used to include everything, i.e. all kinds of innovations or "Bid'ah" without any exception.

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They conclude therefore, that all innovations are "evil".

By stating such an ill-fated statement, they have in fact accused the scholars (Ulema) of the Muslim World of committing "evil" innovations, particularly Hadrat Umar (*radi Allahu anhu*). However, they quickly respond and say: No, we did not mean the Companions (Sahaba Ikraam). In reply to that we say, yes, indeed you did so, because you said "every" or "all" innovations are "evil".

And you have rejected what the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) himself approved, i.e. "Tarawih Prayers".

We will now quote before you many actions which were not carried out during the life of Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) but were in fact done following his demise by his Companions (*ridwanullahi ta'ala ajma'in*).

1. THE ISSUE OF COMPILING THE QUR'AN IN ONE BOOK

Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit (*radi Allahu anhu*) said: Prophet Muhammad (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) had passed away and the Qur'an has not been compiled into one book! In fact, it was Hadrat Umar who told Hadrat Abu-Bakr (*radi Allahu anhum*) to collect the Qur'an. Hadrat Abu-Bakr (*radi Allahu anhu*) was hesitant at first and he actually said, "How could we do something which the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) himself never did". Hadrat Umar (*radi Allahu anhu*) replied, "BUT BY ALLAH IT IS A GOOD THING". Hadrat Zaid then said Hadrat Umar kept coming back and forth until Hadrat Abu-Bakr (*radi Allahu anhum*) sent after him and assigned him the task of compiling the Qur'an. (*Bukhari Shareef*)

2. PROPHET IBRAHIM'S STATION (FOOTPRINT).

Imam Baihaqi (*radi Allahu anhu*) said that Bibi Ayesha (*radi Allahu anha*), a wife of the Holy Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) said that Prophet Ibrahim's (*alaihis-salaam*) Station (Footprint) was attached to "KAABA" during the Prophet's and Abu-Bakr's time. It was not until the time of Hazrat Umar (*radi Allahu anhum*) who changed its original position. Ibn Hajar (*radi Allahu anhu*), the great Muhaddith said: None of the companions raised any objection against Hazrat Umar (*radi Allahu anhu*) for doing so and he was the first person to cover Prophet Ibrahim's (*alaihis-salaam*) Station (Footprint) in the state it is now.

3. THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SECOND AZAAN DURING FRIDAY PRAYER

Imam Baihaqi narrated that Sayyiduna Al-Saa'eb bin Zaid (*radi Allahu anhum*) said: The first call (Azaan) for Friday Prayer commenced when the Imam sat on the Pulpit (Mimbar). This was the practice during the Prophet's, Hazrat Abu-Bakr's and Hazrat Umar's time. But when Hazrat Uthman came, he introduced the second Azaan (*radi Allahu anhum*).

4. SENDING PRAISE AND SALAAMS UPON THE PROPHET (SALLAL LAAHU ALAIHI WASALLAM)

This was first introduced by Hazrat Ali (*radi Allahu anhu*) and he used to teach it to people of his time. Ibn Jabir mentioned that in his book called "*Tah'theeb Al-Aa'thar*" so did Imam Tabari, Ibi Assem and Yaqoub bin Shaibah (*radi Allahu anhum*).

5. THE ADDITION MADE BY IBN MASOUD TO TASHA'HUJ

Imam Tabari said that Ibn Masoud (*radi Allahu anhum*) used to read after saying "*As Salaam Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuhu*", "*As Salaam Alaina Min Rabenna*" (Peace be upon us from our Lord).

6. THE INTRODUCTION OF READING "BISMILLAH AL-RAHMAN AL-RAHIM" BEFORE COMMENCING TASHA'HUJ.

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Bukhari and Muslim both narrated that Ibn Umar (*radi Allahu anhum*) use to read "*Bismillah Al-Rahman Al-Rahim*" before Tasha'hud.

All the above Companions have in fact introduced innovations which they have deemed beneficial and which were not practised during the life of the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*). Hence, that these innovations were brought about in acts of worship! What then would you say about these renowned Companions? Are they going to be classified among those who practise "evil" innovations!

As for their (Bin Baaz, etc.) other statement which is even worse than the first one, where it is alleged by them that in the religion of Islam there is no such thing as "good innovation" or "Bid'ah". Let us quote the opinion of the most renowned scholars of Islam regarding this issue.

1. Imam Al-Hafiz Al-Nawawi (*radi Allahu anhu*) said in Vol.6, p.21 in his "*Commentary on Sahih Al-Bukhari*": What the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) meant when he said "very" or "all" innovations, is that it is general but restricted, i.e. that most innovations are "evil" but not "all". In "*Tahdhib Al-Asma wal Lugat*" Bid'ah is explained as follows:

"Bid'ah in Shari'ah is the invention of that which was not there in the period of the Messenger of Allah, and it is divided into two categories Hasanah (or good) and Qabihah (or evil)".

2. Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani (*radi Allahu anhu*) who explained Sahih Al-Bukhari said: "*Every action which was not in practice at the Prophet's time is called or known as Innovation, however, there are those which are classified as 'Good' and there are those which are contrary to that*".
3. Imam Abu-Na'im said that he heard Imam Ibrahim Al-Junaid say that he heard Imam Shafi'i (*radi Allahu anhum*) say: "*The new things that are brought about are two kinds. One kind is that which brought about, inconsistent with something in the Qur'an or the Sunnah or with some Athaar or I'jma. This the category of Bid'ah Dalalah (heretic innovation). The second kind is that which is brought about from good things which are consistent with any of the above*".
4. Imam of Imams Izzuddin Ibn Abd al-Salaam (*radi Allahu anhu*) writes in his book "*Al-Qawa'id*": "*Bid'ah is divided into Wajib, Haram, Mandub, Makruh and Mubah. And the way to know which category it belongs to, is to examine it together with the laws of Shari'ah. If it falls in with the laws that deal with what is Wajib, then it is Wajib. If with those laws that deal with Haram, then it is Haram. If with the laws dealing with what is Mandub, then it is Mandub. If with the laws dealing with what is Makruh, then it is Makruh. If with the laws dealing with what is Mubah, then it is Mubah*".

Following the examination of the statements of these highly renowned scholars of Islam, we ask: How is it then that what is alleged that the word "Kul" or "every" includes all kinds of innovations or "Bid'ah" regardless? And where in the religion of Islam is it stated that there is no "good Bid'ah" or "good innovation". Hence, the Messenger of Allah (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) has said: "*Whoever introduces a good innovation into the religion of Islam, will be granted due reward for it and the reward of those who acts upon it without any reduction in their deeds*".

From this hadith we find that every Muslim is entitled to introduce a "good Bid'ah or innovation" as long as it conforms with the test mentioned earlier, even though the Messenger of Allah (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) did not do it, preach it or practice, in order that he/she could increase the deeds of goodness and rewards.

PART TWO

THE BEGINNING OF THE CELEBRATION OF MEELAD SHAREEF

As we all know as matter of fact, that when ever people want to promote and advance their ways, they pave the way to spread their falsehood among the Muslims masses and those who have very limited knowledge by misquoting what the Imams of Islam have stated or written. It is alleged by those people who disagree with Meelad that Imam Ibn Kathir (*radi Allahu anhu*) stated in his book "*Al-Bi'dayah Wa Ni'ayah*" in Vol.11, p. 172 the following: "*It was the*

Fatimy Government which ruled Egypt from 357-567 who was responsible for the celebration of Meelad".

We say in reply to the above that after having consulted the above reference we found that it was a sheer lie, for we read that page and we found that the above is but allegations, deceit and dishonesty when quoting the renowned scholars of Islam. However, if they insist on the above, we demand that they produce it before us if there is any truth in what they allege!

Allow me now to quote before you what Imam Ibn Kathir (*radi Allahu anhu*) has actually said in the same book "*Al-Bi'dayah*" Vol.13, p. 136: "*Sultan Muzaffar used to arrange the celebration of the Meelad Shareef with honour, glory, dignity and grandeur. In this connection he used to organise a magnificent festival*". Then he said in praise of that man: "*He was a pure-hearted, brave and wise Aalim (Scholar) and a just ruler, may Allah shower His Mercy upon him and grant him an exalted status.*"

Shaikh Abu-Khattab Ibn Dihyah (*radi Allahu anhu*) also wrote a book for him on the Meelad Shareef entitled "*Enlightenment on the Birthday of the Bearer of Good News, the Warner*". For this book Sultan Muzaffar awarded him a gift of one thousand Dinars. He then said: "*Every year his expenditure on the Meelad Shareef amounted to three hundred thousand Dinars*".

Examine carefully, dear brother/sister, such praise which has been conferred by Ibn Kathir upon that man, where he described him as "*a wise Aalim, brave and pure-hearted*" and then concluded by saying "*may Allah shower his Mercy upon him and grant him an exalted status*". He did not say he was a corrupt or evil, he did not say he was committing "Bid'ah" or deeds which leads a person to be doomed, as it is alleged by those who reject the celebration of Meelad Shareef.

I refer you to that very reference which has been quoted to read further for yourselves what Imam Ibn Kathir (*radi Allahu anhu*) has added in praise of this Sultan.

I would strongly recommend as well that you consult what Imam Zahabi (*radi Allahu anhu*) in his book "*Biography of the Elites*", Vol. 22, p. 336 has said in description of this Sultan: "*Sultan Al-Muzaffar was humble, generous, follower of the Prophet's way and he liked the scholars and narrators of Hadith*".

POINT TWO

VIEWPOINT OF THE IMAMS OF THE MUSLIM UMMAH ON THE CELEBRATION OF MEELAD SHAREEF

1. Imam Al-Hafiz Al-Suyuti (*radi Allahu anhu*) in his famous book "*Al-Hawii Lil-Fatawii*" allocated a special chapter on that topic and named it "*The Excellence of Objective in Celebrating the Mawlid*" where he said: *The question under consideration is what the verdict of the Shari'ah on celebrating the Holy Birthday of the Noble Prophet during the month of Rabbi-ul-Awwal. From the point of view of Shari'ah is this a praiseworthy action or a blameworthy one? And do those who arrange such celebration receive blessings or not?*

He said: "*The reply to this question is that in my view the Meelad Shareef (Celebration of the Birthday of the Noble Prophet - sallal laahu alaihi wasallam - is in fact such an occasion of happiness on which people assemble and recite the Holy Qu'ran to the extent that is easy. Then they relate the prophecies concerning the appearance of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) that have been transmitted in Ahadith and Athar, and the miraculous events and signs that took place on his birth. Then food is set before them and according to their desire they partake thereof to satisfaction. This festival of celebrating the birthday of the Noble Prophet is a Bid'ah Hasanah (good innovation) and those arranging it will get blessing, since in such a celebration is found the expression of joy and happiness at the greatness and eminence of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and his birth*".

2. Even Ibn Tay'miah said in his book "*Necessity of the Right Path*", p. 266, 5th line from the bottom of that page, published by Dar Al-Hadith, the following: "*As far as what people do during the Meelad, either as a rival*

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celebration to that which the Christian do during the time of Christ's birthday or as an expression of their love and admiration and a sign of praise for the Noble Prophet, Allah will surely reward them for such Ij'tiha". He then said: "Although Meelad was not practised by (Salaf), they should have done so since there was no objection against it from the Shari'ah point of view".

And we certainly only celebrate Meelad out of love and admiration to the Prophet of all Mankind.

3. Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (*radi Allahu anhu*) was asked, same reference of Imam Suyuti (*radi Allahu anhu*), about Meelad Shareef. His reply was: *"Meelad Shareef is, in fact, and innovation, which was not transmitted from any pious predecessor in the first three centuries. Nevertheless, both acts of virtue as well as acts of abomination are found in it (i.e. sometimes acts of virtue are found therein and sometimes acts of abomination). If in the Meelad Shareef only acts of virtue are done and acts of abomination are abstained from, then the Meelad Shareef is a Bid'ah Hasanah (good innovation), otherwise not."* He then added *"... to do any virtuous act and to observe it annually as means of recollection for any special day on which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed any favour or removed any calamity is a form of showing gratitude to Allah. Gratitude to Allah Ta'ala is expressed through different kinds of Ibaadah (worship) -prostration and standing in prayer, charity and recitation of the Holy Qu'ran. And what is a greater favour from Allah can there be than the appearance of the Prophet of Mercy (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) on this day (i.e. 12th of Rabbi-ul-Awwal)?"*

Some people do not limit it and celebrate the Meelad Shareef on any day of Rabbi-ul-Awwal. Nay, some people have extended it even more and increased the period to the whole year. According to the latter, the Meelad Shareef can be celebrated on any day of the year. The objective here is the same, i.e. to rejoice at and celebrate the Holy Birth of the Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*).

4. Imam Abu-Bakr Abdullah Al-Demashqi (*radi Allahu anhu*) compiled a number of books on the subject and called them *"Collection of Traditions on the Birth of the Chosen Prophet"*, *"The Pure Expression on the Birthday of the Best of Creations"* and *"The Spring for the Thirsty One on the Birth of the Rightly Guided"*.
5. Imam Al-Hafiz Al-Iraqi (*radi Allahu anhu*) wrote a book and called it *"The Pure Spring on the Sublime Birth"*.
6. Imam Ibn Dahyah (*radi Allahu anhu*) wrote a book and called it *"Enlightenment on the Birthday of the Bearer of Good News, The Warner"*.
7. Imam Mulla Ali Qari (*radi Allahu anhu*) wrote a book and called it *"The Quenching Spring on the Birthday of the Prophet"*.
8. Imam Shams UI-Din bin Naser Al-Dumashqi (*radi Allahu anhu*), said in his book *"The Spring for the Thirsty One on the Birth of the Rightly Guided"* about the story of Abu Lahab that he will receive a light punishment every Monday for expressing joy at the birth of the Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) on that day. The Imam said the following verse of poetry, the translation of the above is:
*If such Kafir was denounced in the (Qur'an)
And perished are his hands, and in the Flames is his eternal abode
It is narrated that every Monday
His torment is made easy for his Joy at the Birth of Ahmad
What is the expectation then of a servant who spent all his life
Happy with the Arrival of Ahmad and died on the Oneness of Allah.*
9. Imam Shams UI-Din Ibn al-Jazri (*radi Allahu anhu*), the Imam of Reciters, wrote a book and named it *"The Scent of Notification on the Blessed Birthday"*.
10. Imam Al-Hafiz Ibn Al-Jawzi (*radi Allahu anhu*), said in the description of Meelad: *"Peace and Tranquillity takes over during that year and a good glad tiding to obtain your wish and inspiration"*.
11. Imam Abu-Shamah, The Sheik of Al Hafiz Al Nawawi (*radi Allahu anhuma*), said: *"The best of the innovations of our times is what is carried out on the day of corresponding to the birthday of our Beloved Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), where people give out donations, practice what is right, express their joy*

and happiness, in doing so is surely a sign of love and admiration for the Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam)".

12. Imam Al-Hafiz Al-Qastalani (*radi Allahu anhu*), who gave commentary on Sahih Bukhari, said: "*May Allah shower his Mercy upon a person who takes the days of the month of Rabbi-ul-Awwal, in which the Noble Prophet (radi Allahu anhu) was born, as days of feast and celebration for doing so is the best cure for the heart of an ailing person.*"

Following all of the above, there is yet another false accusation, i.e. THOSE WHO OPPOSE MEELAD SHAREEF CLAIM THAT IF MEELAD WAS PART OF "DEEN", THEN SURELY THE PROPHET (SALLAL LAAHU ALAIHI WASALLAM) WOULD HAVE DONE IT HIMSELF AND HE WOULD HAVE MADE IT CLEAR FOR THE PEOPLE TO CELEBRATE IT?

THE REPLY IS:

Not everything which the Prophet or his Companions did not do would ultimately make things "Haraam". Since the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) himself said: "*He who introduces a new good Sunnah in Islam will be rewarded for it ...*"

Imam Shafi'i (*radi Allahu anhu*) said: "*Anything which enjoys the backing of Shari'ah cannot be an innovation even if the Companions did not practice it, because their abstention from doing something may have been due to a particular reason which was there at that time, or they have left it to something which happens to be better, or perhaps news about a particular them did not reach them all.*"

Therefore, whosoever alleges that this thing is Haraam on the basis that the Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) did not practice it, then surely he has alleged something which has no foundation or backing in *Shari'ah* and thus his allegation is refuted and rejected.

FINALLY

It should be noted that, according to your allegations you have stated, i.e. That every person who innovates or brings about into action that which the Prophet or the Companion did not do, means that this person has in fact introduced something bad into the religion, will be interpreted that the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) did not fulfil "the Deen" for his "Umah" and the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) did not convey what was ought to be conveyed to the Muslims! and whoever believes in that is a "Kaafir".

We say, "We condemn you from your own words", because you have brought and practised so many innovation which the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) or the Companions never practised nor preached, not even "Salaf" ever do them.

To name just a few and not all:

1. To gather collectively the Muslims to pray behind one Imam during "Tarawih Prayers", at the two Sacred Mosques and other Mosques.
2. Reading the "Du's" at the conclusion of finishing the recitation of the Holy Qur'an during "Tarawih Prayers" and "Tahajjud Prayers".
3. Allocating the 27th night of Ramadaan to recite the whole Quran at the two Sacred Mosques.
4. The Caller for Azaan saying when announcing to the people the commencement of the Tarawih Prayers the following, "Raise up for Tarawih Prayers, May Allah reward you".
5. Claiming that "Tarawih Prayers or Divinity" is divided into three Parts.

Is this a Prophetic saying, or the saying of one of the Companions or of the Four Imams? And many other things such as the formation of the committees for "Enjoying what is Good and Forbidding what is Evil", establishment of universities, Association for memorisation of the Holy Quran, Offices of Dawah and "Special Week of Masha'yekh". Hence, we do not raise objections to these things since they are in place for serving Islam. Let us add that these things are all "Bid'ah" but we acknowledge that they are "good Bid'ah".

REFUTATION OF THE FINAL OBJECTION?

It is alleged that since the Birthday of the Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) is the same as his demise, therefore, expressing joy on that day is no better than expressing grief over his demise and if the religion of Islam was to be applied on the basis of one's opinion, then we are bound to show grief during this day and not happiness!

I will leave the rebut of such crooked argument to none other than Imam Suyuti (*radi Allahu anhu*) himself, where he said in his famous book "*Al-Hawaii Lil-Fatawii*", p. 193, the following: "*The birthday of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) is the greatest favour of Allah granted to us, and that his demise is the greatest affliction for us. However, Shari'ah has encouraged us to show gratitude for favours and has taught us to observe patient perseverance, silence and calm in the face of afflictions. The Shari'ah has ordered us to offer "Aqiqa" on the birth of a child which is an expression of happiness and gratitude for favours and has taught us to observe patience, silence and calm in the face of afflictions. But the Shari'ah has not ordered us to sacrifice an animal on the death of someone nor to do such action. On the contrary, it has prohibited wailing and lamentation. Thus, the laws of Shari'ah indicate that to exhibit happiness in this Holy month in connection with the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), is better than showing grief at his demise.*"

CONCLUSION

The Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasalalm*) foretold about the coming of such people in the Hadith narrated by "Abu-Yaa'li" on the authority of "Huzaifah" who said:

The Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) said: "*What I fear most for you, is a man who reads the Qur'an until such time when the blessing of Qur'an is reflected on him and he takes Islam as his Cloak ... he then turns around and strips himself off from Islam and then tosses it away behind his back, then he heads quickly towards his neighbour with his sword unsheathed and he calls him a 'Mushrik'!" I said: "O, Prophet of Allah! Who is more worthy of being called a Mushrik the one being attacked or the attacker". He replied, "It is indeed the attacker."*

To end this research on a happy note let me draw your attention to the following Hadith: The Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) has himself indicated the excellence of this great month and day in reply to a questioner. When the questioner wanted to find out about fasting on Mondays, the Noble Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) replied: "*That is the day on which I was BORN*".

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