



Not all Bid`ahs (rejected innovation in religion) are equal in evil

First question from Fatwa No. (3227):

Q1: What is the ruling on a person who persists in committing Bid`ahs (rejected innovation in religion) like reciting Qur'an over the dead before and after burial, slaughtering a sheep to prepare food for the attendees of the funeral, reciting the supplication of Al-Qadiriyyah order "O Allah, for the sake of Ahmad's honor, help us reach our goal easily!", burning incense in their gatherings, reciting Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]") while walking in the funeral procession and Talqin (encouraging someone dying to say: "La ilaha illa Allah") at the grave?

Some scholars say that people who commit these Bid`ahs are disbelievers as they do not abide by the Prophet's warning against Bid`ahs. Other scholars view that those people are sinners, but are not taken out of Islam.

A: Bid`ahs are not all equal in evil. Some Bid`ahs represent sins that are lesser than Kufr (disbelief). For example reciting the Qur'an over the dead before or after

their burial and slaughtering a sheep to prepare food for the attendees of the funeral are Bid`ahs. Reciting Tahlil while walking in the funeral procession and Talqin of the dead person at the grave are Bid`ahs. Sitting in circles and making collective remembrance of Allah and burning incense are Bid`ahs. All these deeds are Bid`ahs initiated by people. It is not authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he did or said or even accepted these deeds. Also, it is not authentically reported that the Sahabah (Companions) (may Allah be pleased with them) or the Salaf (Righteous Predecessors) (may Allah be merciful to them) have done such Bid`ahs. These Bid`ahs are sins and persistence in committing them turns them into major sins but they do not reach the degree of Kufr (disbelief). Committing these Bid`ahs will be considered as Kufr if the person persists in committing them to make people act upon them instead of the Shari`ah, to lead people astray, or to drive them away from Allah's Straight Path. Such a person who intentionally innovates in religion what Allah has not made lawful is a Kafir (a disbeliever) because he deems it lawful to violate Allah's Shari`ah by invoking the dead and seeking their help instead of Allah. [So whoever seeks help from dead people like `Abdul-Qadir Al-Jilany, Ahmad Al-Tijany and others to bring benefit, avert harm, or alleviate suffering or so, is committing Shirk \(associating others in worship with Allah\) and Kufr \(disbelief\). It is like the Shirk and Kufr practiced by the disbelievers of the early Jahiliyyah \(pre-Islamic time of ignorance\). The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to call them to Tawhid \(belief in the Oneness of Allah\) and fought against those who resisted it and persisted in Shirk. After describing Himself with the attributes of Lordship, Allah \(may He be Exalted\) says about this, ﴿ Such is Allāh, your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those, whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, own not even a Qitmīr \(the thin membrane over the date-stone\). ﴾ If you invoke \(or call upon\) them, they hear not your call; and if \(in case\) they were to hear, they could not grant it \(your request\) to you. And on the Day of Resurrection, they will disown your worshipping them. And none can inform you \(O Muhammad peace be upon him\) like Him Who is the Well-Acquainted \(with everything\). ﴾](#)

Some Bid`ahs may lead to Shirk like when some Sufis supplicate to Allah saying, "Make it easy for us to reach our goal for the sake of Ahmad's honor," or circumambulation around the shrines of pious people as a means of drawing closer to Allah. A person who goes around the shrine of a Waliy (pious person) commits an act of Al-Shirk Al-Akbar (major form of associating others in worship with Allah). The same applies to traveling to visit the graves of pious people.

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

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