



Q 5: In Tanzania we prepare a banquet to be held in a special location where we gather and say, "This banquet is offered by the founder of Qadiriyyah Tariqah (Sufi order)." Is this act regarded as Bid`ah (rejected innovation in religion) or does it belong to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him)? We do not visit the Masjids (mosques) unless we prepare for this visit by offering foods. Moreover, we celebrate Mawlid (the Prophet's birth day). Is there any harm doing these things?

A: During the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet), and Salaf (Righteous Predecessors) banquets were not prepared for honoring any of the late righteous men. None of the Sahabah or Salaf celebrated Mawlid either during the lifetime of the Prophet or after his death. They never prepared food to commemorate the Prophets' death. Celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, or that of righteous people, caliphs, outstanding personalities, shaykh `Abdul-Qadir or others, by reciting eulogies or even worse claiming that the soul of the Prophet attends the celebration, are all considered reprehensible Bid`ahs.

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Showing respect to the Prophet (peace be upon him) can be manifested by following his way; Allah (may He be Exalted) says, [﴿ Say \(O Muhammad peace be upon him to mankind\): "If you \(really\) love Allâh then follow me \(i.e. accept Islâmic Monotheism, follow the Qur'ân and the Sunnah\), Allâh will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾](#) Also, love for the righteous people can be shown through following their path while conforming to the Sunnah and the Prophet's (peace be upon him) tradition.

Therefore, Muslims should adhere to the Sunnah of the Prophet and the path of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and be careful about excessive veneration of the pious people and overpraising them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, [﴿ Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mary, for I am only a slave. So, call me Allah's Slave and Messenger.﴾](#) (Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih) The Prophet further said, [﴿ Do not exceed the limits in your religion for those who preceded you have been destroyed due to their excessiveness.﴾](#)

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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