

Programme Ten; *Bid'a*.

10.1 The meaning of *Bid'a*.

Literal meaning.

Literally, *Bid'a* means to initiate or create something upon an unprecedented example.¹

One of the names of Allāh Almighty is *Badīr* (2:117)². This refers to how Allāh created everything in the skies and earth without a previous example to follow.

The meaning of *Bid'a* in Islamic Sharīah.

Imam al-Harawī writes:

وشرعا المحدث الذي لم ينص عليه القرآن و لا الحديث

'In Islamic Sharīah, *Bid'a* is a new matter for which there is no textual proof from the Qur'ān or Hadīth.'³

10.2 The Prophet's guidance on *Bid'a*.

Repeatedly, the Prophet ﷺ warned his followers to refrain from innovative practices in Islamic Sharīah. As the final Prophet, he left a perfect role model for us to follow and he urged his followers not to initiate new matters. We must not change the number of Rak'āts in Salāh or alter when Hajj is performed.

Imam Nasā'ī reports in his *Sunan* from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said:

'The most truthful of dialogue is the dialogue of Allāh and the best of all guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The worst matters are the new ones (*Muhdathat*) and every *Muhdathat* is *Bid'a*. Every *Bid'a* is misguidance and every misguidance is destined for the fire.'⁴

10.3 Did the Prophet declare all innovations as misguidance?

The above Hadīth seemingly suggests that the the Prophet ﷺ declared all *Bid'a* as misguidance. However, the classical scholars have divided *Bid'a* into different types. What justification exists to categorise *Bid'a* into different types?

¹ p. 415. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. 'Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

² This word comes from the same root word as *Bid'a*.

³ p. 415. Ibid.

⁴ *Sunan Nasa'i*. Book of the Two Eids. Chapter, the Sermon. Hadīth no, 1560. Similar reports are to be found in *Sahih Muslim* (Hadīth no. 1435), *Sunan Ibn Maja* (Hadīth no. 44), *Sunan al-Darmi* (Hadīth no. 208) and *Musnad Ahmad* (Hadīth no. 13815).

In reality, the Prophet ﷺ did not declare *all Bid'a* as misguidance. Several Ahādīth of his confirm this;

- The Mother of the Faithful Āisha (may Allāh be pleased with her) reports that the Prophet ﷺ said:

من احدث في امرنا هذا ما ليس منه فهو رد

‘Whoever innovates [something] *which is not from our matter* [of Islam] then it is rejected.’⁵

What this saying clearly indicates is that not all *Bid'a* is rejected; rather those innovated practices are which are alien to Islam.

- Imam Muslim narrates a Hadīth through the chain of Jarīr ibn Abd Allāh, who reports that the Prophet ﷺ said:

‘Whoever initiates a good practice in Islam then he will attain the reward for it and the reward of whoever acts upon it thereafter, without any shortcomings. And whoever initiates an evil practice, then he will carry the burden as well as the burden of whoever acts upon it thereafter, without any shortcomings.’⁶

What this Hadīth thus shows is that not *all* innovation is contrary to Islam. If this was the case, then the Prophet ﷺ would not have promised a reward for those who initiate a good practice.

- Ibn Māja reports in his *Sunan* that the Prophet ﷺ said:

‘...and whoever initiates a *Bid'a* that Allāh and His Messenger are not pleased with, then upon him is the sin and the sin of whosoever acts upon it [thereafter]...’⁷

In clear terms, the Prophet ﷺ identifies the abhorred *Bid'a* as the one which displeases Allāh and His messenger.

- The Qur'ān too implicitly suggests that not all innovated practices are wrong. Allāh states:

‘...and We sent Jesus, son of Maryam and gave him the *Injīl*. And we ordained in the hearts of those who followed him, compassion and mercy. But the priesthood they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe this for them, but they sought only to please Allāh. But they did not observe it with the right observance.’ (57:27).

In this verse, the believers in the time of Jesus are commended as they were the people of ‘mercy and kindness’. In addition to their ordained worship, they innovated the practice of Priesthood (رهبانية). This involved refraining from certain permitted acts (like marriage) and gearing their entire energy towards worshipping their Lord.

⁵ *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Salah. Hadīth no, 2499.

⁶ *Sahih Muslim*. Book of Knowledge. Hadīth no. 4830.

⁷ *Sunan Ibn Maja*. Introduction. ‘Whoever revives a Sunna that has perished...’ Hadīth no. 206.

Allāh or Jesus did not formally order priesthood. Despite, this, Allāh affirmed this innovation and accepted it. Those who came after these believers were lamented, because they added *Shirk* to their worship and distorted the original message of Jesus. Al-Harawī writes:

‘It is deduced from this verse that whoever innovates a practice which does not contravene the Sharīah, then this is not necessarily a misguided innovation. Rather, the agent is rewarded accordingly.’⁸

- The scholars too have agreed that there are different types of *Bid’a*.

Imam Shāfi’ī declares:

‘*Bid’a* is of two types; *Bid’a Mahmūda* (praiseworthy innovation) and *Bid’a Mazmūma* (abhorred innovation). That which complies with the Sunna is praiseworthy and that which opposes the Sunna is abhorred.’⁹

Imam Qurtubī writes:

‘Every *Bid’a* that originates from humans either has an origin in Islamic Sharīah or not. If it does have an origin, then it falls under the category of what Allāh has affirmed and what the Prophet encouraged. If the *Bid’a* contravenes what Allāh and His Prophet have ordered, then it is disliked and rejected.’¹⁰

On the Hadīth ‘and every *Bid’a* is misguidance’, Imam Qurtubī explains:

‘[With this saying] the Prophet ﷺ intended such matters which do not comply with the Qur’ān and Sunnah, or the actions of the Companions [and not all types of innovations unequivocally]. This is clear in his other saying ‘Whoever initiates a good practice in Islam then he will attain the reward for it and the reward of whoever acts upon it thereafter, without any shortcomings. And whoever initiates an evil practice, then he will carry the burden as well as the burden of whoever acts upon it thereafter, without any shortcomings.’ This is an indication that innovated practices can be disliked or can be praiseworthy.’¹¹

Al-Harawī writes:

‘This Hadīth ‘and every *Bid’a* is misguidance’ is categorised [in Usūl Fiqh terminology] as *al-Ām al-Makhsūs*. In order words, the order is universal but specific to innovations that oppose the Sharīah. If this Hadīth is not interpreted as such, then the Hadīth ‘Whoever initiates a good practice in Islam...’ will not make sense.’¹²

⁸ p. 418. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami’; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

⁹ p. 11. *al-Islam Din al-Wastiyya wa al-I’tidal*. Glossary for National Curriculum for Religious Teaching, Syria.

¹⁰ *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*. p. 87. Vol. I, part II. Dar al-Kutub a-Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² p 420. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami’; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

10.4 Other Categorisations of *Bid'a*.

Imam al-Nawawī cites Sheikh Abū Muhammad 'Abd al-Azīz ibn 'Abd al-Salām, who categorised *Bid'a* into the following types;

i. Compulsory. This includes:

- The obligation to teach the sciences of the Arabic language.
- Studying secular sciences such as medicine and engineering.

ii. Forbidden. For instance:

- Altering the way the Qur'ān is read.
- The Muslims who totally distort the name of Allāh in their Zikr sessions.¹³
- The beliefs of misguided Muslims such as the Qadariyyas, the Jabariyyas, Qadianis and so on.¹⁴

iii. Recommended. This includes:

- The building of Mihrābs. The Mihrāb was first added to the Prophet's mosque at the end of the first century, in the time of Umar ibn Abd al-Azīz.¹⁵
- The building of schools and universities.
- The building of places for the Azan to be read.¹⁶
- The dotting of the Qur'ān.¹⁷
- Celebrating the *Mawlid*. Al-Harawī writes that whoever thinks that the *Mawlid* is a misguided innovation is simply ignorant.¹⁸
- Writing *صلى الله عليه وسلم* after the Prophet's name is *Bid'a* as he himself did not do this. When he wrote a letter to Hirqal and Kisra, he did not add these words.¹⁹

iv. Disliked. This includes:

- The excessive decoration of mosques.
- According to Sheikh Ramadhān Butī, a leading scholar of Syria, a disliked *Bid'a* of recent times is the blaring of the name of the deceased over a microphone and asking people to pray for the deceased from the front car of a slow procession towards the mosque or the cemetery.²⁰

v. Permissible.

This concerns innovations that are morally neutral and are thus permitted, like putting different types of food on the table.²¹

¹³ p. 416. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. 'Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

¹⁴ p. 12. *al-Islam Din al-Wastiyya wa al-I'tidal*. Glossary for National Curriculum for Religious Teaching, Syria.

¹⁵ p. 417. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. 'Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

¹⁶ p. 417. Ibid.

¹⁷ p. 417. Ibid.

¹⁸ p. 417. Ibid.

¹⁹ p. 419 Ibid.

²⁰ p. 73. Haddad, G.F. (2005) *Sunna Notes- Studies in Hadīth & Doctrine (Volume II; The Excellent Innovation in the Qur'ān and Hadīth*. Aqsa Publications: UK.

²¹ p. 423. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. 'Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

10.5 Examples of innovations from the Companions.

- Abū Bakr (may Allāh be pleased with him) was the first to compile the Qur’ān in one document. This was not done in the time of the Prophet ﷺ.²²
- Umar (may Allāh be pleased with him) famously began the practice of congregational Tarāwīh prayer. He commented: ‘What a good innovation this is!’ (نعمت البدعة هذه).²³
- Umar (may Allāh be pleased with him) added a few words to the original *Talbiyya* of the Prophet ﷺ. He would recite:

لبيك اللهم و سعديك الخير في يدك و العمل و الرغباء اليك

No Companion objected to this addition because it complied and complemented the original words of the Prophet ﷺ.²⁴

- Umar (may Allāh be pleased with him) moved the place of Maqām Ibrāhīm. In the time of the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr, it was attached to the Ka’ba. Ibn Hajar adds that none of the Companions opposed this action of Umar.²⁵
- Uthmān (may Allāh be pleased with him) added a second Azān for Friday prayers though this was not done in the time of the Prophet ﷺ. This practice is still in place today.²⁶
- Khubaib ibn Addī initiated the practice of performing two Rak’ats Nafl before execution, as reported by al-Bukhārī in his *Sahīh*.²⁷
- Bilāl (may Allāh be pleased with him) would perform two Rak’ats Nafl after every Wudhu. The Prophet ﷺ told him this was the reason why he heard his footsteps in Paradise.²⁸

²² p. 87. Haddad, G.F. (2005) *Sunna Notes- Studies in Hadīth & Doctrine* (Volume II; The Excellent Innovation in the Qur’ān and Hadīth. Aqsa Publications: UK.

²³ p.92. Haddad, G.F. (2005) *Sunna Notes- Studies in Hadīth & Doctrine* (Volume II; The Excellent Innovation in the Qur’ān and Hadīth. Aqsa Publications: UK.

²⁴ p 419. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami’; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

²⁵ p. 88. Haddad, G.F. (2005) *Sunna Notes- Studies in Hadīth & Doctrine* (Volume II; The Excellent Innovation in the Qur’ān and Hadīth. Aqsa Publications: UK.

²⁶ p 421. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Dar al-Masami’; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

²⁷ *Sahīh al-Bukhari*. Hadīth no. 3777. Book of expeditions, Chapter, the Ghazwa of Raji’.

²⁸ The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said to Bilal at Fajr Prayer: ‘Bilal! Tell me about the deed for which you are most hopeful for reward in Islam, for, truly, I heard the sound of your sandals in Paradise.’ He replied: ‘I did not do anything for which I am more hopeful of reward except the fact I never perform Wudhu in the day or night without praying what I must pray after such ablution.’ The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said: ‘With these two Rak’as [you entered Paradise].’ (*Sahīh al-Bukhari*, Hadīth no. 1081) See p. 73. Haddad, G.F. (2005) *Sunna Notes- Studies in Hadīth & Doctrine* (Volume II; The Excellent Innovation in the Qur’ān and Hadīth. Aqsa Publications: UK.

10.6 ‘All innovations are wrong’ – the opinion of the Wahhabis.

The classical and majority view in *Bid'a* contrasts with some Muslims who hold the view that all new practices in Islam are wrong. The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Legal Opinions (in Saudi Arabia) declared that:

‘All innovations are deviations [from Islam], and there is no such thing as a good innovation.’²⁹

Such an opinion does not explain why Umar - when he innovated the practice of performing Salāh al-Tarāwīh collectively in the month of Ramadhan – called the act as ‘good innovation’. He called it an ‘innovation’ because there was no example of regular, congregational Salāh al-Tarāwīh in the time of the Prophet ﷺ. He called it ‘good’ because this act fell within the laws of Sharīah.

10.7 The refutation of the Wahhabis.

10.7.1 Commemorating Laila al-Isrā and Laila Nisf Sha'bān is *Bid'a*

• The Permanent Committee (3:59-61) declared:

‘It is not permitted to celebrate any events other than the formal religious occasions that the law singles out [for celebration], namely the two Feasts (Eid al-Fitr & Eid al-Adha). However, Mother’s day, national days, birthdays, or times connected to other religious events, such as the Night Journey of the Prophet ﷺ [and the middle night of Sha’ban] or those dedicated to the opening of the mosque, should not be celebrated. For these kinds of celebrations are reprehensible innovations that are new to Islam and therefore invalid.’³⁰

Answer.

It is *Mustahab* for Muslims to gather in the house of Allāh for the sake of His remembrance, propagating Islam and highlighting the flawless Sunna of the Prophet ﷺ. Abū Mūsā al-Asharī (may Allāh be pleased with him) reports that the Prophet ﷺ said:

‘Allāh Almighty descends on His creation on the middle night of Sha’bān and forgives His creation, except for the polytheist and the one who shows animosity.’³¹

Āisha (may Allāh be pleased with her) reports that the Prophet ﷺ spend the middle night of Sha’bān in extensive prayer to the extent she thought he had died.³²

Regarding the night of mid-Sha'bān, Sheikh Ibn Taymiyya wrote :

‘[Some] said there is no difference between this night and other nights of the year. However, the opinion of many of the people of learning and that of the majority of our [Hanbalī] colleagues...is that it is a night of superior merit, and

²⁹ Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain. p. 65.

³⁰ p. 71. Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

³¹ *Musnad Ahmad*. Hadīth no. 6353.

³² Reported by al-Baihaqi and Tabarani. Cited in *al-Islam Din al-Wastiyya wa al-I'tidal*. Glossary for National Curriculum for Religious Teaching, Syria.

this is what is indicated by the words of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, in view of the many Ahādīth transmitted about it and in light of...the words and deeds transmitted from the early generations. Some of its merits have been narrated in the books of Hadīth...³³

10.7.2 Reading Salam upon the Prophet ﷺ before Azan is Bid'a.

Answer.

Urwa ibn Zubair (may Allāh be pleased with him) reports that a woman from Banū al-Najjār said:

'My house was the tallest house in relation to the mosque, and Bilāl would perform Fajr Azān upon it. He would come there at dawn time, sit and wait for Fajr time. When the time came for Azān, he would say: 'O Allāh! I praise you and seek your assistance on that Quraish establish Your religion.' She said: 'then he would perform the Azān. I swear by Allāh! I do not know of a single night when he did not read these words.'³⁴

What this Hadīth explicitly shows is that performing a Du'a before the Azān is the Sunna of the Muezzin of the Beloved Prophet, Bilāl (may Allāh be pleased with him). Therefore, sending Salām upon the Prophet ﷺ, which too is a Du'a, cannot be termed as a disliked innovation.

10.7.3 Salāh al-Tasbih is Bid'a.

- The same scholars also reject Salāh al-Tasbīh:

'The *Tasābīh* prayers are a reprehensible innovation. The Hadīth which they are based upon is not reliable, hence these prayers should be rejected.'³⁵

Answer.

Even if the Hadīth about Salāh al-Tasbīh is weak, then according to all the scholars, it is permissible to act upon a weak Hadīth in the area of encouraging virtuous acts (*Fazā'il al-A'māl*). But the scholars have found sufficient evidence to warrant its approval. Dr. Ahmad 'Id writes that the validity of Salāh al-Tasbīh can be proven from the narrations of Abū Dāūd, Ibn Māja, Ibn Khuzaima and al-Tabarānī. Imam Nawawī believes there is sufficient evidence to deem these prayers as recommended.³⁶ Therefore, referring to these prayers as innovation is incorrect.

10.7.4 The Du'a after the obligatory Salāhs is Bid'a.

Answer.

In the same way Prophet did read Tarāwīh but not collectively, the prophet did perform Dua after Salāh but not collectively. Imam Muslim³⁷ reports from Thawbān that:

³³ p. 208. Haddad, G.F. (2005) Sunna Notes- Studies in Hadīth & Doctrine (Volume II; The Excellent Innovation in the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Aqsa Publications: UK.

³⁴ *Sunan Abu Daud*. Book of Salāh. Chapter, Azan on a Minaret. Hadīth no. 435.

³⁵ p. 83. Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

³⁶ p. 83. Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

³⁷ *Sahih Muslim*. Book of Mosques. Hadīth no. 931.

‘When the Prophet ﷺ used to finish the Salāh, he would say *Istaghfirullāh* three times and say:

اللهم انت السلام و منك السلام تباركت ذا الجلال و الاكرام

Hence, the question is not whether the Du’a after Salāh is forbidden or not as this is proven without doubt. As the example of Umar shows with Tarāwīh prayers, there is no harm in performing a religious duty collectively when it is proven the Prophet did it individually. Moreover, doing it collectively will ensure that Muslims do not miss this perfect time to supplicate to Allāh. The Prophet ﷺ was asked about which Du’a is most listened to? He replied, ‘In the last part of the night and after the obligatory prayers.’³⁸

10.7.5 Reading Salam upon the Prophet ﷺ loudly after the Azan is *Bid’a*.³⁹

Answer.

Countless Ahādīth stress the importance of the Du’a and Salām upon the Prophet ﷺ after the Azan. The only difference is whether it should be read loudly or quietly. Most scholars do not oppose it being read loudly because it can remind those Muslims who forget to recite it.⁴⁰

10.7.6 Shaking hands after Salāh is *Bid’a*.

• Sheikh Ibn Bāz writes in *Fatāwa Islāmiyya*:

‘[The practice of] shaking hands [with the person praying alongside you] after finishing Prayer (Salāh) is not Islamic in origin; it is, therefore a reprehensible innovation.’⁴¹

Answer.

The origin of shaking hands is Sunna. The fact that people have not always been observing this Sunna does not mean that it is no longer a recommended practice.

10.7.7 Collective Zikr is *Bid’a*.

Answer.

Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

‘And (O Muhammad) keep yourself patient with those who call to their Lord morning and afternoon, seeking His pleasure...’ (18: 28)

‘O believers! Remember Allāh excessively. And glorify His praises morning and afternoon.’ (33: 41-2).

³⁸ *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*. Hadīth no. 3421.

³⁹ p. 101. Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

⁴⁰ p. 23. *al-Islam Din al-Wastiyya wa al-I’tidal*. Glossary for National Curriculum for Religious Teaching, Syria. Sheikh Jibril Haddad writes that the practice of performing Salam upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) after Azan was introduced by Salāh al-Din Ayyubi in Egypt and Sham (Syrian, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan). Haddad, G.F. (2005) *Sunna Notes- Studies in Hadīth & Doctrine (Volume II; The Excellent Innovation in the Qur’ān and Hadīth)*. Aqsa Publications: UK.

⁴¹ p. 79. Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

In both verses, Allāh has used the plural form. In other words, *everyone* must remember Allāh.

Abū Huraira reports that the Prophet ﷺ said:

‘Verily for Allāh are appointed angels who circulate the streets seeking the people of Zikr. When they find a community remembering Allāh...they spread their wings to the earthly sky. Their Lord ask, though He knows better: ‘What are My servants saying?’ They reply: ‘they are doing Your *Tasbīh*, Your *Takbīr*, Your *Hamd* and Your *Majd*...’⁴²

This Hadīth is clear indication that collective Zikr is reported to Allāh and therefore not an act which contravenes Sharīah.

In the famous Hadīth Qudsī, Allāh says:

‘And if My servant remembers Me in a gathering, I will remember him in a gathering much better than his.’⁴³

10.7.8 Saying the intention verbally before commencing Salāh is *Bid’a*.⁴⁴

Answer.

The Shāfi’ī scholars state that there is no harm in speaking one’s intention aloud. In fact it is encouraged when (i) the person feels that the verbal uttering will help the heart (ii) the person feels he is vulnerable to the whispers (*Waswasa*) of the devil.⁴⁵

10.7.9 Placing flowers on graves is *Bid’a* and an imitation of the infidels.⁴⁶

Answer.

Imam al-Bukhārī and Muslim report from Ibn Abbās (may Allāh be pleased with him) that:

‘The Prophet ﷺ once passed by two graves and said: ‘both are being punished over trivial matters. As for one of them, he never took care when urinating. As for the other, he used to tell-tale.’ The Prophet then asked for a wet plant which he snapped in half. He placed them on grave and said: ‘perhaps their punishment will be lightened until the plant withers.’⁴⁷

The branches of plants glorify Allāh as long as they are not dry. They bring Allāh’s mercy to the deceased in the grave because, as with all living things, they praise Allāh. As for imitating infidels, as the Hadīth shows, this is also the Sunna of the Prophet ﷺ. One can only be punished for imitating infidels if we set out intentionally to do so.

⁴² *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Du’as. Chapter, the Superiority of the remembrance of Allāh. Hadīth no. 5929.

⁴³ *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Tawhid. Hadīth no. 6856.

⁴⁴ p. 84. Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

⁴⁵ p. 84-5. *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

⁴⁶ p. 124. Cited in *The Response (Fix Your Deen series)*. Translated by Dr. Richard Gauvain.

⁴⁷ *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Wudu, Chapter, what has been mentioned about urinating. Hadīth no. 211.

10.8 Conclusion.

In short, the worships ordained by the Prophet ﷺ are categorised into two types. The first are those worships which have been prescribed attached to a specific place, time, number and method. Such a type has to be performed exactly like the Prophet ﷺ performed it without addition or shortcomings. If someone does, then this falls under the Prophet's command that 'every *Bid'a* is misguidance.' Examples of such types of worship are the number of Rak'ats in the prescribed Salāhs, the fasting in Ramadhān, the rituals of Hajj and the amount and recipients of Zakāh.

The second type are those worships which form general guidance to the Muslims and are not specific to a particular time, place, number or method. Muslims are free to perform these types of worship with more freedom. Examples are like Nafl prayers, Zikr, the recitation of the Qur'ān, Du'a and Salām upon the Prophet ﷺ.⁴⁸

It seems that the Wahhābis have failed to acknowledge this important difference and simply use the criteria that if the Prophet did not do it in that exact manner, it is forbidden, wrong and reprehensible. This position defies common sense. The jurists are clear in stating that in Islamic Sharīah, everything is permissible until proven otherwise (الأصل في الأشياء الإباحة).⁴⁹ We are allowed to perform Du'a whenever we went, unless Sharīah has stated otherwise, like when going to the toilet. We are free to perform optional prayers freely, unless Sharīah has guided us otherwise, like at the time of Zawāl. This is why the Prophet ﷺ did not forbid Bilal from the Nafals he performed after every ablution.

⁴⁸ p. 11-12. *al-Islam Din al-Wastiyya wa al-I'tidal*. Glossary for National Curriculum for Religious Teaching, Syria.

⁴⁹ This is the principle which the majority of the Usul Fiqh scholars adhere to. Support for this maxim is found in the Qur'an. Allah states that 'He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you.' (6: 119). In other words, everything is permissible and if it is not, then the Qur'an and Sunna have clearly defined it as forbidden. For more discussion on this, please refer to pp. 254-267, *Ma'arif al-Ahkam*. Mufti Muhammad Khan Qadiri. Alami Da'wat Islamiyya Publications, Lahore.