

The man said, "Why? I am just adding a little to the boundaries of Ihram". So Imam Malik recited the verse: **"Let those who oppose his command beware that a fitnah might strike them or a painful punishment that might befall them"** (24: 63).

3. Bid'ah cause Sunnah to die.

Ibn Abbas said, "When bid'ah is created then the Sunnah dies and this continues until that bid'ah is living and the Sunnah is dead." In fact not only does bid'ah cause the Sunnah to die but it also causes hatred for the Sunnah.

4. Bid'ah is a stepping stone to Kufr.

Imaam Al-Barbahaaree said, "Beware of bid'ah, because every bid'ah started out at something small and resembling the truth and people were fooled by it and followed it until it became bigger and bigger and were trapped by it and it took them out of Islam." (Kitaab Sharh us-Sunnah).

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The kufr of Jews and Christians is because of bid'ah. They introduced new things into the religion and those things took them completely away from the true message of Musa and Isa alaihumma salam".

5 Bid'ah destroys the akhira of the person.

The Prophet said, **"I am your predecessor at the Kawthar, and whoever will pass by there, he will drink from it and whoever will drink from it, he will never be thirsty. There will come to me some people whom I will recognize, and they will recognize me, but a barrier will be placed between me and them. I will say: They are of me. It will be said: 'You do not know what they innovated in the religion after you left'. I will say, 'Far removed, far removed (from mercy), those who changed (their religion) after me"** (Sahih Bukhari).

6. The repentance of an innovator is not accepted.

The Prophet said: **"Verily Allaah has prevented repentance from every person of innovation."** [Silsilat Al-Ahaadeeth As-Saheehah:1620] As for the sinner, Allah is quick to accept his repentance.

The sayings of the Companions:

Abdullaah ibn Umar states, **"Every innovation is misguidance, even if the people regard it as good"** (ad-Daarimee), Here we have the son of Umar ibn Khattab, refuting the concept of a good bid'ah. As for what Umar (ra) said regarding praying taraaweeh in congregation behind one Imaam, as a 'good bid'ah', then this is only a bid'ah in the linguistic meaning of the word not in the Shariah sense. The Prophet had prayed taraaweeh in congregation; Umar (ra) was merely reviving what the Prophet had started, and not introducing something new.

Abdullaah ibn Mas'ud said, **"follow the sunnah of Muhammad and do not innovate, for what you have been commanded is enough for you."** [ad-Daarimee]

Hudhayfah bin al-Yaman said, **"every act of worship that the Companions did not do, do not do it"** [Abu Dawood].

The sayings of the Imaams:

Imaam Abu Haneefah said: **"stick to the narrations and the way of the salaf, and beware of the newly invented matters for all of it is innovation"** [Sawnul Muntaq of as-Suyutee].

Imaam Maalik said: **"he who innovates an innovation in Islam regarding it as something good, has claimed that Muhammad (saw) has betrayed his trust to deliver the message as Allaah says, 'this day have I perfected for you your religion'. And whatsoever was not part of the religion then, is not part of the religion today"** [al-I'tisaam].

Imaam Ahmad said, **"the fundamental principles of the sunnah with us are: avoiding innovations and every innovation is misguidance"** [Usul as-Sunnah of Imaam Ahmad].

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WHAT IS BID'AH?

The Deen of Islam Is Complete and Perfect

As Muslims we have been blessed with the perfect religion. Allah says, "**This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion**" (5:3).

This verse clearly states that the religion has been completed and so has no need of addition and deletion. And the Prophet Muhammad (salallahu alaihi wa sallam) fulfilled the trust placed upon him by Allah completely, *explaining the religion to the people in detail*, making clear the halal from the haraam, the encouraged from the discouraged, even to the extent that he taught us the manners of going to the toilet.

So what is bid'ah

Bid'ah (innovation) is a newly invented matter in the religion. It is defined as: **'Worshipping Allah in a way that He has not prescribed', or: 'Worshipping Allah in a way other than that of the Prophet (salallahu alaihi wa sallam)'**.

For our worship to be accepted by Allah, there are two conditions:

- 1) It is done sincerely for the sake of Allah,
- 2) It is done in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (salallahu alaihi wa sallam).

As for the second condition, then this is only fulfilled when the action is in accordance with the Sunnah with respect to six matters:

The First: **Cause:** When the act of worship is linked to a cause which is not legislated, then this is a rejected innovation. For example many people single out the 17th of Rajab for tahajjud prayer, because it was the night in which the Messenger of Allah ascended to the heavens. The tahajjud prayer is indeed an act of worship but when it is linked to this reason it becomes an innovation because it is based upon a reason which is not established from the Sharee'ah. The Messenger of Allah never singled out the 17th of Rajab for tahajjud prayer, nor did his Companions. This type of bid'ah, where worship is linked to a cause not from the Sharee'ah, is very common.

The Second: **Type:** The act of worship must agree with the Sharee'ah in its type. If a person was to worship Allah with an act of worship whose type has not been legislated, it would not be accepted. An example of that is when a man sacrifices a horse, his sacrifice would not be correct because he has opposed the Sharee'ah in its specification of the type. Sacrifice is not performed except with lamb, cattle, sheep and camels.

The Third: **Quantity:** If a person desired to increase the number of rakaats of the prayer this would become an innovation which is not acceptable since it opposes the Sharee'ah in terms of quantity.

The Fourth: **Manner of Performance:** If a person was to perform wudhoo by washing his feet first then wiping his head, we would say: His wudhoo is void as it is in opposition to the Sharee'ah in the manner of its performance.

The Fifth: **Time:** If a man was to sacrifice an animal in the first days of Dhul-Hijjah the sacrifice would not be accepted due to its opposition to the Sharee'ah with respect to time. The time for sacrifice begins after the Eid al Adha prayer.

The Sixth: **Place:** If a woman was to perform i'tikaaf at home, it would not be correct due its opposition to the Sharee'ah in terms of place. This is because i'tikaaf can only be performed in the mosque.

So we see from the above six examples that every act of worship must be done exactly in the manner that the Messenger (salallahu alaihi wa sallam) taught us.

Bid'ah is a slander against Allah and His Messenger

If we claim that there is a special reward for an act that the Messenger of Allah did not do, then this can only mean one of two things:

- 1) Either the Messenger of Allah was ignorant of this act, or
- 2) The Messenger knew about this act, but chose to conceal it.

Point one is contradicted by the statement of the Messenger (salallahu alaihi wa sallam) who said, "**There is nothing that will take you closer to paradise but that I have enjoined it upon you, and there is nothing that will take you closer to hell but that I have warned you from it**" (Musnad ash-Shaafi'ee). And point two is contradicted by the statement of 'Aisha (ra): Whoever says that Muhammad concealed part of what was revealed to him is a liar, for Allah says: "**O Messenger! Proclaim which has been sent down to you from your Lord**" (5.67).

What did the Prophet (salallahu alaihi wa sallam) say about bid'ah

He (salallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "**I warn you of the newly invented matters and every newly invented matter is an innovation (bid'ah), and every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hell-fire**" (an-Nasaa'ee).

And he (salallahu alaihi wa sallam) used to say at the beginning of his lectures: "**and the best speech is the Speech of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad and the worst of all affairs are the newly invented matters**" (Sahih Muslim). The Prophet would say this in every speech. Why? Because when the Prophet wanted to emphasis something of great importance he would repeat it again and again.

The danger of bid'ah

1. Bid'ah causes disunity in the Ummah.

The division and splitting of the ummah is a direct result of bid'ah. This is proven very clearly from history. All of the Companions were united upon the Sunnah. However, when the Khawarij came with an innovation (in belief) many Muslims split from the ranks of the ahl-Sunnah and hence became the first of the ahl-bid'ah. Around the same time, the Shia innovated beliefs about Ali (ra) thus further dividing the ummah. These innovated beliefs also led to innovations in worship.

2. Bid'ah is the cause of fitnah for this Ummah.

Imam Malik was asked about putting on the Ihram from the Prophet's mosque rather than the miqaat. He said, "I fear for that person that some fitnah will come to him."