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REJECTION OF INNOVATION

This is the fifth hadith in our monthly series by our student Dr Neelofer Sohail on the 40 Hadith of Imam Nawawi. These short reflections are written under the guidance of our instructor Dr Muhammad Al-Rahawan. Dr Neelofer is in her second year at Mishkah, and is geriatric physician, a wife and a mother of 3 beautiful children.



Imam An-Nawawi Hadith 5

Cultural practices have permeated Islam to such an extent that sometimes it is difficult to know what is from the Prophet (saw) and the salaf rather than a cultural innovation or bidaah. So what is bidaah? Linguistically, bidaah means to bring in something unprecedented. Technically, it implies a new methodology or practice. Ibn Rajab, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "A bidaah is any form of worship which has no basis in the Shariah which would warrant its legislation."

This hadith is a fundamental basis of our deen in guiding our outward actions. It complements the first hadith which talks about the inner aspects of an action which is intention, and adds the dimension of outward actions. The outward actions need to conform to the deen and the shariah, otherwise they will be rejected. In Surah Al Maidah: 3, Allah states "This day I have perfected and completed your religion for

you, completed my favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." In this verse, Allah is telling us directly He has given us everything we need to follow the religion completely and perfectly through the Quran and Prophet (saw). Thus, by innovating we are basically criticizing Allah and the Prophet (saw) of neglecting to show us the correct way.

Growing up in the Middle East with an Asian background, I was taught many rites of worship which I now know have no evidence in the shariah. The intention of the people performing these rites is that they are doing "extra deeds" to get closer to Allah. So how could that be wrong or an innovation? Well, this is one of the biggest problems facing some Muslims today - the thought process that taking acts of worship to extremes will increase their reward somehow. But what they do not realize is that if these acts are not originally part of the Shariah or they have omissions, they may be rejected.

Any act must be in accordance with the Shariah with respect to cause, type, amount, manner, time and place. On the other hand, an example of an act that may be considered an innovation is the sufi chanting and dancing to get in a trance to get closer to Allah. Other examples include any act of worship based on fabricated hadith like the prayer of the month of Rajab called Raghaa'ib, calling adhaan other than for the five prayers, continuous silence, the way mawlid is celebrated in some places (controversial), and visiting and praying at graves of saints to name a few.

Bidaah can take us down the path of disbelief, which is a trick of shaytan since it does not appear wrong to the person doing it. Sometimes these innovations are so deeply embedded that any effort to counteract and educate leads to a response filled with hatred and rejection. The reason for committing bidaah are manifold and include ignorance of the religion of Islam, dependence on weak and fabricated hadith, blind imitation of the masses, cultural practices, and following one's whims.

The way we can avoid bidaah is to adhere to the Quran and sunnah, spreading correct knowledge, educating ourselves between the fabricated and sahih hadith, receiving knowledge from the correct sources and to some degree using our reasoning powers to think about what we are doing and why? Anas Ibn Maalik (ra) reported that the Prophet (saw) said, "Allah does not accept the repentance of an innovator until he abandons his innovation." (At-Tabraani and Bayhaqi).

When I learned about it and thought it through, it left me wondering about how many Muslims do not even perform the obligatory deeds constantly and correctly and yet have the time to innovate. If we want to get close to Allah then the best way is to perform the obligatory deeds that He has prescribed for us. If we want to achieve ihsan in our ibadat and increase in our worship with extra acts, then we have a treasure trove of recommended ibadat that can be performed such as the duha prayer, Tahajjud, fasting the three "white days" in the middle of the month, reading the Quran and forming a connection with it, and so much more.

May Allah make us among those who follow His guidance and that of the Prophet (saw), without additions or omissions.

DR SALAH AL-SAWY: TAFSIR OF SURAH AN NISAA AND FATAWA

Allah (swt) tells us in **Surah An-Nisaa ayat 135** : "*O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted.*"

This is ayat that our dear **Dr Salah Al-Sawy** recently explained in his weekly tafsir series. As usual he also had his **weekly fatawa session** with questions from the community. Watch both videos below and visit our [Facebook page](#) to see other lectures. In addition to the tafsir of Surah Nisaa, Dr Salah has also been conducting a short tafsir on Surah Az-Zumar every week, as well as khatiras after fajr almost daily.



الدكتور صلاح الصاوي - بث مباشر
Weekly Fatawa - Feb 25, 2020



الدكتور صلاح الصاوي - بث مباشر
Surah An-Nisaa 135

BEGIN YOUR PLANTING IN RAJAB

The month of Rajab has arrived and we are now less than two months away from the holy month of Ramadan. Our righteous predecessors considered Rajab the month of planting - planting the seeds whose fruits we will reap in the month of Ramadan with Allah's permission. In other words, it is a month to begin preparing ourselves for the blessed days ahead.

Rajab itself is considered one of the four sacred months in the Islamic calendar. The Prophet (saw) said "The year is twelve months, of which four are sacred: three consecutive months, Dhu'l-Qa'dah, Dhu'l-Hijjah and Muharram, and Rajab Mudar which comes between Jumaada and Shabaan." (Reported in Bukhari and Muslim). Linguistically, in Arabic, the word Rajab could mean respected, tremendous or great.



Although there are no authentic narrations pointing to specific acts of worship during month, indeed when we enter Rajab, it is a great reminder of that our beloved guest Ramadan is truly on the way.

If we have not already started preparing our hearts and minds, now is the time to begin. After all, good habits take time to establish - when we begin early, we can build consistency and greatly increase our ability to succeed. In these coming months, let us set concrete goals, change our mindset, and adopt beneficial habits, consciously investing our time and energy into various acts of worship.

By the time Ramadan arrives, inshaAllah, we will be in a better state of faith that will enable us to reap even more of its benefits because we have prepared ourselves. May Allah accept from us.

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