

MAWLID / MAWLOOD / MILAD-UN-NABEE

Some Muslims are excited at the approach of the 12th Rabee‘ul-Awwal which is the (commonly known) date of birth of our beloved Nabee (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam). In order to show their love for him, they hold gatherings called ‘*Mawlid / Mawlood / Milad*’ or ‘The Prophet’s Birthday’. Many of these individuals are continuing a family or community tradition that shows how much they love Rasoolullaah (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam). Whilst Almighty Allaah encourages us to love Rasoolullaah (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam) and to express that love, it does not include ‘*Mawlid*’, *Mawlood* or ‘*Milad*’ functions that have become the norm amongst some unsuspecting Muslims.

No Basis in Shariah

There is no festival in Islamic *Sharee’ah* that is called “The Prophet’s Birthday”. Neither the *Sahaabah*, the *Taabi’een*, the four *Imaams* nor anyone else recognized such a day as part of their religion. Rather this festival was introduced by some ignorant *Baatini* innovators whom the masses followed; all scholars of repute have denounced it wherever it is practiced. Evidences in the *Qur’aan* and *Sunnah* show that celebrating birthdays is a kind of *Bid’ah* (innovation) in religion which has no basis in the pure *Sharee’ah*. It is not prescribed to celebrate the birthday of anyone, whether Prophets or anyone else, because that is not narrated in the *Sharee’ah*. It is not permitted to accept invitations to birthday celebrations, because this involves supporting and encouraging *Bid’ah* that has been taken from non-Muslims who have no basis for what they do.

Almighty Allaah states:

“Or have they partners with Allaah (false gods) who have instituted for them a religion which Allaah has not allowed...?” **[Ash-Shooraa, 42:21]**

“Then We have put you (O Muhammad) on a plain way of (Our) commandment. So follow that, and follow not the desires of those who know not. Verily, they can avail you nothing against Allaah (if He wants to punish you). Verily, the *Dhaalimoon* (wrongdoers) are *Awliyaa* (protectors, helpers, etc.) to one another, but Allaah is the *Walee* (Protector, Helper) of the *Muttaqoon* (pious).” **[Al-Jaathiyah 45:18-19]**

“Follow what has been sent down unto you from your Lord, and follow not any *Awliyaa*’ (protectors, helpers, etc.) besides Him. Little do you remember!” **[Al-A’-a-raaf 7:3]**

Our Holy prophet (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam) said: "Whoever does something that is a not part of this matter of ours (i.e. Islam) will have it rejected" (**Muslim**); and "The best of speech is the Book of Allaah and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). The most evil of things are those which have been newly invented (in religion), and every innovation is a going astray." There are many other *Ahaadeeth* that convey the same meaning.

This innovation of celebrating the Prophet's birthday in the month of Rabee'ul-Awwal takes one or several forms: Some of them simply gather to read the story of his birth, or listen to speeches and *Qaseedahs* (odes) on this occasion. Others make food and sweets etc, and offer them to the people who attend. Another group conduct these celebrations in the mosques or in their homes. Other innovators do not limit themselves to the above, but their gatherings include Haraam and evil things such as men mixing freely with women, dancing and music, or acts of shirk such as seeking the help of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and calling upon him or seeking his support against their enemies, and so on. Whatever kinds of celebrations they are and whatever form they take, they are undoubtedly *Bid'ah* and *Haraam* innovations that were introduced long after the time of the best generations.

Seventh Century A.H. Beginnings

Historians such as Ibn Katheer, Ibn Khalliqaan and others write that the first one who introduced this innovation was Abu Sa'eed Kawkaboori, the king of Irbil, at the end of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century AH. Abu Shaamah said: The first one who did that in Mosul was Shaykh 'Umar Ibn Muhammad al-Mulla, one of the well known righteous men, and the ruler of Irbil and others followed his example. Al-Haafiz Ibn Katheer wrote in '*Al-Bidaayah*' (13-137), in his biography of Abu Sa'eed al-Kawkaboori: '*He did the Mawlid in Rabee'ul-Awwal and celebrated it with a great celebration.*' ... Then he wrote: '*Al-Sabt said: Some of those who attended the feast given by the king on some of the Mawlids said that this feast included five thousand roasted heads, ten thousand chickens, one hundred thousand bowls and thirty thousand plates of sweets. And the Sufis sang from Dhuhr until Fajr, and he himself danced with them.*'

Ibn Khalliqaan wrote in '*Waafiyaat al-A'a-yaan*' (3-274): '*When the first of Safar came, they would adorn those domes with all kinds of fine adornments, and in every dome there was a group of singers and a group of puppeteers and musical players, and they did not leave any dome but they installed a group there.*' If a Muslim joins in this action, eats their food and sits in their gatherings, then undoubtedly she or he is taking part in keeping the innovation alive, and is cooperating in it, in opposition to the words of Almighty Allaah: "Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allaah" [**Al-Maa-idah 5:2**].

Celebrating the Prophet's birthday was not prescribed by Allaah in the Quran or by the Messenger of Allaah in the *Sunnah*, so it is not permissible for the Muslims to celebrate his birthday, in obedience to

the command of Allaah and the command of His Prophet (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam) . If celebrating the Prophet's birthday was prescribed, then the Prophet would have told the *Ummah* of that, because he is the most sincere of people and there is no Prophet after him who could explain anything he did not speak about. He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the Seal of the Prophets and he explained to the people what he had to explain of the truth, such as loving him and following his sharee'ah, sending blessings and salaams upon him and other rights of his that are explained in the *Qur'aan* and *Sunnah*. He did not tell his *Ummah* that celebrating the day of his birth was something prescribed so that they would do that. He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not do that during his lifetime and his companions (May Allaah be pleased with them) who were the dearest of people to him and the most knowledgeable of his rights did not celebrate that day, neither did the Rightly-Guided Caliphs or any others. Then those who followed them in truth of the best three generations did not celebrate this day either.

Indeed, Rasoolullaah (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam) informed us not to exaggerate about him as the Christians had exaggerated about Jesus (upon whom be peace). He said:

“Do not exaggerate about me as the Christians exaggerated about the son of Maryam. I am only a slave, so say, ‘The slave of Allaah and His Messenger.’” **(Al-Bukhaari)**.

What has been reported is that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) made the day of his birth a day of worship, which is different to celebration. He was asked about fasting on Mondays, and he said:

“That is the day on which I was born and the day on which I was entrusted with the Mission or when I was first given Revelation.” **(Muslim, An-Nasa-i and Abu Dawood)**.

A Few Questions to Think About

We also know that the *Sahaabah* (May Allaah be pleased with them) were the people who loved Rasoolullaah (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam) the most.

Was it reported that Abu Bakr, who was the closest of people to him and the one who loved him the most, celebrated the birthday of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)? Was it reported that 'Umar, who ruled for twelve years, or 'Uthmaan, did this? Was it reported that 'Ali, his relative and close companion, did this? Was it reported that any of the *Sahaabah* did this? No, by Allaah!

Is it because they were not aware of its importance, or did they not truly love the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)? No one would say such a thing except one who has gone astray and is leading others astray. Did any of the *Imaams* – Abu Haneefah, Malik, al-Shaafi'ee, Ahmad, al-Hasan al-Basri, Ibn Seereen – do this or command others to do it or say that it was good? Can it be

possible that the *Sahaabah*, the *Imaams* and the people of the best three centuries were unaware of it, and it was only those who came later who were aware of its importance?! By Allaah, no!

It was not even mentioned during the first and best three centuries. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said in a *Saheeh Hadeeth*:

“The best of mankind are my generation (or my century), then those who come after them, then those who come after them. Then there will come a people who will not care if their testimony comes before their oath or vice versa (i.e., they will not take such matter seriously).” **(Al-Bukhaari, Al-Muslim and At-Tirmidhi).**

Increasing Our Love for Rasoolullaah (Sallallaahu-'alayhi-wasallam)

The *Qur'aan* tells us that love of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is demonstrated by following the guidance he brought. Allaah states:

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘If you (really) love Allaah, then follow me, Allaah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allaah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Say: ‘Obey Allaah and the Messenger.’ But if they turn away, then Allaah does not like the disbelievers.” **[Aal ‘Imraan 3:31-32]**

The first *Aayah* explains that love is just a claim, but the proof of sincerity is following what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) brought. The second *Aayah* reaffirms the importance and necessity of obeying Allaah and His Messenger. Hence Allaah ended the *Aayah* with a very stern warning in which those who refuse to obey are described as *Kaafirs* (non-Muslims), and Allaah does not love the disbelievers. We ask Allaah to keep us safe from that. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) told us of the danger of not obeying him, and the danger of adding to what he brought. The celebration of *Milad* or his birthday is indeed an addition to what he brought – as all the scholars agree. He said: “The best of speech is the Book of Allaah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The most evil of things are those which are newly-invented (in religion), and every innovation is a going astray.” **(Muslim and An-Nasa’i).**

The strength of love for the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is connected to the Muslim’s faith. When his faith increases, his love for the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) increases. Loving the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is an act of obedience to Allaah and a means of drawing closer to Him. Loving the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is one of the obligatory duties in Islam. It was narrated that Anas said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his father, his child and all the people.” **(Bukhaari, 15; Muslim, 44)**

We can increase our love of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) by realizing the following:

Firstly: he was sent by his Lord who chose him above all of creation to convey the religion of Allaah to mankind. Allaah chose him because He loved him and was pleased with him. If Allaah were not pleased with him, He would not have chosen him. So we must love the one whom Allaah loves and be pleased with the one with whom Allaah is pleased. We must realize that he is the close friend (*Khaleel*) of Allaah and that close friendship is a higher status and it is the highest degree of love. It was narrated that Jundub said: I heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say:

“I declare before Allaah that I have no close friend (*Khaleel*) from among you. Allaah has taken me as a close friend as he took Ibraaheem as a close friend. If I were to have taken a close friend from among my *Ummah*, I would have taken Abu Bakr as a close friend.” (Muslim, 532).

Secondly: We should realize the high status to which Allaah has raised him, for he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of mankind. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (May Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

“I will be the leader of mankind of the Day of Resurrection, the first whose grave will be opened, the first to intercede and the first to be asked to intercede.” (Muslim, 2278)

Thirdly: We should realize that he suffered trials and difficulties in order to bring Islam to us. We should remember that the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was persecuted, hit, slandered and insulted; the closest people to him disowned him and accused him of being a madman, a liar and a sorcerer. He fought the people in order to protect the religion so that it could reach us; they fought him, expelled him from his people and homeland, and gathered armies against him.

Fourthly: We should follow the example of his companions who loved him deeply. They loved him more than wealth and sons, and more than their own selves. Fifthly: We should strive to follow his *Sunnah* in word and deed, so that his *Sunnah* is the path we follow in our whole life, and you put his words before any other words and put his command before everything else. We should follow the ‘*Aqeedah* (belief) of his noble Companions, and the ‘*Aqeedah* of the *Taabi’een* who followed them, and the ‘*Aqeedah* of those who followed their path until the present day, namely *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah*, and avoid *Bid’ah* (innovation) of deviant persons.

We conclude by asking Allaah to protect us from *Bid’ah* (innovation) and ask Him to help us to love His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and to make him dearer to us than our children, parents, families and our own selves, and bless us to learn and live our lives according to his upright example...Aameen.

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