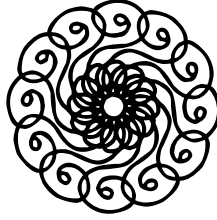


**INNOVATION IN LIGHT OF
THE PERFECTION OF
THE SHARĪ'AH**



**Shaykh Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ
al-‘Uthaymīn**

Translated by Abū ‘Iyāḍ Amjad Rafīq
Shawwāl 1416H (March 1996)

www.bidah.com
www.salafiebooks.com

1st Edition (1.0) Safar 1435H / December 2013CE.
Original Translation Shawwāl 1416H / March 1996



This is a **free** electronic publication originally published on **salafiebooks.com (www.salaf.com)**. If you did not download this ebook from **salafiebooks.com** it may not be original, genuine or safe and may have been modified without permission. To ensure authenticity and security download the original from **salafiebooks.com** and discard all other copies.

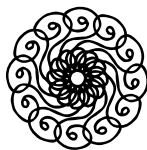
You may print this ebook for your personal use. Commercial use is prohibited. If you wish to spread this ebook you can publicize its unique URL at **salafiebooks.com**. Third-party hosting is prohibited and is a copyright violation.

Salafi Publications
472 Coventry Road
Small Heath
Birmingham B10 0UG
United Kingdom

t. 0121 773 0003
t. 0121 773 0033
f. 0121 773 4882

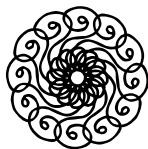
email: admin@spubs.com
web: www.spubs.com

Contents



Translator's Introduction	2
1. The Perfection of the Sharī'ah	3
2. The Qur'ān And The Role of the Prophet	6
3. The Messenger Fulfilled The Trust	8
4. Innovating Into The Religion	9
5. True Veneration Of Allāh and His Messenger	11
6. Every Innovation is Misguidance	13
7. The Statement of 'Umar	16
8. The Intermediate Ways and Means	19
9. Instituting a Good Sunnah	21
10. The Accepted Action in the Sharī'ah	23
11. The Evil Effects of Innovation	26
12. Closing Supplication	28

Translator's Introduction



All praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds, and may the ṣalāt and salām be upon His Final Messenger. To proceed:

This is a very brief but concise treatise by Shaykh Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn (raḥimahullāh) on the subject of innovation. It is an excellent introduction to this topic and its argument is precise, clear and strong. I first translated this in Shawwāl of 1416H (March 1996) and it was published online for a number of years.¹ I have broken the text into separate chapters for easier digestion of the material and also added suitable chapter headings to provide structure.

Abū ʿIyāḍ Amjad Rafīq
15th Safar 1435H / 18th December 2013CE

¹ On the University of Essex Islāmīc Society homepage which later became www.salafipublications.com.

1. The Perfection of the Sharī‘ah



Verily, all praise belongs to Allāh alone, we praise Him, seek His aid and His forgiveness. We repent to Him and seek refuge in Him from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allāh guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever He misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh alone and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and messenger. Allāh sent him with the guidance and the true religion and he conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the ‘ummah and strove for Allāh's sake as He ought to be strived for until there came to him the certainty. He left his ‘ummah on a pure and clear path, whose night is like its day and none deviates from it except one who is destroyed.

He explained (in this clear path) everything which the ‘ummah is in need of in all of its affairs (to such an extent) that Abū Dharr (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu) said: "*The Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) did not even leave a bird flapping its wings in the sky except that he mentioned to us knowledge regarding it.*"

Also a man from among the pagans said to Salmān al-Fārsī (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu), "Your Messenger teaches you (so much), even toilet manners." So Salmān replied, "Yes! He has also forbidden us to face the *qiblah* while passing water or excrement or that we clean ourselves with less than three stones, or that we clean ourselves with the right hand or that we clean ourselves with dung or bones."

You will see that Allāh the Exalted has explained in this great Qurʾān the fundamentals of the religion and its branches. He has explained Tawheed with all its types, the etiquette of meeting in gatherings, and seeking permission to enter peoples houses. The Exalted said, **"O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the gatherings then make room (spread out). Allāh will (in turn) make ample room for you."** (Mujādilah 58:11)

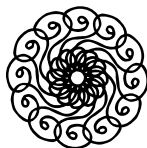
And He also said, **"O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own until you have sought permission and saluted its inhabitants. That is better for you, in order that you may remember. And if you find none in the house then do not enter until permission has been given to you. If you are asked to go back then go back. That is more pure for you and Allāh has full knowledge of all that you do."** (al-Nūr 24:27-28).

He has also explained the manners of dress. He the Exalted said, **"The elderly women who do not desire marriage, there is no blame upon them if they put aside there outer garments without making a display and show of beauty."** (al-Nūr 24: 60) **"O Prophet. Say to your wives, your daughters and the women of the believers that they should put their outer garments over themselves (their bodies). That will be better in order that they may be known as such (free and respectable women) and not be harmed or abused. And Allāh is ever forgiving and merciful."** (al-Aḥzāb 33:59). **"And that they should not strike their feet so that what they hide from their beauty becomes known."** (al-Nūr 24:31). **"And it is not righteousness that you enter the houses from the rear but righteousness is the (quality of the) one who fears (Allāh). So enter houses through their proper doors."** (al-Baqarah 2:179). And other such numerous verses by which it is

made clear that this complete and comprehensive religion is not in need of any addition just like it is not permissible to make any decrease in it.

This is why Allāh the Exalted said in describing the Qurʾān, "**And We have revealed to you the Book (O Muḥammad) , as a clarification and explanation for every single matter.**" (al-Naḥl 16:79). There is no such thing which mankind is in need of in their lives and livelihood except that Allāh has explained it in His Book whether explicitly by the text (itself) or through indication or through express speech or something understood from the text (but not explicitly stated).

2. The Qur'ān And The Role of the Prophet



My dear Brothers, there are some amongst the people who explain the speech of Allāh, "**There is no creature upon the earth or bird in the sky which flaps its wings except that it forms part of communities just like yourselves. We have not left anything out of the Book and then to your Lord will you be gathered.**" (al-An'ām 6:38) They explain, "**We have not left anything out of the Book**" by saying that the Book referred to is the Qur'ān. What is correct however, is that the Book is the Preserved Tablet. As for the Qur'ān, Allāh has described it in a way which is more deep and profound than what has been mentioned in the above verse about the Preserved Tablet by negating the omission of anything from it. He said (about the Qur'ān), "**And We have revealed to you the Book, as a clarification and explanation (tibyānan) for every single matter.**" (al-Naḥl 16:89). This is more profound and clear than His saying, "**We have not left anything out of the Book.**"

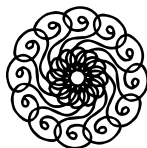
Perhaps someone may say: "Where can we find the number of the five prayers in the Qur'ān? And the number of (rak'ahs) for every prayer in the Qur'ān. And how can it be correct if we cannot find in the Qur'ān a description of the number of rak'ahs in every prayer while Allāh says, "**And We have revealed to you the Book, as a clarification and explanation (tibyānan) for every single matter**"?

The answer is that Allāh the Exalted has made it clear to us in His Book that it is obligatory upon us to take whatever the

Messenger of Allāh has said and whatever he has directed us to. The Exalted said, "**Whoever obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allāh.**" (al-Nisā' 4:80) and "**And whatever the Messenger gives to you take it and whatever he forbids you from then refrain from it.**" (al-Ḥashr 59:7).

Whatever the Sunnah explains then the Qur'ān has (by default) indicated and directed to it because the Sunnah is one of the two types of revelation which Allāh revealed to His messenger and taught him, just as Allāh has said, "**And Allāh has revealed to you the Book and the Wisdom.**" (al-Nisā' 4:113) Therefore, based upon this, whatever has come in the Sunnah has also come in the Book of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic.

3. The Messenger Fulfilled The Trust



My brothers, now that this matter has been settled, did the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) die while something remained from the religion which draws one closer to Allāh the Exalted which he did not explain?

Never! since the Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) explained the whole of the religion either by his speech, his action or his (silent) approval and whether that was initiated of his own accord or whether it was due to a response to a question. Sometimes Allāh would send a bedouin from the furthest region of the desert in order to ask the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) something from the matters of the religion which the Companions, who stuck by the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) did not ask him. This is why they used to rejoice when a bedouin would come and ask the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) about certain affairs. That the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) did not leave anything which the people are in need of in their worship, their dealings with one another and their livelihood without having explained it is proven to you by His speech, the Exalted, **"This day have I perfected for you your religion and have completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islām as a religion."** (al-Mā'idah 5:3).

4. Innovating Into The Religion



When this matter has been explained O Muslim, then know that every one who innovates something into the religion of Allāh, even if it is with a good intention, then his innovation, along with it being misguidance, will be considered a revilement of the religion of Allāh the Mighty and Majestic and will be considered a denial and rejection of Allāh the Exalted in His speech, **"This day have I perfected for you your religion"** (al-Mā'idah 5:3). Since this innovator who innovated a matter into the religion of Allāh which is not from the religion of Allāh is saying silently that the religion has not been completed because this matter which was left out, and which he innovated, can be used to draw closer to Allāh the Mighty and Majestic.

It is amazing that a person will innovate something related to Allāh's Essence, His Name's and Attributes and then say that in doing so he is exalting and magnifying his Lord, that he is freeing his Lord from any imperfections and faults and that he is obeying His speech the Exalted, **"So do not set up equals or partners to Allāh"** (al-Baqarah 2:22).

You will be amazed by this person. He makes this innovation in the religion of Allāh which is related to Allāh's Essence, and which the Salaf from this Ummah and its leaders were not upon and then says that he is freeing Allāh from defects, magnifying Him and is implementing His saying, the Exalted, **"So do not set up equals or partners to Allāh"** (al-Baqarah 2:22) and that

whoever disagrees with that is someone who makes resemblances for Allāh and likens Him to His creation.

Just like you will be amazed by a people who innovate in the religion of Allāh something which is related to the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) and which does not belong to the religion of Allāh. Then they call out and claim by this innovation that they are lovers of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam), that they are venerating the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam). And that whoever does not agree with them in this innovation of theirs is a hater of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) and other such bad names which they give to whoever does not agree with them in their innovation.

It is amazing also that the likes of such people say "We are the ones who exalt and magnify Allāh and His Messenger." In reality when they innovate into the religion of Allāh and His Sharī'ah which His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) came with something that does not belong to it they are without a doubt putting themselves ahead of Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh the Mighty and Majestic has said, **"O you who believe! Do not put yourselves ahead of Allāh and His Messenger and fear Allāh. Indeed Allāh is All-Hearing and All-Knowing."** (al-Ḥujurāt 49:1).

5. True Veneration Of Allāh and His Messenger



My brothers, I ask and adjure you by Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, and I would like the answer to be from your hearts not from your sentiments and emotions, from what your religion necessitates and not your blind-following: What do you say about those who innovate something into the religion of Allāh which does not belong to it whether it is related to Allāh's Essence, His Names and Attributes or whether it is related to the Messenger of Allāh (sallallāhu ʿalayhi wasallam) and then say "We are exalting and magnifying Allāh and His Messenger." Are they more worthy of being those who venerate and magnify Allāh and His Messenger?

Or is it those people who do not deviate even a fingertips length from Allāh's Sharīʿah, who say with regard to what has come in the Sharīʿah "We believe and treat as true that with which we have been informed and we hear and we obey with regard to that which we have been commanded" and who say about that which the Sharīʿah did not come with "We desist and refrain, it is not for us to put ourselves ahead of Allāh and His Messenger and it is not for us to say about the religion of Allāh something which is not found in it." Which of these two are more worthy of being those who love Allāh and His Messenger and who exalt Allāh and His Messenger?

There is no doubt that it is the ones who say "We believe and accept (as true) that with which we have been informed and we hear and we obey with regard to that which we have been

commanded" and who say "We hold back and refrain from that which we have not been commanded" and who say "We are the least able in placing something in the Sharī'ah of Allāh something which is not in it." There is no doubt that these are the ones who know and acknowledge their own limit and power and the power of their creator.

These are the ones who venerate Allāh and His Messenger and they are the ones who demonstrate the truthfulness of their love for Allāh and His Messenger. It is certainly not those who innovate into the religion of Allāh something which does not belong to it, in terms of belief, speech or action.

6. Every Innovation is Misguidance



You will be surprised at a people who know the saying of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam), "*Beware of the newly-invented matters, for every newly-invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance and every misguidance is in the Hellfire.*" They know that his speech "*every innovation*" is general, comprehensive and complete, being enclosed and surrounded with the strongest particle that can be used for generalisation and inclusion and that is "*kullu (every)*" and that the one who spoke this comprehensive speech (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) knows the sense and meaning of this word. That he is the most eloquent of the whole of creation, the greatest adviser of the creation to the creation, who does not speak except with something the meaning of which he (certainly and definitely) intends and desires. Therefore, when the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) said, "*Every innovation is misguidance*" he knew what he was saying and he knew the meaning of what he said. These words came from him out of the perfection of (his) advice to the ‘ummah.

Whenever these three matters come together in speech, the perfection of advice and will, the perfection of speech and discourse and the perfection of knowledge and acquaintance, it indicates that what is desired or intended by the speech is the actual meaning which it indicates and refers to. After this

comprehensiveness is it correct that we divide innovations into three types or five types? Never! This is not correct.²

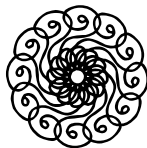
The claim of some of the scholars that there is *bid'ah ḥasanah* (good innovation) falls into one of two situations (and is explained in one of two ways): a) It is not an innovation in reality but a person considers it an innovation b) That it is an innovation which makes it evil. However, a person does not know about its evil.

Therefore, this is the answer to everything which is claimed to be a good innovation (*bid'ah ḥasanah*). Built upon this, there is no way for the people of innovation to make from their innovations something that is a good innovation. In our hands is this sharp sword from the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi

² Some of the Shāfi'ite jurists divided innovation into five types (wājib, mustahabb, mubāh, makrūh and ḥarām) based upon their misunderstanding that the word "bid'ah" has been used by the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam) in a purely linguistic sense. On the contrary, the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam) already qualified the intended meaning and usage of the word "bid'ah" as occurs in the ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (raḍiyallāhu 'anhā), "*Whoever introduces into this affair of ours that which does not belong to it will have it rejected.*" In this ḥadīth it is made clear that the innovation which being negated is that which relates purely to religious matters and consists of invention of something new, attributing to the religion and it being absent of evidence, either general (in its foundation) or specific (in its details). Hence, every censure of innovation in the Sharī'ah texts relates to matters pertaining to the religion and thus the rejection of innovation is absolute and complete, without exception. In any case, the types of innovations these Shāfi'ite jurists intended by permissible, recommended and obligatory innovations were not innovations in worship ('ibādah) but matters like novel types of food, clothing and shelter, things which are only ways and means to already defined sharī'ah objectives (such as building schools, universities or authoring works to refute innovators). Refer to Bidah.Com for a more detailed treatment of this matter and an explanation of the intent of the Shāfi'ite jurists in their treatment of the subject of bid'ah.

wasallam), "*Every innovation is misguidance.*" Verily, this sharp sword was manufactured in the factories of Prophethood and Messengership. It has not been made in the fragile and feeble factories (of the people) but rather, it has been made in the factories of Prophethood. The Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) designed it into this fine and efficacious (piece of art). It is not possible for anyone to challenge the one in whose hand this sharp sword lies with any innovation, saying it is a good innovation while the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) says, "*Every innovation is misguidance.*"

7. The Statement of ‘Umar



It is as if I feel in your souls a whispering which says, "What do you say about the saying of ‘Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu), the one who was always in agreement with the truth when he ordered ‘Ubayy bin Ka‘b and Tamīm al-Dārī to stand and lead the people in prayer during Ramadān and when he went out to the mosque while the people were all united behind one imām, saying, "What a good innovation this is. Yet the prayer which they do not perform but sleep at its time is better than the one they are performing now."

The answer to that is from two aspects:

The First: It is not permissible for any person to contradict and oppose the words of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) with any other words. Not with the words of Abū Bakr who is the most superior person of the ‘ummah after its Prophet, nor the words of ‘Umar who is the second best of this ummah after its Prophet, nor the words of ‘Uthmān who is the third best of this ummah after its Prophet and nor the words of ‘Alī who is the fourth best of this ‘ummah after its Prophet and nor the words of anyone besides them because Allāh the Exalted said, "**Let those beware who withstand his (the Messenger's) order that a trial will befall them or that a painful punishment will touch them.**" (al-Nūr 24:63).

Imām Aḥmad (raḥimahullāh) said, "Do you know what the trial is? The trial is shirk. Maybe when he rejects some of the words of

the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) deviation and corruption falls into his heart so he is destroyed." And Ibn Abbās (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu) said, "It is almost as if stones from the sky will fall upon you, when I say to you the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) said this and you say Abū Bakr and Umar said that."

The Second: We know with certain knowledge that ‘Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu) was among the greatest of people in respecting and venerating the words of Allāh the Exalted and His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam). He was well known for standing by the limits (ḥudūd) of Allāh the Exalted to such an extent that he was described as a guardian of the words of Allāh the Exalted.

Umar never transgressed the limits of Allāh and so it does not benefit Umar (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu) to oppose and differ from the words of the leader of mankind, Muhammad (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) and that he should say about an actual innovation "What an excellent innovation this is" whilst this innovation is the same one which the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) intended in his speech, "Every innovation is misguidance." Rather it is necessary that this innovation about which ‘Umar said, "What an excellent innovation this is" is placed within the type of innovation which does not fall under the intent of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) in his saying, "Every innovation is misguidance."

By his speech, ‘Umar (raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu) was referring to the gathering of people behind one ‘imām after they had been separated and dispersed previously (praying alone or in small groups). The basis for the prayer (in congregation) during Ramaḍān comes from the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam). It is established in the two Ṣaḥīḥs (of al-Bukhārī and

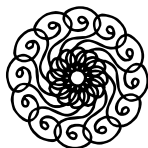
Muslim) from the hadeeth of Ā'ishah (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu) that the Prophet (ḍallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam) led the people in prayer for three nights and then remained behind from the people on the fourth night and said to them, "Indeed I feared that this may be made obligatory upon you and that you may not be able to perform it (due to its burden)."

Therefore, praying at night during Ramadān in congregation is from the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam) and Umar (radiyallāhu 'anhu) named this an innovation considering that when the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam) abandoned praying with the people they became separated. One man would pray by himself and another would pray with another and yet another would be praying with two people. There would be groups of people praying in the mosque praying by themselves.

Then Umar (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu) saw with his sharp and correct vision that he should unite the people behind a single 'imām. This action in itself is an innovation when one considers that the prevailing situation before was one of separation and dispersal. This (kind of) innovation is a relative one and has a precedence and it is not an absolute innovation which has been initiated (without any former example or model). Umar (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu) reinstated this (action) because this sunnah was present in the time of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam).

Therefore, this is a sunnah but it was abandoned since the time of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam) until 'Umar (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu) reinstated it. With this principle it is not possible, ever, for the people of innovation to find a passage or outlet from the words of 'Umar (radiyallāhu 'anhu) for what they sanction and approve of from their innovations.

8. The Intermediate Ways and Means



Someone may say, "There are innovated things which the Muslims have accepted and have acted upon, yet these things were not known during the time of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) such as schools, composition of books and whatever resembles that. These are innovations which the Muslims have considered to be good, acted upon them and see them as being from the best of actions. How then can you reconcile between this which is almost unanimously agreed upon by the Muslims and between the speech of the leader of the Muslims, the Prophet of the Muslims and the Messenger of the Lord of all the Worlds (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam), *'Every innovation is misguidance.'*"

The answer: We say that this in reality is not an innovation.³ Rather it is a means to something which has been legislated (in the Sharī‘ah). The means differ from place to place and time to time. **It is from the established principles (in the Sharī‘ah) that the means (wasā’il) have the same rulings as their objectives (maqāṣid).** Therefore, ways and means for achieving something legislated are also legislated and permissible. Means

³ The Shāfi‘ite jurists referred in an earlier footnote treat these affairs to be innovations and put them in the category of recommended or obligatory innovations. However, these are not really innovations in the proper Sharī‘ah sense of the word "bid‘ah" and are either matters of broad public interest which have general proofs from the texts and comprise ways and means that help to achieve desired Sharī‘ah goals.

and ways for things which are not legislated are also not legislated and means and ways to things which are unlawful are also unlawful. Even good, when it is a means towards evil, is considered evil and as such is forbidden. Listen to the words of Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, **"And do not revile or curse those whom they call upon besides Allāh so that they also revile and curse Allāh out of enmity without knowledge."** (al-An‘ām 6:108).

Reviling the (false) gods of the pagans is not wrong rather it is appropriate and justified however reviling the Lord of all the Worlds is improper, unjustified and constitutes enmity and oppression. That is why when the praiseworthy reviling of the gods of the pagans is a clear and open cause for reviling the Lord of all the Worlds it is unlawful and prohibited. I have presented this as a proof to show that the ways and means have rulings related to their objectives. Therefore, schools, writing down of knowledge and authorship of books, while they may be innovations, not being found in the era of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) in this manner, are not sought in themselves (as objectives). Rather they are ways and means which have the same ruling as the objectives behind them which in this case is to teach and spread (Sharī‘ah) knowledge.

This is why if a person was to build a school for the purposes of teaching knowledge which is forbidden, the building of the school is also forbidden and if he was to build the school for the purposes of teaching the Sharī‘ah the building of this school is legislated and would be permissible.

9. Instituting a Good Sunnah



If one was to say: How would you respond to the saying of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam), "*Whoever enacted in Islām a good sunnah would have its reward and the reward of whoever acted upon it till the day of Judgement.*"

The answer: The one who said, "*Whoever enacted in Islām a good sunnah*" is the same one who said, "*Every innovation is misguidance*" and it is not possible that a saying should arise from the truthful and believed one (the Messenger) which invalidates another of his sayings. It is not possible that the words of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) should ever contradict. Nor is it ever possible for (his speech) to come with one meaning alongside contradiction (with some other meaning). Whoever thinks that the words of Allāh or the words of His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) are contradictory should look again. This suspicion only arises either out of incapability or negligence on his behalf. It is not possible for a contradiction to be found in the words of Allāh the Exalted or the words of His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam).

When that is the case the explanation of the lack of contradiction between the hadeeth, "*Every innovation is misguidance*" and the hadeeth, "*Whoever enacted in Islām a good sunnah*" is that the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) said, "*Whoever introduced in Islām*" and innovations are not from Islām. He also said,

"*ḥasanah*" (good) and innovation is not "*ḥasanah*" (good). There is also a difference between enacting and innovating.

There is also **another answer** in which there is no harm: That the meaning of "*man sanna*" (whoever enacted) is "whoever revived a sunnah which used to exist and then became non-existent." Built upon this, "enacting" is a relative matter just like when one revives a sunnah after it had been abandoned it would be considered as an innovation [in relation to its previous non-existence, but not considered an innovation absolutely].

There is also a **third answer** which indicates the context of the ḥadīth and that is the story of the small band of people who came as a delegation to the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) and who were in very straitened and difficult circumstances. The Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) called the people to donate freely for these people. A man from the Anṣār came with a bag of silver which was very heavy in his hands. He placed it in front of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) and the face of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) began to rejoice out of delight and happiness and he said, "*Whoever enacted in Islām a good sunnah would have its reward and the reward of whoever acted upon it till the day of Judgement.*" Here the meaning of enacting is the introduction of an action in terms of its performance and not in terms of legislation. Therefore the meaning of, "*Whoever enacted in Islām a good sunnah*" is the one who acted upon it, effecting it and actualising it and not legislating it because legislation is forbidden as "*every innovation is misguidance.*"

10. The Accepted Action in the Sharī'ah



Know my brothers that a person's following of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) is not proper and correct except when the action is in accordance with the Sharī'ah with respect to six matters:

The First: Cause (Sabab): When a person worships Allāh with an act of worship linked to a cause or reason which is not legislated, this is an innovation which is rejected from the one who performs it. An example of that is when people awaken on the seventeenth night of the month of Rajab with the proof that it was the night in which the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) ascended to the heavens. The tahajjud prayer is indeed an act of worship but when it is linked to this reason it becomes an innovation because it is based and constructed upon a reason which is not established from the Sharī'ah. This description - the agreement of the act of worship with the Sharī'ah in terms of its reason and cause - is an important matter by which the innovatory nature of many things thought to be from the Sunnah, when in reality they are not, are made clear.

The Second: Type or Kind (Jins): It is also vital that the act of worship agrees with the Sharī'ah in its type. If a person was to worship Allāh with an act of worship whose type or mode has not been legislated, it would not be accepted. An example of that is when a man sacrifices a horse, his sacrifice would not be correct because he has opposed the Sharī'ah in its specification

of the type. Sacrifice is not performed except with lamb, cattle, sheep and camels.

The Third: Quantity (Qadr): If a person desired to increase the prayer (with respect to the number of rak'ahs) this would become an innovation which is not acceptable since it opposes the Sharī'ah in terms of quantity. If a person was to pray Dhuhr prayer with five rakahs for example, his prayer would not be correct by unanimous agreement.

The Fourth: Form or Manner (Kayfiyyah): If a person was to perform ablution by washing his feet first then wiping his head then his hands and then the face we would say his ablution is void as it is in opposition to the Sharī'ah in the manner of its performance.

The Fifth: Time (Zamān): If a man was to sacrifice an animal in the first days of Dhul-Ḥijjah the sacrifice would not be accepted due to its opposition to the Sharī'ah with respect to time. I have heard that some people sacrifice sheep during the month of Ramaḍān seeking nearness to Allāh with this sacrifice. This action is an innovation with respect to time because there is nothing by which a person draws nearer to Allāh through sacrificing except the sacrifice of Aḍḥā and 'Aqīqah and that which is given as a gift. As for sacrificing in the month of Ramaḍān while believing that there is a reward for this sacrifice similar to the sacrifice on 'Īd al-Aḍḥā then that is an innovation. And as for sacrificing merely for the meat itself then that is permissible.

The Sixth: Place (Makān): If a man was to perform i'tikāf in other than a mosque his i'tikāf would not be correct. This is because i'tikāf is not to be performed except in the mosques. If a woman was to say, "I wish to perform i'tikāf in the pray area of

the house" her i'tikāf would not be correct due its opposition to the Sharī'ah in terms of place. Another example of this is when a man wishes to perform ṭawāf but finds that it has become constricted (due to congestion by people) and the area around him has become narrow so he begins to perform ṭawāf from outside the mosque. His Tawāf would not be correct because the place for ṭawāf is the House (al-Ka'bah). Allāh the Exalted said to Ibrahīm the Khalīl, "**Purify my House for those who perform Tawāf**" (al-Ḥajj 22:26).

Therefore Ibādah is not considered to be righteous action except when two conditions are present: **The First:** Ikhlāṣ (sincerity). **The Second:** Mutāba'ah (adherence) and this is not correct except by the six abovementioned matters.

I say to those who have been put to trial with innovations and whose intentions are (no doubt) good, desiring good, when you desire good but we do not know, by Allāh, a path better than the path of the Salaf may Allāh be pleased with them. My brothers bite onto the Sunnah of the Messenger (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam) with the molars and travel upon the path of the Righteous Salaf. Be upon whatever they were upon and then look and see: Will that will injure or hurt you in any way?

11. The Evil Effects of Innovation



I say, and I seek refuge in Allāh that I say something about which I have no knowledge, I say: You will find that many amongst those people who are eager and zealous in innovations are weak and feeble in carrying out those matters whose legislation has been established and whose correctness from the Sunnah has also been established. When they finish and depart from these innovations they face the established acts of Sunnah with laxity.

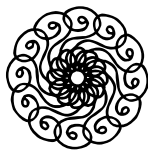
All of this is from the evil effects of innovations upon the heart. The evil effects of innovations upon the heart are very great (and severe) and their dangers towards the religion are immense (and significant). Never do a people make an innovation into the religion of Allāh except that they neglect from the Sunnah its like or even greater than it, as some of the people of knowledge from the Salaf have mentioned.

Conversely, when a man feels (and knows) that he is following (and adhering) and not legislating (of his own accord through innovations) he will obtain, as a result of that, the perfection of awe, submission, humility and worship of the Lord of all the Worlds, and the perfection of following the 'Imām of the pious, the Chief of the Messengers and the Messenger of the Lord of all the Worlds, Muhammad (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam).

I direct this advice to all my Muslim brothers who consider anything from among the innovations to be good, whether they are related to the Essence of Allāh, His Names and Attributes or

to the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam) and venerating him, that they should fear Allāh and turn away from that. Furthermore, they should make their affair built upon adherence and imitation and not innovation. And upon sincerity and not association of partners (in Allāh's worship). Upon the Sunnah and not upon bid‘ah. Upon what al-Raḥmān loves and not upon what Shayṭān loves. Then they should look at the safety, good life, tranquility, comfort and great light that their hearts will obtain (as a result).

12. Closing Supplication



I ask Allāh that He makes us guides who are guided and leaders who rectify (others). That He enlightens our hearts with faith and knowledge and that He does not make the knowledge we have acquired harmful to us. That He takes with us the path (He takes towards) His believing slaves. That He makes us amongst His close friends who have fear of him and amongst His party of the successful ones. May Allāh send prayers and blessings upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family and his companions.



For more E-books on creed and methodology please visit **SalafiEBooks.Com**. For information on Islām, Sunnah and Salafiyyah in general refer to the following:

Reference

TheNobleQuran.Com
SahihalBukhari.Com
SahihMuslim.Com

Methodology

Salafis.Com
Manhaj.Com
TheMadkhalis.Com
Takfiris.Com
Ikhwanis.Com
IslamAgainstExtremism.Com

Creed

Aqidah.Com
TawhidFirst.Com
AboveTheThrone.Com
Wahhabis.Com

Sects and Innovation

Bidah.Com
Asharis.Com
Maturidis.Com
Mutazilah.Com
Shia.BS
Barelwis.Com
Nabahani.Com
SayyidQutb.Com

Other

Dajjāl.Com
IbnTaymiyyah.Com
IslamJesus.ws
Islam4Kids.Com
PiousMuslim.Com

Online Stores

SalafiBookstore.Com
SalafiAudio.Com

Radio

SalafiRadio.Com

Ibn al-Qayyim (rahimahullāh) said:

The people of Islām are strangers amongst mankind. And the believers are strangers amongst the people of Islām. And the people of knowledge are strangers amongst the believers. And the people of the Sunnah who separate it from the desires and innovations, they are strangers. And those who call to it and have patience upon the harm of the opposers, they are the severest of them (all) in strangeness. However, they are the people of Allāh in truth. There is no strangeness for them (in reality), (rather) their strangeness is only in relation to the majority about whom Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, said, **"If you were to obey most of those upon the Earth they would misguide you from the path of Allāh"** (6:116). So the ones (mentioned in the verse) are (the real) strangers to Allāh and His Messenger and their strangeness is the deserting (type of) strangeness.

Madārij al-Sālikīn (3/195).

