

THE MAWLOOD BID'AH

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The Mawlood – Bid'ah According to Principles Accepted by Ijma' (Consensus)

BY MUJAHID AZIZ

In this short article, we shall, Insha-Allah, demonstrate that the Mawlood practices in vogue are bid'ah sayyiah (evil innovation) according to the Shariah even on the basis of just one principle of Fiqh that is accepted unanimously by the Fuqaha – the Authorities of the Shariah. That Principle of the Shariah is:

A permissible (mubah) or commendable (Mustahab) or even a Sunnah practice becomes a bid'ah if it acquires an undue emphasis in such a manner that there is a genuine possibility of the masses regarding the innovated form, or aspects of it (e.g. fixed date, a particular procedure), as Sunnah or Wajib.

This article will ignore the other very valid reasons, perhaps more significant ones, on the basis of which the Ulama have branded Mawlood bid'ah.

A perfunctory research of the Mawlood gatherings that take place around the world will easily confirm the widespread prevalence of the following characteristics that have become practically inseparable from these innovated functions as understood by both the laity and the Ulama:

1) A particular form has been accorded to Mawlood. It is generally held on specific occasions, especially the month of Rabiul Awwal, and is cloaked with a specific procedure. It is regarded as a Sunnah, in fact as a Waajib practice by a significant proportion of people, hence extreme annoyance and even animosity are displayed towards non-participants.

2) The emphasis placed on the specific form (*hay't-e-kathaaiyah*) of observance of Mawlood supersedes that of the prescribed acts of Sunnah and even Wajib/Fard actions. This undeniable fact can be easily gauged from the fact that the omission of the performance of Mawlood on a specific date would lead to much turmoil, controversy and commotion amongst the masses, and even amongst those Ulama who are the promoters of this bid'ah. On the contrary, the omission of proven Sunnah acts such as fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, the Day of Arafat, the Miswaak, Ishraaq and Tahajjud Salaat, etc., does not create even a stir among the people although all these Masnoon acts were meticulously upheld by the Sahaabah, and the Auliya of all ages. Thus, observance of Mawlood has been elevated to a higher status than even valid Sunnat and Waajib acts of Ibaadat.

3) Participation in such gatherings is used as a barometer for righteousness or even "sunnism". Those who do not practise the specific form of Mawlood along with certain attachments, are frowned upon, or even regarded as deviants, 'haters of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)' (gustakh-e-Rasul), 'wahhabis', and even as kaafir. These vile epithets are hurled against Muslims who do not observe a practice which has no origin in the Sunnah.

Such is the prevalence of the above three characteristics, particularly the first two, that there is no real room left for subjectivity.

Considering **only** these characteristics which have become inherently associated with the Mawlood practice of today, it is quite obvious that it has superseded many other practices that were unanimously prohibited by the classical Fuqaha, based on the principle that raising a practice beyond its true status results in it becoming bid'ah.

For the purposes of this discussion we will ignore the significant proportion of Mawlood gatherings today which involve even more abominable attachments such as singing, qawwali, music, free-mixing of men and women, etc.

We shall cite now some examples of practices that had been emphatically prohibited and labelled as bid'ah by the Fuqaha of all Madh-habs, long before such practices had acquired the level of emphasis which the Mawlood custom of this era has acquired.

'Allamah al-Shatibi, who had judged the Mawlood to have transgressed the bounds of permissibility during his era around 600 years ago, expounds upon the principle being discussed in this article, and cites numerous examples of its application from the early generations:

"Often a practice is initially lawful but assumes the form of innovation (bid'ah) through the elevation of its status. Acts of optional Salaat which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had performed publicly on a somewhat permanent basis are described as Sunnah. Now to accord non-Sunnah optional acts the same emphasis which is accorded to Sunnah acts is tantamount to elevate it to a status which the Shariah has not bestowed to it, hence it is labelled bid'ah. The consequence of this is the laypeople and the ignorant believe that it is a Sunnah.

This is a great evil because believing a non-Sunnah to be a Sunnah, and giving it the same importance as is accorded to Sunnah, is tantamount to changing the Shari'ah, just as if it were believed that a Waajib act is not Waajib or that an act which is not is in fact Waajib,, and then practice in accordance with this belief. This is ruinous. So, granted, that the practice is originally valid, but transgressing the limits stipulated in the Shari'ah, whether in belief or practice is in actual fact corruption of the laws of the Shari'ah.

From this the justification of the righteous Salaf in their intentional avoidance of Sunnahs becomes manifest. Thus abstention from even some Sunnah acts was to ensure that the ignorant person does not believe that these acts are from the obligatory ones e.g., udhiyah (qur'baani), etc.. (Since Qur'bani is Waajib for Hanafis, they may not abstain. However, for Maalikis it is not Waajib, hence Allaamah Sahtabi mentions it by way of example.)

This is why most of them also forbade tracing the relics of pious people, as al-Tahawi, Ibn Waddah and others transmitted from Ma'rur ibn Suwayd al-Asadi who said: "I attended the Hajj season with the Commander of the Believers, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (Allah be pleased with him). When we departed for Medina, I accompanied him. After he had performed with us the Fajr Salaat in which he had recited Surah Alam tara kayfa fa'ala (Sura 105) and Li'ilaafi Quraysh (Sura 106), he saw people taking a path, so he said: 'Where are these people going?' They said: 'They are going to a mosque here wherein Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) prayed.' He said: 'Those before you were destroyed because of this! They traced the relics of their Ambiya and adopted them as churches and monasteries. Whoever performs Salaat in any of these mosques in which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had prayed, then he should pray there. He should not intentionally proceed to such Musaajid..'"

Ibn Waddah said: I heard 'Isa ibn Yunus – the Mufti of Tartus – say: 'Umar ibn al-Khattab ordered the cutting of the tree under which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had accepted the Pledge of Allegiance. He (Umar) had it cut because the people would specially go and perform Salaat under it, hence he feared that they would be tempted (to introduce innovations).

Ibn Waddah said: Maalik ibn Anas and other jurists would dislike going to those relics of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) with the exception of Quba'.

While providing justification for this position which was adopted by Imaam Malik (rahmatullahi alayhi), al-Shatibi states:

"Maalik would dislike all innovations even if it was done with good intentions. This was for preventing a non-Sunnah from being regarded as a Sunnah, so that an act which is not a command of the Shariah may not be considered as part of the Shari'ah. Maalik would dislike going to the Bayt al-Maqdis for fear that it would be taken as a Sunnah, and he would dislike going to the graves of the Shuhada. In fact he avoided going even to Quba' for the self-same fear that it would be considered to be Sunnah, despite the narrations of encouragement towards this. Since the 'ulama feared the consequence of bid'ah, they avoided it.

Ibn Kinaanah and Ashhab said: We heard Maalik saying when he came to the grave of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (radhiyallahu anhu): "I wish that my legs were paralysed so that I was unable to come here.!"

Note: Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) understood the merit and the benefit of visiting the grave of this illustrious Sahaabi. Nevertheless, his far-sightedness constrained him to make this very serious statement thereby conveying the danger of even a meritorious practice being elevated by the masses to a status not conferred to it by the Shariah. The deeds of the Fuqaha are arbitrarily considered as being emphasized Sunnah acts by the masses.

Sa'id ibn Hassan said: I used to read Ahaadith to Ibn Naafi'. When I read the hadith pertaining to spending generously on one's family on the night of 'Aashura', he said to me: "Burn it!" I said: "Why! O Abu Sa'd?" He said: "For fear that it will be taken as a Sunnah." (i.e. Sunnatul Muakkadah).

Allah Ta'ala had blessed the illustrious Fuqaha and Muhadditheen of the Khairul Quroon era with such *Firaasat* (spiritual perception and wisdom) which enabled them to understand with precision the dangers of exceeding the limits prescribed by the Shariah. Every mediocre Aalim does not have the authority to so daringly order that a Hadith be burnt. But, a Muhaddith of the rank of Hadhrat Naafi', the Maula of Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), knew exactly what he was instructing and why. Guarding the purity of the Shariah by preventing innovation (bid'ah) has priority over the observance of a Mustahab practice such as spending generously on the occasion of Aashura. It was via the avenue of bid'ah that the entire Shariats of Hadhrat Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) and of Hadhrat Nabi Isaa (alayhis salaam) had been corrupted and mangled beyond recognition by their followers, the Yahood and Nasaara.

"Hence, despite these being permissible and even desirable activities, they frequently avoided them for fear of innovation (bid'ah). When such meritorious practices are emphasized and practised publicly with rigidity and regularity, they come to be regarded as necessary Sunnah acts. Thus they enter into the domain of bid'ah without doubt. (End of paraphrased quote of Allaamah al-Shatibi)"

Allamah Turtushi, an early Maaliki authority, in his Kitāb al-Hawādith wal-bida', mentions examples of the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum) preventing even Sunnah acts in order to prevent the masses from elevating these acts to a status higher than what the Shariah has conferred:

"Among these is abstention from Qasr Salaat by Hadhrat Uthman ibn Affaan (radiyallahu anhu) while traveling. It was said to him "Did you not perform qasr with the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam)?" He said "Yes, but I am the Imaam of the people. The bedouins and the people of the desert will see me performing two raka'ts and say: This (i.e. two raka'ts) is what was made obligatory. Now reflect! Allah have mercy on you!"

There are two views regarding Qasr Salaat for the musaafir (traveller). According to the Hanafi Math-hab, performing Qasr is Waajib whereas according to the

Shaafi' Math-hab it is optional. Both Math-habs have their respective Shar'i proofs. One of the Shaafi' evidences is this particular episode of Hadhrat Uthmaan (radhiyallahu anhu). Despite Qasr being a valid Sunnah practice, he abstained from it on that particular occasion for the fear of it being regarded as a Fardh practice. Whilst in terms of his view such abstention was permissible, it is not permissible according to the Hanafi view of Qasr being Fardh

" Among these is abstention from Udhiyyah (Qur'baani) for the fear of it being considered Waajib. (Abstention is permissible according to the view which says that Qur'baani is not Waajib. This is not the Hanafi view, hence abstention is not permissible).

"Hudhayda ibn Ased said "I witnessed Abu Bakr and Umar and they did not sacrifice because they feared it being considered waajib"

Abu Masud al-Badari said "I leave my sacrifice and indeed I am from the most simple of you, because I fear that my neighbours will think it is waajib"

Tawus said: "I have not seen a house having more meat and bread than the house of Abbaas. He would slaughter and sacrifice every day, but then would not sacrifice on Eid day so that people should not think it is Waajib. He was an Imaam whom people followed". (According to him, Qur'baani is not Waajib. It is Sunnah, hence he occasionally abstained for the fear of a Sunnah being elevated to the status of Wujooob.)

Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (radhiyallahu anhu) said "We would sacrifice for the women and our family and when people competed in this we abandoned it"

Look, Allah have mercy on you! There are two views regarding Qur'baani. One, it is Sunnah, and two, it is Waajib. Even so, the Sahaabah (those who believed it to be Sunnah, not Waajib) even abstained from a Sunnah on account of the fear that people understand it differently, believing it to be Fardh."

Salaat al-Raghaib and Saalat al-Nisf Sha'ban

Salaat al-Raghaib and Salaat al-Nisf Sha'ban were Nafil congregational prayers performed on a particular night. Both Salaat were unanimously labelled as bid'ah by the Fuqaha. It's worth noting that these gatherings were completely free from the numerous other Haraam attachments which are inherently associated with the Mawlood of today.

Shaykh al-Izz ibn al-Salaam states several times in a work specifically dedicated to this issue, that the reason why Salaat al-Raghaib is prohibited is because the public would think that this Salaat in the manner it is performed has its origin in the Sunnah:

When a scholar performs this Salaat al-Ragha'ib in congregation with the public then the masses will think that it is the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), hence he would be attributing a falsehood to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) by his example. Some times one's practical example is similar to verbal expression."

Reiterating this elsewhere, he says:

"Salaat al-Ragha'ib with its peculiarities conveys the impression to the public that it is a Sunnah from the Sunnahs of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and this is the factual position."

When his opponent argued that there are Ahaadith which confirm that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had led some of the Sahaabah in congregation for Nafl Salaat, he replied:

"As for the Hadith of Anas and 'Itban ibn Malik (Radhiyallahu anhumaa), there is a difference between them and Salaat al-Ragha'ib because being led in Salaat al-Ragha'ib gives the impression to the public that it is a Sunnah and a symbol (salient feature) of the Deen whereas what is reported in the Hadith of Anas and 'Itban (Radhiyallahu anhumaa) is a rare circumstance, hence the public does not believe that it is Sunnah, rather they believe that it is permissible."

This shows that anything which is in essence permissible or mustahab, becomes a bid'ah if it is performed in such a way that gives the impression that it is a salient or emphasized act of ibaadat, i.e Sunnatul Muakkadah.

He further explains that the innovation of this salaah is further proven by the absence of its mention and description by the illustrious authorities of the Khairul Quroon in their kutub. Thus, he states:

"From the facts which prove that this Salaat is an innovation is that it has not been transmitted from any of the Ulama of the Sahaabah, Taabieen and Tab-e-Taabieen who are the Standards of the Deen and Imaams of the Muslims. This Salaat is neither recorded in any of their kutub, nor discussed in any of their gatherings. It is impossible that an important Sunnah practice would have remained hidden from these illustrious authorities who were the Standards of the Deen".

Imam Nawawi (rahmatullah alayh), in his Sharh Muslim labelled this Nafl congregational Salaat as bid'ah while commenting on the following Hadith which proscribes specifying dates and time not prescribed in the Shar'iah. Such specification not found in the Sunnah would cause the masses to gain the erroneous impression that the specification itself is from the Sunnah:

“Do not single out the night (preceding) Friday from among the nights for Salaat; and do not single out Friday from among the days for fasting, but only when anyone among you is accustomed to a fast which coincide with this day (Friday).”

Imam Nawawi (rahmatullah alayhi) further states:

“The ‘ulama use this Hadith to prove aversion for the bid’ah salaah called Saalat al-Raghaib. May Allah destroy the fabricator and creator of this bid’ah salaah. This is because it is a reprehensible innovation from the innovations of divergence (i.e. from the Straight Path) and ignorance.” (Sharh Sahih Muslim)

In his authoritative work, “Reliance of the Traveller”, containing the soundest positions of the Shafi’i madh-hab, Shaykh Ahmad ibn an-Naqib al-Misri (d.769) states regarding Salaat al-Raghaib and other acts of ibadah not found in their exact form in the Sunnah, that all of them are despicable acts of innovation (kullu dhaalika bid’atun Qabeehatun):

“It is an offensive, blameworthy innovation to perform any of the following spurious prayers: (1) twelve rak’ats between the sunset prayer (maghrib) and nightfall prayer (‘isha) on the first Thursday night of the month of Rajab; (2) one hundred rak’ats in the middle of the month of Sha’ban; (3) Two rak’ats after each of three times of reciting Ya Sin (Qur’aan 36) on the night of mid-Sha’ban; (4) or the so-called prayer of ‘Ashura’ on 10 Muharram.”

Sajdat al-Shukr

The Fuqaha disallowed the performance of a simple Sajdah for gratitude after Salaat due to the reason that people will think it is Sunnah, as stated by Shaykh Ibrahim al-Halabi:

“It is disliked because the ignorant believe it is Sunnah or obligatory, and every permissible act leading to this is disliked.” (Sharh al-Munyah)

Imaamul Haramayn, citing his teacher Abu Muhammad, mentions the bid’ah status of this voluntary, seemingly harmless, act of ibadah:

“...And my teacher, Abu Muhammad, vehemently rejected this Sajdah and he derived proof for this through Qiyaas (analogy) with the rukoo’ (bowing); for indeed if a person were to perform a voluntary act of goodness with a single rukoo’, then this would be Haraam by agreement because it is a bid’ah and very bid’ah is misguidance except that which an evidence indicates towards it being an exception.” (Sharhul Muhaadhdhab (3/565))

Imam an-Nawawi also held this view and mentions that this was the definitive position of Imam al-Ghazali. Shaykh Ahmad ibn an-Naqib al-Misri (d.769) states

regarding performing the single prostration to merely humble oneself to Allah in order to draw near to Him:

"It is unlawful to prostrate without occasion merely to humble oneself to Allah to draw near to Him (since it is a reprehensible innovation)." (Reliance of the Traveller)

Raising the hands for du'a upon the mimbar on the day of Jumu'ah

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani states regarding two acts which were labelled bid'ah despite having a clear precedence and basis in the Shar'iah:

"And Imaam Ahmad reported with a good sanad from Ghadeef Ibnul-Haarith who said, 'al-Maalik Ibn Marwaan sent (someone) to me and he said: indeed we gather the people for two matters: raising the hands (for du'aa) upon the mimbar on the day of jumu'ah, and giving exhortations after the fajr and 'asr prayers.

So he said: as for these two, then they are examples of your innovations in my opinion and I will not accept anything of them from you because Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "A people do not introduce an innovation except that a sunnah the likes of it is raised (i.e. forgotten and neglected)' and adhering to the sunnah is better then introducing a bid'ah"

So if this was the answer of this sahaabee concerning a matter that has a basis in the religion, then what do you think the case would be concerning a matter that has no basis in the Deen?" [Fath al-Bari (13/314)]

Recitation of a particular Surah during a Salaat in public

Regarding the recitation of a particular Sur'ah during Taraweeh on a particular day in Ramadhan, the first reason given by Imam Nawawi for its reprehensibility is that the masses will gain the impression of it being a Sunnah:

*"This is not a sunnah but a detestable bid'ah and for its detestability are reasons: **from them is the impression of it being sunnah**...Thus, every worshipper should refrain from this practice and should relay its condemnation, for indeed it is established in authentic Ahaadith that newly-invented matters are prohibited and that every bid'ah is misguidance, and this practice has not been transmitted from any of the Salaf." (Fatawa Imam al-Nawawi, 'Ala' al-Din ibn al-Attar, 1:25-6)*

Those Shaafi'is who, when it suits their purposes, intransigently cling to every fatwa of Imam Nawawi, placing him on a pedestal above even that of Imam Shaafi'i and his Ashaab, should adhere strictly to this principle applied by Imam Nawawi on the several instances cited above.

Always Shaking Hands after the Congregational Fard Prayers

Ibn 'Ābidīn al-Shāmī (d. 1252 H) writes in his *Radd al-Muhtār*, that shaking hands after the congregational prayers would give the false impression that the particular time and place in which this is practised, is Sunnah:

“Some of our [Hanafī] scholars and others have stated explicitly the detestability of the customary handshake following the salawāt, although shaking hands is sunnah. And that is only because it has not been transmitted [from the early generations] in this specific place [i.e. after the salawāt] – thus, continuity on it in this [specific place] gives the false impression that it is sunnah therein.” (Radd al-Muhtār, Dār 'Ālam al-Kutub, 3:141)

Salāt al-Raghā'ib

Ibn 'Ābidīn al-Shāmī continues to state that the reason for the reprehensibility of this Nafl congregational prayer is due to the specification not found in the Sunnah, even though Salaat is the most virtuous of deeds:

“This is why they forbade gathering for Salāt al-Raghā'ib which some worshippers invented because it has not been transmitted in this form in those specific nights, even though Salāh is the best institution.” (ibid.)

Sajdat al-Shukr on a Particular Occasion

Al-Haskafī (d. 1088 H) writes in *al-Durr al-Mukhtār* that every permissible action which the ignorant may come to believe to be Sunnah becomes Makruh (Tahreemi):

“But it (sajdat al-shukr) is detestable after Salāh because the ignorant believe it is sunnah or wājib (i.e. after Salāh), and every permissible action leading to it is makrūh.” (Al-Durr al-Mukhtar/ Radd al-Muhtār, Dār 'Ālam al-Kutub, 2:598)

Ibn 'Ābidīn explains that this statement was transmitted from al-Zāhidī (d. 658 H) in his commentary on Qudūrī.

The karāhah (detestability) mentioned here refers to makrūh tahrīmī (prohibitively disliked) for which a person is sinful, as mentioned by Ibn 'Ābidīn, quoting Tahtāwī:

“It is apparent that it is makrūh tahrīmī because he inserts into the Deen what is not from it.”

Imām Burhān al-Dīn al-Hanafī (d. 616 H) conveys this view right from the founders of the Hanafi Madh-hab:

“The reason for the karāhah based on the view of al-Nakha‘ī and Abū Hanīfah (may Allah be pleased with them), according to what al-Qudūrī mentioned, is that if one who was observed (by people) was to practise upon it, and a supposer wrongly imagined that it is sunnah or wājib adhered to at the instance of blessing, then indeed he has inserted into religion what is not from it, and he (upon him peace) said: Whoever inserts into religion what is not from it, it is detestable.” (al-Muhīt al-Burhānī, Dār al-Kutb al-‘Ilmiyah, 5:323)

Similarly Ibrahim al-Halabi stated in *Sharh al-Munyah* under “The Prostration of Gratitude and what is Done after the Prayer”:

“It is disliked because the ignorant believe it is Sunnah or obligatory, and every permissible act leading to this is disliked.”

Fixing a Sūrah to a Rak‘at

Abū Bakr al-Jassās (d. 370 H) writes in explaining another Hanafī ruling:

“Abu Ja‘far [al-Tahawī] said (quoting the Imāms of the Hanafī madhhab): It is makrūh (prohibitively disliked) to adopt a (specific) part of the Qur‘ān for a specific part of the prayers.

*“And that is because if that was to be permitted, it would not be assured that with the passage of time people will not believe it to be sunnah or wajib; **as has occurred today in the understanding of many of the ignorant people regarding similar practices.**” (Sharh Mukhtasar al-Tahawī, Dār al-Sirāj, 8:525)*

Note: This was in the 4th Islamic century! How then can we claim our ignorant and common people of this age are immune from this misunderstanding?

It is futile to quote certain Fuqaha of the past eras, who had permitted a particular form of Mawlood under completely different conditions, well before such gatherings had acquired the status they hold today.

For example, the Deobandi Akaabir clearly held the view that lecturing about the birth of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is meritorious. as stated explicitly here by Shaykh Rashid Ahmad Gangohi:

“The actual extolling of Wilaadat (birth of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)) is praiseworthy. It will become Makrooh if conditions are attached to it...It is

Mustahab to extol the Wilaadat of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant peace), however due to the attachment of various conditions this gathering is now prohibited.' [Fatawa Rashidiyyah]

"Extolling the Wilaadat" is not a merrymaking function and feast organized in the month of Rabiul Awwal and accompanied by a host of baseless acts. A simple bayaan just like any other bayaan, for educating Muslims about the fadhaa-il of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is adequate.

In light of the principle expounded in this article, and it's full applicability to the Mawlood today, it will be pointless now to quote the Fatwa of Istihbaab (commendability) of Shaykh Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, Allaamah Suyuti, or any other Aalim from the past.

The fitnah associated with Mawlood practices, especially the emphasis, is prevalent in virtually every part of the world.

Avoiding the perpetration of Haram takes precedence over benefits of a non-obligatory practice

Regardless of the benefits of any non-Wajib practice, abstention from it is imperative if it is the cause for Fitnah and haraam. This principle was applied so thoroughly by the Fuqaha that even proven Sunnah acts were forbidden at times, as demonstrated by some of the examples cited above.

With regards to a Wajib/Fard (obligatory) practice which may have become contaminated, the practice itself will not be discarded. Shaykh Ashraf Ali Thanwi explains the difference:

"The act of Sajdah Shukr (prostration of thankfulness) is mubah according to the Ahaadith, but Hanafi jurists, as mentioned by 'Allamah Ibn 'Abidin al-Shami (rahmatullah alayh), declared this act to be makruh in case the masses start considering it a desired sunnah. It is mentioned in 'Aalamgiri (Fatawa Hindiyyah) that people used to make this (sajdah) after Salaat. It is makruh because ignorant people will consider it sunnah and wajib. Any mubah action which culminates in this attitude, becomes makruh. However, if the act is Waajib, it will not be abandoned, rather the corrupt factors which have crept in it will be rectified.

For instance, the act of accompanying the Janaazah will not be abandoned due to the association of a makruh action with it; rather the makruh act will be prohibited. This is because the Janaazah is necessary, and it will not be abandoned because of a temporary karaahah (reprehensibility).

However, in contrast to the dinner invitation, it should be refused after one becomes aware of the accompanying makruh action. The dinner party is not

something necessary in the Deen. 'Allamah Ibn 'Abidin al-Shami has differentiated between these issues as well."

The true sign of love for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is strict adherence to his (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) Sunnah and the Sunnah of his Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum) who held the greatest love for the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). All other claims to love that differs from the manner it was manifested in the lives of the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum) are empty slogans.

Muslims should celebrate Rasulullah's (sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam) birth and existence, by following his Sunnah and guidance outwardly and inwardly; sending frequent Durood on him; reading about him and sharing his life with others; fasting on Mondays; visiting his blessed Rawdah to offer Salaam directly to him; venerating and respecting anything associated with him, etc.

Furthermore, the true followers of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) have always been the strictest adherents of the Shar'iah and the most outspoken against all forms of bid'ah and shirk, as exemplified by all the Mujaddids (Revivers of the Deen), including the recent ones such as Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani and Shah Waliullah. Firmness against shirk and bid'ah has always been the salient feature of the Ulama-e-Haqq.

Imam Bukhari (rahmatullahi alayhi) states regarding the quality that he found consistently within the **1000+** scholars he had met during the best of generations:

"I have met more than a thousand scholars. (Then he mentioned the names of the more prominent in each of the lands that he travelled in) and I found that they all agreed on the following points: they all used to prohibit bid'ah – that which Rasulullah(sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and his Companions did not practice, because of the saying of Allaah,: "Hold firmly to the Rope of Allaah and do not separate"" [Sharh Usul I'tiqaad]

For a glimpse of what the Maslak (methodology) of the true Sufis and Mujaddids was like, see the following articles linked to the undermentioned links::

<http://reliablefatwas.com/mujaddid-alf-e-thani/>

<http://reliablefatwas.com/mujaddid-alf-e-thani-shah-waliullah-shirk-amongst-muslims/>

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CUSTOMARY PRACTISES OF MAULOOD ARE ISLAMICALLY AND RATIONALLY REPULSIVE

This brief *Naseehat* is for the benefit of those who are in doubt, but are in the quest for the Truth. This *Naseehat* is for the uncommitted ones who think rationally, whose minds are free of Qabar Pujaari indoctrination – those who have a natural aversion for bid'ah such as rituals proffered in the guise of ibaadat, but which have absolutely no truck with Islam.

Intelligent Muslims are not in need of a rigmarole of devious arguments to understand the simple issue of the Shariah's stance on the question of maulood. The votaries of this birthday merrymaking custom contend that maulood is for the love of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The vehemence and rigidity which they have assigned to their innovation of meelaad, have constrained them to brand as 'kaafir' those who do not participate in this practice. They are branded *gustaakh-e-Rasool* (*disrespectful to Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam*), hence their fatwa of kufr for abstainers.

Can a Muslim be a kaafir merely because he abstains from a custom which had not existed in Islam for the first five centuries of its history? Are all the Sahaabah, Taabi-een and Tabe-Taabieen 'kaafirs' because they never practised meelaad nor had they dreamt about this bid'ah? Why did the love and devotion of the Sahaabah for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) not constrain them to innovate meelaad or to celebrate Rasulullah's birthday? Did those who appeared on the scene five centuries after Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) have greater love and devotion for Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) than even the Sahaabah?

Does intelligence accept that a practice innovated five hundred years after Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) can be regarded as a compulsory act of ibaadat, abstention from which is kufr?

The ordinary intelligent Muslim in search of the truth is not interested in the views of Ulama who appeared on the horizon seven and eight centuries after the Sahaabah. The view of an Aalim regardless of his lofty status is not binding on any one if such a view is pure opinion unsubstantiated by the *Nusoos* of the Shariah. Intelligent Muslims, before they accept a practice to be ibaadat, require evidence from the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, not from sources a thousand years after the Sahaabah. Our Deen was perfected and finalized during the very age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and his Age includes the *Khairul Quroon* according to his command.

Declaring the perfection and finalization of the Deen, the Qur'aan states:

“This Day have I (Allah) perfected for you your Deen, and have completed for you My favour, and have chosen for you Islam as your Deen.”
(Aayat 4, Al-Maaidah)

About the epoch of *Khairul Quroon*, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Honour my Sahaabah, for verily they are your noblest, then those who follow them (the Taabieen), then those who follow them (Tabe-Taabieen). Thereafter falsehood will prevail.

Rituals and practices in the form of ‘ibaadat’, innovated a thousand years after Rasulullah (sallallahu alahu alayhi wasallam) may not be imposed on the Ummah as acts of Ibaadat. Even if it be hallucinated that a meelaad practice is without any of the evils which bedevil all these innovations, then too, it will not be Ibaadat, and may not be imposed on the Ummah if it was not sanctioned by the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen of the *Khairul Quroon*. The private devotional practices of Ulama and Auliya centuries after the Sahaabah are not meant for mass consumption by the Ummah. Such practices may not be elevated to the status of Sunnah. In fact, the grave-worshippers have elevated their meelaad bid’ah to the status of Fardh, hence they feel justified to brand as kaafir those who do not accept their evil bid’ah.

To know and understand the reality of meelad it will suffice to know that this merrymaking custom came into existence many centuries after Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), hence it has absolutely no relationship with the Sunnah. On the contrary, due to the plethora of evil elements associated with meelaad, the practice is bid’ah and haraam.

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