

MAWLID SUNNAH OR BID'AH

*Answers to Ten Questions regarding the Mawlid
by Mufti Zahid Hussain al-Qadiri*

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The work of TheSunniWay includes providing translations of literature by our pious predecessors, developing authentic Sunni applications for smartphones and spreading the message of Imam Ahmad Rida through other digital means such as social media.

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May Allah ﷻ accept our humble efforts through the blessed intermediary of the Best of Creation ﷺ and his true devotees, such as Sayyidi Ala Hazrat رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

Author

Mufti Zahid Hussain, currently resides in Preston UK and has changed the lives of many through his immense intellect of the Deen, which many have witnessed through his inspiring speeches and fatawa (religious edicts) in well versed English and Urdu.

Mufti Zahid Saheb has studied at some of the most revered Islamic Institutions for Education, such as Jami'ah al-Azhar [Cairo, Egypt], Jami'ah Ashrafiyyah [Mubarakpur, India] and Jami'ah Amjadiyyah [Ghosi, India]. At these places, Hazrat has been taught by some of the most respected Ulama of the Ahlus Sunnah alive today, most notably the son of Sadr al-Shari'ah, al-Muhaddith al-Kabeer Allamah Zia ul Mustafa Saheb, to whom Mufti Saheb has also pledged Bay'at [allegiance] to. Mufti Zahid Hussain has obtained ijazah in Tafseer, Hadith and Fiqh from the Great Shaykh. Furthermore, Mufti Saheb was recently bestowed Khilafat by the Great Grandson of Ala Hazrat, Allamah Mufti Akhtar Raza Khan.

In the eyes of the followers of Ala Hazrat worldwide, Mufti Saheb is respected and admired for his work and the great knowledge that he possesses. He has become a role model for the English speaking Youth, at a time of such fitna, trials and tribulations, Mufti Saheb has stood firm with the teachings of Sayyidi Ala Hazrat, propagating and acting upon them, where many others have failed.

May Allah increase the knowledge of Mufti Saheb and enable him to do even more work for the Deen. May Allah enable us to benefit from the Great Knowledge of this Scholar of Islam, may we be granted even a drop from his vast Ocean of Knowledge, Aameen!

The Ten Questions

1. It is a known fact that our Prophet is the most superior of all the Prophets and Messengers alayhimus salaam and also that he is the seal of all the Prophets alayhimus salaam. He left no stone unturned in conveying the religion to us and rendering precious advice to us. If the "Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ" was a divinely inspired act, then surely the Prophet ﷺ would have commanded the Muslims to it, or at least, either he or his beloved Sahabah would have practiced it.
2. Surah Maidah: we have perfected your religion ... so why do you Sunnis add to religion; don't you believe this Quranic verse?
3. There's a hadith in Tirmizi Shareef which says any Bid'ah in religion leads one astray, so why do you Sunnis add this Bid'ah of celebrating?
4. All this Milaad celebration is just a Bid'ah and innovation introduced by a modern day Indian called Ahmed Raza Khan.
5. How come Imam Abu Hanifa or Imam Bukhari didn't celebrate milaad?
6. Is fixing date for milaad shareef permissible?
7. Celebrating the birth is a way of the Christians for Jesus, why do you Sunnis light up your houses and put decorations like the Christians?
8. You shouldn't celebrate Milaad on 12 Rabi ul Awal as that's the date the Prophet ﷺ passed away.

9. The contemporary form of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabee ﷺ apart from being a manifestation of Bid'ah also encompasses other evils such as the intermingling of sexes, usage of musical instruments and many other such evils. The most abhorring and shocking evils in these functions are the acts of shirk that take place. With hollow claims of "Hubbe- Rasul ﷺ" (love for Rasulullah ﷺ) entreaties and supplications are made to beings other than Allah, namely to Ambiyaa ﷺ.
10. I turn my lights off and some of my friends keep lights off on 12 Rabi ul awal because we believe it has no significance to our lives – how will celebrating the Milaad help us in this life and the hereafter?

The Answers

All praise is for Allah ﷻ, Lord of all creation. He created the most beloved with perfection, elevated His status beyond imagination. He prepared Him with qualities in abundance, including vast knowledge, and in all, competence. He sent Him as a Messenger to every nation, on a specific day fixed by the most Benevolent. He revealed upon him a book of excellence, known as the mother of all revelation; they all declared His birth, for mankind, a divine form of guidance, surely a great gift from the most Beneficent. Salutations be upon his eminence, and also a shower of mercy, and be it endless.

Celebrating the birth of Allah's ﷻ most beloved is without doubt permissible and encouraged according to the unanimous consensus of our predecessors. Its origin shines clearly from the divine book of Allah and the traditions of our great Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the midday sun.

Firstly, it is important that one understands what the Mawlid actually is. Those who are kept behind a veil tend to have this illusion that the Mawlid is a party in which impermissible acts take place, like music and dancing. Things that were prohibited by the Qur'an and Hadith suddenly become permissible due to the birth of the greatest of all mankind ﷺ. I assure you that this is nothing but assumptions and accusations. Allah ﷻ, in the Qur'an condemns such evil assumptions and accusations.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ

إِثْمٌ﴾

﴿“O’ those who believe! Stay away from much assumptions for surely
some assumptions are sin”﴾

[Surah al-Hujuraat, 12]

The truth is, celebrating the Mawlid simply means to thank Allah ﷻ for sending his most beloved to this world. For the Mawlid celebrations, people gather and remember the coming of our great Prophet Muhammad ﷺ into this world from the world of souls. People gather and listen to speeches regarding the auspicious birth from the sound narrations recorded by the masters of Hadith and Seerah. The prosperous life of the Prophet ﷺ is remembered and also His ﷺ beautiful characteristics. Poetry in praise of Allah ﷻ and His beloved are recited without the slightest sound of prohibited music. The Muslims carry out these acts solely for expressing their gratitude to Allah ﷻ, the most merciful.

Q1 | Did the Beloved Messenger ﷺ practise it?

Question:

It is a known fact that our Prophet is the most superior of all the Prophets and Messengers (Alayhimus Salam) and also that he is the seal of all the Prophets (Alayhimus Salaam). He left no stone unturned in conveying the religion to us and rendering precious advice to us. If the "Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ" was a divinely inspired act, then surely the Prophet ﷺ would have commanded the Muslims to it, or at least, either he or his beloved Sahabah, Radi- Allahu anhum, would have practiced it.

Answer:

The Arabic word Mawlid simply means, the time of birth or place of birth. According to the custom amongst the Muslims around the globe, it means to mention and remember the coming of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ into this world whether in a gathering or in seclusion, whether it is on the 12th of Rabee' Al-Awwaal or any other day of the year. This is not a stone left unturned by Allah in the Qur'an and neither by our Prophet ﷺ in his traditions. This is not an act which was strange amongst the companions and those that followed until today. The truth is that the coming of our Prophet ﷺ into this world has been celebrated by Allah ﷻ in the Qur'an, by the Prophet ﷺ in the gatherings of His companions, by the companions (after the Prophet ﷺ left this material world) and by all our

predecessors. Until today those who remain on their path (The path shown by the Qur'an, Hadith and the predecessors) enjoy celebrating the Mawlid.

Allah ﷻ mentions the coming of the beloved (peace be upon him) into this world in the following words,

﴿لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ

عَلَيْكُمْ بِأَلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

﴿“There has come unto you a messenger, (one) of yourselves”﴾

[Surah at-Tawbah, 128]

And in another place:

﴿قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾

﴿“Now has come unto you light from Allah and clear scripture”﴾

[Surah al-Maa'idah, 15]

In the commentary of the above verse it says that the light in the second verse is our beloved Prophet ﷺ. The verse can be better understood from a specific Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ. This specific Hadith is a gathering of the Mawlid, the speaker is our most beloved, the Prophet ﷺ himself and the audience is the eminent companions (Allah ﷻ is pleased with them all).

Amongst his companions, he ﷺ said,

“Now I shall inform you of my birth (first matter), I am the prayer of Ibrahim, glad tiding of Isa’ and I am the very sight of my mother which she saw when she gave birth to me, a light exited her which enlightened for her the palaces of Syria”

[Musnad Ahmad, Bayhaqi, Mustadrak and Ibn Hibban]

The aforementioned verses and the Hadith are sufficient to establish the permissibility of celebrating the Mawlid for a person in search of the truth. Allah clearly mentions the coming of the Prophet ﷺ into this world from the world of souls. The personal pronoun in the verse, “Now hath come unto you”, is plural and for the second person which means Allah ﷻ is addressing a gathering. The same personal pronoun is used in the words of the Hadith, “Now I shall inform you”. Only a lack of sense would now stop one from understanding the permissibility of the Mawlid gathering.

The companions celebrated the Mawlid by mentioning the birth of the Prophet ﷺ and sometimes by singing poetry about the beautiful birth.

It is narrated regarding Ibn Abbas ؓ and Jaabir ؓ that they mentioned the birth in the following words,

“He ﷺ was born on the 12th of Al-Rabee’ Al-Awwal”

[Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah]

Surely, if mentioning the birth of the Prophet ﷺ was a bid'ah, the Sahabah would not have mentioned anything about it, neither the day nor the word "birth". Everything about the Prophet ﷺ recorded by the companions is of utmost importance for the believer. Why did the companions record the date of the beloved's birth ﷺ?

Hassan Ibn Saabit رضي الله عنه was known as the Prophet's ﷺ poet. He sang praises for the Prophet ﷺ and also refuted the poetry of those who tried to ridicule the Prophet ﷺ in their poetry. The Prophet ﷺ would often pray for Hassan رضي الله عنه by saying, "O' Allah, help him through the angel Jibreel". Surely Allah جل جلاله is pleased with Hassan Ibn Saabit. Once he recited poetry regarding the beautiful Mawlid, these words are remembered and sung today by all Muslims young and old. He said,

"My eyes have never seen more handsome than you,
No woman has given birth to more beautiful than you,
You have been created beyond all faults,
As though you have been created as you wished"

Abbas رضي الله عنه, the uncle of the Prophet (peace be upon him) also wrote poetry regarding the Mawlid of the Prophet (peace be upon him), in these words,

"And when you were born (O' Beloved) the earth became bright, and through your light did the horizon shine, and today we walk the path of guidance in that very shining light"

There are many other verses, Hadith and narrations from the companions which mention the coming of our most beloved master ﷺ. However, I want to show that celebrating the Mawlid is not only practiced in the Qur'an and Hadith but it is also encouraged and demanded.

The Prophet ﷺ is a grace (favor) of Allah ﷻ for all creations. This is not something that one can disagree with and yet remain a believer. It is an obligation to believe that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is a divine gift from the almighty Lord of all the worlds. A fundamental belief of Muslims is that the Prophet ﷺ is the greatest gift Allah ﷻ has bestowed mankind with. He ﷺ is the heart of faith.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an,

﴿لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو

عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن

قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

﴿“Allah verily has shown grace to the believers by sending unto them a messenger of their own who recites unto them His revelations, purifies them, and teaches them the scripture and wisdom; although before they were in clear misguidance”﴾

[Surah Aal Imran, 164]

Knowing that the Prophet ﷺ is a gift, bounty, grace, mercy and favor from Allah ﷻ, do we not have a duty to thank Allah ﷻ? Should we not express our gratitude to Allah ﷻ? If yes, and surely yes then in what way and how? Let us see how Allah ﷻ demands us to show our thanks and express our gratitude for the gifts He has bestowed us with. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an,

﴿قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ﴾

﴿“Say: In receiving the grace and mercy of Allah, they must rejoice, it is better than what they hoard”﴾

[Surah Yunus, 58]

From the above verse, we learn that we should rejoice which means we should be happy and we should celebrate. We also learn that it is better than hoarding wealth, which means we should spend it to show our gratitude to Allah ﷻ. Where must we spend our wealth to rejoice? Should we buy new clothes, decorations, give to the poor and feed the poor and also feed our fellow Muslims? The answer is common sense; spend your wealth on that which is within the law of Islam and shows your happiness and thankfulness towards Allah ﷻ.

We now know that we should rejoice the coming of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It is demanded by Allah ﷻ to rejoice and spend to

show our gratitude on receiving the mercy and grace of Allah ﷻ. Isn't that exactly what the true lovers of the beloved do to celebrate the Mawlid?

Allah ﷻ says in another verse of the Qur'an,

﴿وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ﴾

﴿“And publicise well the bounty of your Lord”﴾

[Surah ad-Duha, 11]

The Prophet Muhammad's birth ﷺ is surely the most gracious bounty of Allah ﷻ for us believers. Allah ﷻ commands us to publicize it. How must we publicize the coming of the Prophet ﷺ? According to the masses around the globe, one of the ways of publicising and showing acknowledgment is marching in the streets. Is there anywhere in the Qur'an where Allah ﷻ has prohibited the marching in the streets to publicize His best of gifts? If not and surely not then why not?

Allah ﷻ says,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾^ج

﴿“O, those who believe! Forbid not the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, and transgress not, Lo! Allah does not love the transgressors”﴾

[Surah al-Maa'idah, 87]

The Prophet ﷺ explains this verse in the following Hadith narrated by Salmaan Al-Faarsi رضي الله عنه،

“Lawful is that which Allah ﷻ has made lawful in the book. Unlawful is that which Allah ﷻ has made unlawful in the book. And that which Allah ﷻ has not mentioned is forgiven (permissible)”

[Tirmizi and Ibn Maajah]

This is the very reason why the Muslim Scholars unanimously agree that anyone who regards something as unlawful must provide evidence, otherwise it is deemed lawful.

Publicizing can also be achieved by holding gatherings and addressing people the bounties and gifts of Allah ﷻ. In the same way the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to gather the companions together. Flags, banners and posters are also effective for publicising. Chanting praises and speeches are also a way of publicising. The fact of the matter is, whatever lies within the boundaries of Islamic law is allowed and whatever the law of Islam has prohibited is not allowed. Therefore, music, dancing, intermingling with the opposite sex, consuming the unlawful, swearing, hurting others through unlawful acts such as shouting, screaming and jumping around like hooligans

whilst in the Masjid or marching in the streets are all unlawful. Marching in the streets in a respectable manner or gathering and speaking of the beautiful characteristics, life or birth of the beloved ﷺ is all lawful. The Islamic Law does not suddenly change on the 12th of Al-Rabee' Al-Awwal, that which was lawful remains lawful and that which was unlawful remains unlawful.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an,

﴿قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِنْكَ ۖ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ

الرَّازِقِينَ﴾

﴿“Isa’ son of Maryam said: O’ Allah, our Lord! Send down for us a
clothe spread with food from heaven, that it may be an eid for us, for the
first of us and the last of us and a sign from You, give us sustenance for
You are the best of sustainers”﴾

[Surah al-Maa'idah, 114]

From the aforementioned verse we learn that the Prophet Isa' ﷺ asked the Lord for food from heaven as a gift for his people. The Prophet Isa' ﷺ also said that the receiving of the gift will be an eid for them, and for those who will come later in generation. The day will

be remembered and celebrated as an eid. It is an Islamic principle that everything from the previous Prophets (upon them all be peace and blessings) mentioned in the Qur'an or Hadith without being refuted remains established. Therefore, remembering the days Allah ﷻ sent his bounties as days of eid is perfectly permissible. If the people of the Prophet Isa' عليه السلام made the day an eid when they received the food from heaven, then why can the Muslims not remember the day their greatest gift came from Allah ﷻ as a day of eid? Verily the day of our Prophet's ﷺ birth is a day of eid.

Surely, now the stone appears to have been turned. I believe it is correct to say, it is a known fact that the Mawlid is an eid and according to the command of Allah ﷻ we must rejoice and publicise it.

Q2 | Are Sunnis adding to religion?

Question:

Surah Maidah: “we have perfected your religion” ... so why do you Sunnis add to religion; don’t you believe this Quranic verse?

Answer:

The Ahl Al-Sunnah Wa Al-Jamaa’ah are the Muslims which have remained on the path shown by the Qur’an, Hadith and the predecessors. It is infidelity to reject a verse of the Qur’an and to add something to the religion which is contradicting its sources.

From the above, it is clear that the Mawlid is not a new addition to the Islamic Law but actually an act encouraged in the Islamic Law. The verse in Surah Al-Maa’idah mentioned in the question is actually a verse in support of the Mawlid celebration.

Allah ﷻ, the almighty Lord says,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ

لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

﴿“This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed my favor unto you, and have chosen for you as religion Al-Islam”﴾

[Surah al-Maa’idah, 3]

When this verse was revealed, a Jew said to Umar رضي الله عنه,

“If this verse was revealed upon us, we would have made that day an eid”. Umar رضي الله عنه replied that we know very well the day and the place of that revelation and Umar رضي الله عنه indicated, that day is an eid.

[Bukhari and Muslim]

If the day; when the aforementioned verse was revealed, can be known and remembered as a day of eid then surely the day of our Prophet's birth ﷺ should be known and remembered as a day of eid.

Q3 | Is Celebrating the Mawlid a Bid'ah?

Question:

There's a hadith in Tirmizi Shareef which says any Bid'ah in religion leads one astray, so why do you Sunnis add this Bid'ah of celebrating?

Answer:

Celebrating the Mawlid is not a bid'ah. However, one may say that the way the Mawlid is celebrated nowadays is not like it was in the time of the Prophet ﷺ and therefore it is bid'ah.

It is correct that the Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ says that any bid'ah in religion leads one astray. However, there are many other narrations of Hadith which apparently seem to contradict this one. Unfortunately, the people who today call themselves Ahl Al-Hadith (people of the Hadith) only follow some of the Hadith and reject the rest. Whichever Hadith befits their desires, they accept. The rest they don't even consider, that is the very reason why the Ahl Al-Sunnah declare them as the Munkireen Al-Hadith (Rejectors of the Hadith).

It is a known principle amongst all the great Hadith masters and jurists (those who deduce rulings from the Qur'an and Hadith) that when two or more Hadith apparently seem to contradict each other, it is necessary to reconcile between them. This is simply because the Prophet ﷺ was free from faults and therefore in reality never contradicted himself.

The Hadith mentioned in the question from Tirmizi is,

“Every innovation is a bid'ah, and every bid'ah is misguidance”

Here is a Hadith recorded in the two most authentic books of Hadith; Bukhari and Muslim which explains the above mentioned Hadith,

“He who innovates in this religion of ours something which is not from it, is rejected”

[Bukhari and Muslim]

In the above Hadith, the Prophet ﷺ has conditioned the act of innovation in religion with, “that which is not from it”. This condition tells us that an innovation can have its roots within the religion and therefore not always be unlawful and misguidance. This is confirmed by a verse of the Qur’an and a Hadith I have mentioned in answer to question one. Let us read it one more time,

Allah ﷻ says,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْرِمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾^ج

﴿“O, those who believe! Forbid not the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, and transgress not, Lo! Allah does not love the transgressors”﴾

[Surah Al-Maa'idah, verse: 87]

The Prophet ﷺ explains this verse in the following Hadith narrated by Salmaan Al-Faarsi رضى الله عنه،

“Lawful is that which Allah ﷻ has made lawful in the book. Unlawful is that which Allah ﷻ has made unlawful in the book. And that which Allah ﷻ has not mentioned is forgiven (permissible)”

[Tirmizi and Ibn Maajah]

This is the very reason why the Muslim Scholars unanimously agree that anyone who regards something as unlawful must provide evidence, otherwise it is deemed lawful.

The conclusion (reconciliation between the apparent contradicting traditions regarding innovations) is that if someone invented an act and deemed it lawful, whereas it is mentioned as unlawful in the Qur'an or the Hadith, then it is surely misguidance. Otherwise it will be from the religion and therefore permissible.

Here is a Hadith recorded in Sahih Muslim which clears all apparent contradiction and clearly explains the actual Islamic ruling,

“He who innovates in Islam a good innovation, then it is acted upon after him; for him will be written his reward and the reward of all who acted upon it without any decrease in their reward. And he who innovates in Islam a bad innovation, then it is acted upon after, against him will be written his punishment and the punishment of all who acted upon it without any decrease in their punishment”

[Muslim]

This Hadith leads us to understand the Hadith from Tirmizi which was mentioned first. We reconcile between the apparently contradicting Hadith by declaring that every bad innovation is

unlawful and misguidance, everything other than that is lawful and permissible. Let us read the Hadith once again with this explanation, “Every [bad] innovation is a [bad] bid’ah and every [bad] bid’ah is misguidance”

Now it will be easy to understand the acts of the companions and our predecessors (Allah ﷻ is pleased with them all) which they performed after the Prophet ﷺ had left this world.

The Qur’an was not compiled into one collection in the time of the Prophet ﷺ. Different parts and verses were written in different places. When many of the Huffaz (Those who had memorized the whole Qur’an) were martyred, Umar ﷺ came to Abu Bakr ﷺ who was the caliph at the time and pleaded him to gather the Qur’an into one collection. Abu Bakr ﷺ at first responded negatively,

“How can I do what the Prophet ﷺ never did?”

After a few days passed, Abu Bakr ﷺ realised its need and told Umar ﷺ that Allah ﷻ had opened his heart to understand what Umar ﷺ was pleading. Thus, the Qur’an was compiled into one. Now who would be dumb enough to say that Abu Bakr ﷺ and Umar ﷺ were both misguided? Did Abu Bakr ﷺ and Umar ﷺ innovate something that is unlawful? Of course not as Allah ﷻ is surely pleased with them both.

Imam Bukhari رحمته الله has recorded a narration regarding Umar رحمته الله. In the month of Ramadan he gathered the people to perform the taraweeh salah in congregation behind Ubay Ibn Ka'b رحمته الله. Once he came and saw them performing the taraweeh salah in congregation, he said,

“How good is this bid’ah”

Umar رحمته الله confirms our understanding of bid’ah and clearly declares that bid’ah can also be good and acceptable. There are many other examples such as building the domes and minarets on the Masaajid, the Mihrab in the Masaajid, building schools, the new languages and subjects of knowledge that were apparently not learnt or taught in the time of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه or in the time of any companion. The list of things and acts that were innovated after the best of times; the time of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه, can result in volumes of books. The fact is, not every bid’ah is unacceptable.

Sometimes the misguided people object by saying there are two types of innovations, “**For** the religion and **in** the religion”

They say it is lawful to innovate **for** the religion but not **in** the religion. This objection itself is a bid’ah, it was never made before by any of our predecessors. It is a baseless claim. The Hadith from Muslim I mentioned above clearly states the words,

“He who innovates **in** Islam a good innovation”

Q4 | Was the Mawlid invented by Ala Hazrat?

Question:

All this Milaad celebration is just a Bid'ah and innovation introduced by a modern day Indian called Ahmed Raza Khan.

Answer:

The great Imam, Sheikh Al-Arab Wa Al-Ajam, Ahmad Raza Khan Al-Barelwi Al- Hanafi رحمته الله was not an innovator but a reviver. The gathering of the Mawlid is not an innovation that was never practiced before his time. The great Imam revived the love of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه and his family in the hearts of the true believers. This may have led the untrue believers to accuse the great Imam, of innovating acts and beliefs. I assure the fact that many scholars of the Muslim world before Imam Ahmad Raza رحمته الله have written extensively on celebrating the Mawlid.

It may amaze the people who regard themselves as the Ahl Al-Hadith and disagree with the permissibility of the Mawlid, that one of the great books of Hadith, Jami' Al-Tirmizi (One of the Sihah Sittah) contains a whole chapter on the Mawlid that is titled,

“Babu Maa Jaa’a Fi Milaad Al-Nabiyyi (May Allah shower Him with complete mercy and send salutations upon him)”

[Tirmizi]

The great Imam of the Muhadditheen, Al-Imam Jalal Al-Deen Al-Suyooti رحمته الله has written a whole book on the permissibility of the Mawlid. The book is named, Husn Al- Maqsad Fi Amal Al-Mawlid.

The Egyptian master of Hadith, Al-Imam Shahab Al-Deen Ahmad Al-Qastalani (Shaarih of Al- Bukhari) رحمته الله writes,

“The Muslims have always held gatherings to rejoice the birth of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه”

[Mawaahib]

This indicates scholarly consensus on the permissibility of celebrating the Mawlid.

The great Muhadditheen, Imam Sakhaawi رحمته الله, Allama Ibn Jazri, Muhaddith Ibn Jawzi رحمته الله, Imam Mulla Ali Al-Qari رحمته الله, Imam Halabi رحمته الله, Sheikh Abd Al-Haq Muhaddith Al-Dehelvi رحمته الله, Shah Wali-Allah Al-Dehelvi رحمته الله and many others have clearly agreed with its permissibility. All of these Imams lived before Imam Ahmad Raza رحمته الله. Even the Imam of the person who has posed these objections, Ibn Taymiyyah (who is referred to by them as Sheikh Al-Islam) has declared that it is a rewarding act to celebrate the Mawlid.

Ibn Taymiyyah writes,

“If the purpose of the Mawlid gathering is the respect of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه, there is much reward for the people as I have stated before”

[Iqtida' Siraat Al-Mustaqeem]

The truth is every one of our predecessors (Salaf) believed it to be a rewarding act. That is the very reason why, nobody has been able to provide any reference from any of our predecessors who said it is an unacceptable bid'ah and therefore not lawful to celebrate the Mawlid. The actual unlawful bid'ah is to deem it impermissible.

For complete satisfaction, here is a reference from the work of Imam Ahmad Raza Khan رحمۃ اللہ علیہ regarding the Mawlid to show that he did not innovate the act of celebrating the Mawlid but simply recorded the statements of our predecessors,

“Without doubt reciting the Qur'an in the Mawlid gathering has been the custom of our predecessors. Imam Jalal Al-Deen Al-Suyooti رحمۃ اللہ علیہ writes in his Fatawa,

The reality of the Mawlid is the gathering of people, reciting the Qur'an, mentioning narrations regarding the birth of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and the signs that occurred at that time.

Imam Hafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ,

Expressing thanks to Allah جل جلالہ can be obtained through different types of worship like prostrating, fasting, spending in the path of Allah and reciting the Qur'an. Which gift from Allah جل جلالہ (Ni'mah) is greater than the appearing of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم on that day?

In Seerah of Allama Shaami رحمۃ اللہ علیہ it says,

In the act of Mawlid which we have regarded as a rewarding act nothing takes place but recitation of the Qur'an and feeding the

Muslims and that is a blessing, good deed and a means to get closer to Allah ﷻ”

[Al-Fatawa Al-Ridwiyyah, Volume: 23]

Now who can possibly say that celebrating the Mawlid is an act, innovated by Imam Ahmad Raza ﷻ? He has clearly quoted three of the great Imams of Hadith and Fiqh that lived before Him.

Q5 | Did Imams Bukhari & Abu Hanifa celebrate the Mawlid?

Question:

How come Imam Abu Hanifa or Imam Bukhari didn't celebrate milaad?

Answer:

The one who says that Imam Al-Mujtahideen Abu Hanifah رحمته الله or Imam Al-Muhadditheen Al-Bukhari رحمته الله did not celebrate the Mawlid is a liar. He merely speaks to deceive others with that which he knows not. Allah سبحانه has prohibited us to speak of that which we have no knowledge of. If there is no mention of the two Imams celebrating the Mawlid, it does not mean they did not.

“Something that has not been mentioned or recorded does not mean it did not exist or occur”

If the books written in the past do not mention that Ibn Taymiyyah used to perform his five times daily Salah, give zakah once a year and fast in the month of Ramadan it does not mean he did not. Surely there is no mention of each specific obligatory and necessary act of worship that Ibn Taymiyyah fulfilled for every day and year of his life. This does not necessitate that he did not perform his obligatory and necessary acts.

If we rely on text to establish the occurrence of acts, it will be impossible to prove many of the companions and those who came

after them performed their obligatory acts. It will be hard to establish many of them believed the essentials of belief.

Apart from what I have mentioned above, Imam Bukhari رحمته الله has recorded narrations regarding the beautiful incidents that occurred at the time of the birth of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه.

According to Imam Abu Hanifah رحمته الله and Imam Al-Shafa'i رحمته الله there is an established rule,

“The essence of all (everything) is permissibility unless prohibited”

This is sufficient to believe the permissibility of celebrating the Mawlid according to Imam Abu Hanifah رحمته الله and Imam Al-Shafa'i رحمته الله for it has not been prohibited in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Many have regarded Imam Bukhari رحمته الله as a follower of the Shafa'i fiqh. Imam Al-Tirmizi رحمته الله was a student of Imam Bukhari رحمته الله and as mentioned before he has recorded a whole chapter on the birth of the Prophet صلوات الله عليه.

Q6 | Is fixing a date for the Mawlid permissible?

Question:

Is fixing date for milaad shareef permissible?

Answer:

There is no harm in fixing a specific day for the Mawlid gathering. Not only fixing a day is permissible but also a time and a place. Fixing a time, day and place is a common practice of every human. Actually, time and place is a necessity for us creations of Allah ﷻ. Our existence cannot be free from time and place. Allah ﷻ has specified the time and place for everything, this is what the Muslims know as, “Taqdeer” (destiny). Allah ﷻ has chosen our times and places of birth, death and everything that happens between them. Allah ﷻ is the best of planners and advises us to also plan.

Therefore it is Allah ﷻ who fixed the day for the birth of His most beloved ﷺ. And Allah ﷻ demands us to remember the days he bestowed us with His bounties.

﴿وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِأَيَّامِ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿“Remind them of days of Allah”﴾

[Surah Ibrahim, Verse: 5]

The verse relates to the days Allah has bestowed upon creation His gifts, mercy, grace and bounties. We should remember those specific days.

[Tafseer Ibn Abbas, Ibn Jareer, Khazin, Madaarik and others]

The Prophet ﷺ remembered and celebrated His birth on a specific day by worshipping Allah ﷻ voluntarily. He ﷺ fasted on the day and expressed His gratitude towards Allah ﷻ.

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked why He fasted every Monday. He said on that day I was born and on that day I received the divine revelation from Allah ﷻ”

[Muslim, Kitab Al-Siyam]

Remembering specific days and rejoicing on them days is established from many verses of the Qur'an and from many Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ. Many of the verses I have mentioned before also establish this.

The prayer of Isa' al-Masri pleading Allah ﷻ to send food from heaven also states that specific day would be remembered as a day of eid for all generations to come.

The actual objection or more of an accusation from the misguided people is that the Barelwies have specified or conditioned the permissibility of celebrating the Mawlid with a specific day; the 12th of Rabe' Al-Awwal. This means that according to the Barelwies, the Mawlid can only be celebrated on that specific day and if someone does it on another day then it is not permissible. Just like the many acts of worship that are conditioned with specific days, times and

places. For example, the Isha salah cannot be performed before its time begins, the Jumu'ah salah cannot be performed on a Monday, the rituals of Hajj cannot be performed in the local Jami' Masjid.

To condition an act of worship with a specific time, day or place is not within the authority of anyone except Allah ﷻ and His beloved Messenger ﷺ. None of our scholars and neither our general Muslims condition the celebration of the Mawlid with a specific time, day, or place. This is just another accusation. The truth is, we believe that the celebration of the Mawlid is not conditioned with a time, day and place but is unconditional. One can celebrate the Mawlid, anytime of the day, any day of the year and in every clean and respectable place.

Q7 | Is Celebrating the Mawlid imitating the Christians?

Question:

Celebrating the birth is a way of the Christians for Jesus, why do you Sunnis light up your houses and put decorations like the Christians?

Answer:

Resemblance of another religion that Allah ﷻ and His beloved Messenger ﷺ have prohibited is unlawful. Otherwise it remains lawful.

From the Qur'an and Sunnah, one can understand that resemblance of other religions that Allah ﷻ and His beloved ﷺ have declared unlawful is: If the action is a specific sign of a religion and if one would carry out the act of resembling or imitating it, he would apparently seem to be from amongst them. For example: Wearing a cross around the neck or on clothes, prostrating in front of fire or idols, celebrating Easter or Diwali, using a Christmas tree or father Christmas for decorations etc. These are specific signs of another religion and therefore are not only unlawful but are acts of infidelity. Another type of resemblance such as growing the moustache and shaving the beard is also severely disliked; not permissible because the Prophet ﷺ mentioned it as a resemblance to the non-believers and demanded the contrary from the Muslims.

If someone celebrates the Mawlid using a Christmas tree or lights of father Christmas as decorations then surely it would be resembling the

Christians and unlawful. However, celebrating the Mawlid by fasting, reciting praises of Allah ﷻ and His beloved ﷺ or decorating the house with lights is not resembling another religion.

Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه narrates that when the Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah, he saw that the Jews fasted on a specific day; 10th of Muharram. He ﷺ asked the Jews why they fast on that day. They said that the day is of great importance for us. On this day our Prophet Musa عليه السلام was relieved from fir'awn (pharaoh). The Jews expressed their gratitude towards Allah ﷻ on that specific day by fasting. If it resembled their religion and it was not permissible to celebrate and fast on the same day, the Prophet ﷺ would have prohibited us from doing so. Instead, the Prophet ﷺ declared that celebrating the bounties of Allah ﷻ, whether it be specific for our Ummah or another Ummah, is encouraged.

The Prophet ﷺ said,

“We have more right (to celebrate the success) of the Prophet Musa عليه السلام. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ fasted on that day and also ordered (the companions) to fast on that day”

[Bukhari, Muslim and Abu Dawud]

According to another narration a companion objected that this is the way of the Jews and the Prophet ﷺ said we shall fast for two days.

Decorations and using lights is also permissible because it is a way of rejoicing. Nowhere does it say in the Qur'an and Sunnah that one must not decorate or use lights whilst rejoicing. None of our predecessors forbade the use of lights and decorations. This means that it is a bid'ah to say it is not permissible. It is to deem unlawful that which Allah ﷻ has made lawful.

It is the custom of the Muslims all around the world to use lights whilst rejoicing their days of celebration. They are commonly used for weddings by the very people who claim it is a way of the Christians. The fact of the matter is that imitating or resembling the way of another religion or people is not always unlawful.

If the Christians cover themselves with clothes, does it mean Muslims must wonder around naked? If the Christians wear shirts, does it mean it is not permissible for Muslims? If the Christians eat bread and drink black coffee, does it mean the Muslims are not allowed that? If the Christians breathe air, does it mean the Muslims have to find another way to survive?

Q8 | Are we Celebrating the Prophet's ﷺ death?

Question:

You shouldn't celebrate Milaad on 12 Rabi ul Awwal as that's the date the Prophet ﷺ passed away.

Answer:

Firstly, the 12th of Rabee' Al-Awwal is not an established date for the demise of the Prophet ﷺ, the scholars of research have quoted different dates and shown that the narrations vary and differ from the 12th of Rabee' Al-Awwal. Some have said it was the 1st of Rabee' Al-Awwal, some have said the 2nd, some have said the 10th and one has said the 12th.

Below are the narrations recorded from Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah.

“Ya'qoob Ibn Sufyan narrates from Yahya Ibn Bukayr. He said that he narrates from Layth. Layth said that the Prophet ﷺ passed away after the first night of Rabee' Al-Awwal had passed”

[Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah]

The night comes before the day in the Islamic calendar and therefore, after the first night came the first day of Rabee' Al-Awwal.

“Fadl Ibn Dukayn said that the Prophet ﷺ passed away on Monday the 1st of Rabee' Al-Awwal”

[Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah]

“Al-Bayhaqi said that we were informed by Abu Abd-Allah Al-Hafiz, he said that we were informed by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (until the end of the chain) that the first day the Prophet ﷺ felt unwell was on a Saturday and the day of His ﷺ demise was on a Monday after two nights of Rabee’ Al-Awwal had passed”

[Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah]

“Al-Waaqidi and Sa’d Ibn Zuhri said that the Prophet ﷺ passed away on a Monday after two nights of Rabee’ Al-Awwal had passed”

[Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah]

The above narrations show that the Prophet ﷺ passed away on the 2nd of Rabee’ Al-Awwal.

“It has been narrated from Abd-Allah Ibn Abbas ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ passed away on the 10th of Rabee’ Al-Awwal”

[Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah]

Finally, the one statement that the Prophet ﷺ passed away on the 12th of Rabee Al-Awwal is of Ibn Ishaq.

[Al-Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah]

From the above narrations one can understand that we cannot say with certain that the Prophet ﷺ passed away on such and such a day. Especially the 12th of Rabee’ Al- Awwal for there is only one statement regarding it and eight narrations against it. Yet the ignorant ones continue shouting that the scholars unanimously agree that the

12th of Rabee' Al- Awwal is the date the Prophet (peace be upon him) passed away.

The great Muhaddith Al-Imam Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani رحمته الله in his Fath Al-Bari (Sharah of Bukhari) after a long discussion establishes that the Prophet ﷺ passed away on the 2nd of Rabi' Al-Awwal.

Secondly, even if we suppose the 12th of Rabi' Al-Awwal is the day that our beloved Prophet ﷺ passed away it does not mean we are not allowed to rejoice that day. This is understood from the following points:

- ❖ There is no prohibition in celebrating times of happiness and it is prohibited to grieve or mourn someone's demise for more than three days. After the demise of the most beloved ﷺ the three days of mourning passed away more than fourteen hundred years ago.

Our blessed mothers, the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, Um Habibah and Zaynab Bint Juhush have narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said,

“She who believes in Allah ﷻ and the Day of Judgment, it is not Halal (permitted) for her to mourn the demise of anyone for more than three nights but for her husband. For her husband she shall mourn for four months and ten days”

[Bukhari and Muslim]

Al-Imam Jalal Al-Deen Al-Suyooti رحمته الله writes,

“In this month one should express happiness for his birth ﷺ and not express grief due to his demise ﷺ

[Al-Haawi Li-Al-Fatawa]

The day the Prophet ﷺ passed away is a time of happiness for he ﷺ said,

“My life is good for you and my demise is also good for you”

[Musnad Bazzar and Al-Shifa of Qadi Ayad]

- ❖ The passing away of the Prophet ﷺ is a mercy for the Ummah as Abu Musa Ash'ari narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said,
“When Allah ﷻ intends good for an Ummah of His servants, He takes away their Prophet before them”

[Muslim, Kitab Al-Fadaa'il]

- ❖ The day the Prophet ﷺ passed away is the day he successfully completed his task for which he was sent in this world ﷺ.
- ❖ It was the day the Prophet ﷺ met with Allah and when a lover meets his beloved it is a time of rejoicing.

- ❖ We are the Ahl Al-Sunnah and we believe that the Prophet ﷺ is alive and enjoys provisions from Allah. How dare one say that he ﷺ is dead for Allah ﷻ says,

﴿وَلَا تَقُولُوا الْمَن يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ

وَلَكِن لَّا تَشْعُرُونَ﴾

﴿“And say not those who are slain in the way of Allah “dead”
but they are alive, only you perceive not”﴾

[Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse: 154]

Never mind saying they are dead; Allah ﷻ prohibits the thought of them being dead,

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ

عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ﴾

﴿“Think not of those, who are slain in the way of Allah, as
dead. But they are alive. With their Lord they are given
provision”﴾

[Surah Al-Imran, Verse: 169]

Surely the Messenger ﷺ of Allah ﷻ is alive and provided for in the best of ways for he ﷺ lived his whole life in the path of Allah and he is dearer to our Lord than the martyrs or any other creation.

Abu Darda' narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said,
“Surely Allah ﷻ has prohibited the earth from eating the bodies of the Prophets. Therefore, the Prophet of Allah is alive and given provision”

[Ibn Majah and Mishkaat Al-Masaabeeh]

A similar narration has been narrated by Aws Ibn Aws and recorded by Abu Dawood, Al- Nasa'I, Al-Daarmi, Al-Bayhaqi, Ibn Majah and Mishkaat Al-Masaabeeh.

There are many narrations that establish the fact that the Prophet ﷺ is alive and that he ﷺ tasted death and then his soul was returned. For more narrations one should seek the extensive books written on the topic. Here, I have mentioned enough for a seeker of the truth.

- ❖ The Prophet ﷺ mentioned why Friday is a blessed day. In that he ﷺ mentioned that it was the day Prophet Adam عليه السلام was given birth and the day he passed away. The Prophet ﷺ said,
“The blessed (better) day the Sun rises upon is Friday. On this day, Adam عليه السلام was born, descended onto earth, his

repentance was accepted and he passed away. On this day, the Day of Judgment will take place”

[Abu Dawood and Al-Tirmizi]

The Prophet ﷺ regarded Friday as a day of eid for the believers. This is established in a sound narration from Ibn Majah. Therefore, according to the Hadith (for those who follow the Hadith) the day a Prophet was born and passed away is a blessed day and a day of rejoicing even if they both occurred on the same day. It is a day of eid.

Q9 | Is Music/Intermingling of opposite sexes allowed during the Mawlid?

Question:

The contemporary form of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabee ﷺ apart from being a manifestation of Bid'ah also encompasses other evils such as the intermingling of sexes, usage of musical instruments and many other such evils. The most abhorring and shocking evils in these functions are the acts of shirk that take place. With hollow claims of "Hubbe- Rasul ﷺ" (love for Rasulullah ﷺ) entreaties and supplications are made to beings other than Allah, namely to Ambiyaa alaihimus-salaam.

Answer:

Every contemporary gathering of the Mawlid does not take place with Haram acts. Until today I have never been to or even heard of a specific gathering in which music and intermingling with the opposite sex takes place. I have heard that such gatherings do take place but never regarding a specific gathering.

To attend any gathering in which Haram acts take place is forbidden whether it is a gathering of the Mawlid or a gathering for learning the Deen. If people gather to learn the Qur'an and Sunnah and at the same time they are intermingling with the opposite sex and using musical instruments then surely such gathering is condemned by the Shari'ah Law. If such gatherings for teaching the Qur'an and Sunnah become common amongst the people it does not mean gathering for the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah should become Haram. The Haram acts will remain Haram and the permissible acts will remain

permissible. The Haram acts will always be condemned and teaching the Qur'an and Sunnah will always be encouraged.

In the same way, a gathering of the Mawlid in which Haram acts take place does not mean all Mawlid gatherings should be deemed unlawful. The Haram acts have nothing to do with the Shari'ah law regarding the Mawlid gatherings that take place within the boundaries of Shari'ah Law. Surely we condemn the Mawlid gatherings in which Haram acts of intermingling with the opposite sex and musical instruments take place. Imam Ahmad Raza رحمہ اللہ has forbidden both these Haram acts in numerous Fatawa and which only he would know who has observed his works and read his Fatawa (Juristic Verdicts). Yet ignorant people do not stop accusing the great Imam of permitting such acts.

Anyhow, if there are gatherings for the Mawlid which are free from such Haram acts then surely it is encouraged to attend them.

Fortunately I have never come across these most abhorring and shocking evils that take place in some Mawlid gatherings as mentioned in the question. That is a Mawlid gathering which encompasses acts of Shirk with hollow claims of loving the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. In fact I have never even heard of such a gathering. Those who claim such functions take place have never been able to identify such a gathering. They have been challenged many times by many scholars to show them such a gathering, however they have failed. Muslims do not commit Shirk in Mawlid gatherings.

The reason for this hollow, shocking and abhorring claim from the misguided people is that they do not know what Shirk is. According to

them, if one asks other than Allah ﷻ for help or calls upon other than Allah ﷻ to have their needs fulfilled, it is Shirk. However, it is a known fact amongst all the scholars that if one asks another for help believing that Allah ﷻ is the helper in reality and those other than Allah ﷻ are the means of gaining help from Allah ﷻ then that is perfectly permissible. Muslims do not seek help from other than Allah ﷻ believing that they can help without the need of Allah ﷻ but they seek help believing that they are a means to gain the help of Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ﴾

﴿“O those who believe! Fear Allah and seek means to approach him”﴾

[Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse: 35]

Calling upon other than Allah ﷻ for the fulfillment of one's needs (believing that the actual helper is Allah ﷻ) is simply a form of Al-Tawassul which is a practice common amongst the companions of the Prophet ﷺ.

Allah orders the believers to ask the prophet Muhammad ﷺ for forgiveness of their sins. Surely it is Allah who is the forgiver. So why ask the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for forgiveness? The answer is, Allah

ﷻ is the one who will forgive but through the means of his beloved Messenger ﷺ. Allah ﷻ says,

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ

الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا﴾

﴿“And when they do injustice unto their souls, if they come to you and ask forgiveness from Allah and the Messenger asks for their forgiveness, surely they will find Allah accepting their repentance and merciful”﴾

[Surah Al-Nisa', Verse: 64]

There are many prophetic traditions which prove the fact that Al-Tawassul was widely practised amongst the companions of the beloved Prophet ﷺ. Whenever the companions needed anything they would always ask for it from the Prophet ﷺ. They knew that Allah ﷻ is the one who provides and fulfils their needs. However, they also knew that Muhammad ﷺ is the means of Allah ﷻ in providing and fulfilling needs. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never prohibited neither condemned his companions for directly asking him for their needs but instead he had announced amongst his companions,

“Allah ﷻ is the provider and I am the distributor”

[Bukhari and Muslim]

I shall mention a few traditions from which one can understand Al-Tawassul and its permissibility.

Imam Tirmizi رحمته الله mentions a narration from Uthman Ibn Hunayf رحمته الله. He said, a blind person came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him to pray to Allah ﷻ for cure. The Prophet ﷺ replied,

“If you desire, I shall pray (and you will gain your eyesight) and if you desire, be patient and that will be better (more rewarding) for you”

The blind person said “pray for me”

The Prophet ﷺ ordered him to perform ablution in the best way he can then to perform two units of prayer and finally supplicate to Allah ﷻ in these words,

“O’ Allah, I ask you and come to you through the means of your Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ, the Prophet of mercy. O’ Prophet of Allah, I come to my Lord through you for this need of mine, fulfill it for me. O’ Allah accept his intercession on behalf of me”

The blind person did exactly as ordered by the Prophet ﷺ. The narrator of the Hadith says that when the blind man stood up after the supplication, he was cured and could now see.

[Imam Tirmizi رحمته الله says the Hadith is sound. Imam Al-Suyooti رحمته الله says in

Al-Tahreer that Imam Bukhari رحمته الله has mentioned this Hadeeth in his

Taareekh. Imam Bayhaqi رحمته الله has mentioned it in Al-Dalaa’il Wa Al-Da’waat and said it is sound]

Imam Bukhari رحمته الله mentions a narration from Anas Ibn Malik رحمته الله. He said that when a drought would occur, Umar Ibn Khattab رحمته الله would supplicate to Allah for rain through the means of the Prophet's صلواته Uncle Abbas Ibn Abd Al-Muttalib رحمته الله in these words,

“O’ Allah, we used to use the means of your Prophet صلواته and you gave us rain. Now we ask you through the means of the uncle of our Prophet صلواته, give us rain” Anas Ibn Malik رحمته الله says Allah جل جلاله would give them rain.

[Bukhari]

Ibn Hajar رحمته الله mentions more detail on the aforementioned Hadith. He narrates from the son of Umar رحمته الله, Abd Al-Allah رحمته الله. He said, Umar رحمته الله lectured the people. In the lecture Umar رحمته الله said to the people,

“Indeed the Messenger of Allah treated Abbas in the same way a child treats his father. Therefore, O’ People, we should follow the way of the messenger of Allah and treat Abbas the way he did. And we should use him as a means to reach Allah”

[Fath Al-Baari, the Sharah of Bukhari]

Imam Ibn Sa’d رحمته الله has mentioned a narration from Sulaym Ibn Aamir رحمته الله. There was a drought In Damascus. The Sky was clear. There was no sign of a cloud. Mu’awiyah Ibn Ab Sufyan رحمته الله and the people of Damascus gathered to perform the Salah of drought (in which they

ask the Lord for rain). Mu'awiyah رضي الله عنه sat on the pulpit and asked the people,

“Where is Yazeed Ibn Al-Aswad Al-Jarshiy?”

The people called for him. Yazeed Ibn Al-Aswad appeared. He was coming towards the pulpit slowly taking step after step (he was quite old). Mu'awiyah رضي الله عنه ordered him to sit on the pulpit. So he did whilst Mu'awiyah رضي الله عنه sat by his feet. Then Mu'awiyah supplicated. He said,

“O' Allah, today we bring forth in your court the best amongst us and the most superior amongst us. We bring forth in your court Yazeed Ibn Al-Aswad”

Then he looked at Yazeed Ibn Al-Aswad and said, “O' Yazeed, raise your hands in the court of Allah”

Yazeed raised his hands and so did the people. It was not long when a cloud appeared from the west with a breeze. It rained and rained, so much that it became difficult for the people to return home. (Al-Tabqaat of Ibn Sa'd)

There are many more narrations that prove it is perfectly permissible to ask other than Allah ﷻ for help as long as one believes them to be a means and not the actual helper, for surely Allah ﷻ is the origin of all help. The misguided people claim to be followers of the great Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رضي الله عنه and therefore I shall mention a narration regarding this great Imam, that even he practiced Al-Tawassul.

Imam Al-Nabhani رحمته الله has written that Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رحمته الله practiced al-tawassul through Imam Al-Shafa'I رحمته الله. Upon that, his son Abd Al-Allah was amazed. Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رحمته الله said, “Imam Shafa’i is such a great person that he is like the sun for mankind.”

[Shawaahid Al-Haq]

Q10 | Will Celebrating the Mawlid bring benefit in the Hereafter? Why use lights?

Question:

I turn my lights off and some of my friends keep lights off on 12 Rabi ul awal because we believe it has no significance to our lives – how will celebrating the Milaad help us in this life and the hereafter?

Answer:

If the day comes that the Prophet ﷺ has no significance in the life of a believer, he should contemplate his faith. It is a shame to know that many people who attribute themselves as Muslims have the nerve to make such comments without hesitation and yet claim to believe,

“Disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ in any form or way is disbelief”

I wonder what their idea of disrespect is. The very people who will not hesitate in holding gatherings in the name of Easter or Christmas will shout with the top of their voices that it is Haram, bid’ah and Shirk to hold gatherings in the name of the Mawlid. It is beyond the comprehension of my mind.

These people do not celebrate on the day the Prophet ﷺ was born but instead show their hatred towards those who do celebrate. They grieve and express sorrow. As mentioned in the question some people turn their lights off. If that is not expressing hatred then what is it? It is a shame that people hate the day of love. The day our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came to this world to spread love throughout

humanity, these people express hatred. For such people I shall mention the following narration.

“Iblees (the devil) cried on four occasions; when he was damned, when he was fallen (from heaven), when the Messenger of Allah was born and when Surah Al-Fatihah was revealed”

[Al- Bidayah Wa Al-Nihayah and Al-Khasaa'is Al-Kubra]

May Allah ﷻ give us the ability to follow the footsteps of the pious predecessors rather than the footsteps of the devil.

The benefit of celebrating the birth of the Saviour of Mankind ﷺ is the same as the benefit of fulfilling the command of Allah ﷻ, following the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, following the footsteps of the rightly guided companions and predecessors. It is the way of the Muslims. It is an act of love for Allah ﷻ and His bounties. It is an act of love for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It is a sign of a true believer. It is a sign of loyalty towards Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. It is a sign of being a follower of the correct Ahl Al-Sunnah Wa Al-Jama'ah.

Even a non-believer like Abu Lahab has benefitted from celebrating the birth of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He is the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ but became an opponent after He ﷺ announced Prophethood. He is the only opponent of the Prophet ﷺ denounced by the Qur'an by name. He and his wife had made it their business to torment the Prophet ﷺ. Yet below is an authentic narration from

Bukhari which shows that he is rewarded expressing happiness on the birth of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

“When Abu Lahab died, someone from his family was shown him in his dream in a bad state. He asked, what happened to you? Abu Lahab replied, I received nothing good after leaving you besides the fact that I am given water through this with which I freed Thuwaybah”

[Bukhari, Kitab Al- Nikah]

This narration is explained by other narrations as mentioned by Al-Allamah Badr Al-Deen Al-Ayni رحمته الله in his Sharah of Bukhari, Al-Imam Ibn Al-Hajar Al-Asqalani رحمته الله in his Sharah of Bukhari and by Al-Imam Jalal Al-Deen Al-Suyooti رحمته الله in his Al-Khasaa'is Al-Kubra and Al-Haawi Li-Al-Fatawa. Thuwaybah was freed by Abu Lahab on Monday when he received the news of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ from her. He gestured with his finger whilst saying the words to free her. Abu Lahab in the fire of hell; where there is no water and much thirst, is provided with water through that very same finger every Monday.

This is a matter upon which those who disagree with the Mawlid celebrations should ponder. If a non-believer can benefit from an act of expressing happiness upon the great Mawlid then why can a Muslim not? How can it be impermissible to express happiness for the birth of such a great gift and blessing of Allah ﷻ? Is it our aim to increase the love we have for the one most Beloved to Allah ﷻ or is it our aim to decrease that love?

Surely, it is Allah ﷻ who guides whom He wills and misguides whom He wills and it is not upon us but to enjoin the good and forbid the evil and Allah ﷻ knows best.

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