



The third question in Fatwa no. (2213):

Q3: Some of the followers of Bid'ahs (innovations in religion), from among those who call upon the dead, wondered, saying, "How can you claim that the dead avail nothing, although Musa (Moses, peace be upon him) availed us and he was the reason behind reducing the daily obligatory prayers from fifty to five." Others also said, "How can you say that every innovation is a going astray! Then what do you say about those who added diacritical marks and dots to the Qur'an, and it all happened after the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)?" How can we answer them?

A3: First: The basis is that the dead do not hear the call of people who call upon them and they cannot answer these calls or talk to the living, even if they were prophets.

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Their deeds have come to an end by their death, for the Saying of Allah: ﴿ And those, whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, own not even a Qitmir (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 like Him Who is the Well-Acquainted (with everything). ﴾ (Surah Fatir, 35: 13-14) and His Saying (which means): ﴿ but you cannot make hear those in the graves. ﴾ (Surah Fatir, 35: 22) and His Saying (which means): ﴿ And who is more astray than one who calls on (invokes), besides Allah, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection, and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them? ﴾ ﴿ And when mankind are gathered (on the Day of Resurrection), they (false deities) will become their enemies and will deny their worshipping. ﴾ (Surah Al-Ahqaf, 46: 5-6) Furthermore, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴿ "When a person dies, all his deeds come to an end except for three: ongoing charity, or beneficial knowledge, or a righteous son who supplicates for him." ﴾ Reported by Muslim in his Sahih (Book of Authentic Hadith). Excluded from this basis is only what is proved otherwise by authentic evidence, as the disbelievers' hearing the words which the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) addressed to them, while their dead bodies were lying in the old well after the Battle of Badr. Also, the fact that the

Prophet (peace be upon him) led all the Prophets (peace be upon them) in prayer on the Night of Isra' (Night Journey) and his talking to the Prophets (peace be upon them) in the heavens when he was taken up into them (Mi'raj). Among these is also the advice that Musa (peace be upon him) gave our Prophet (peace be upon him), that he should ask Allah to lighten the duty of the prayers He had enjoined upon him and his Ummah (nation). Thus, our Prophet (peace be upon him) returned and asked his Lord until they became five obligatory prayers in every day and night.

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All these are miraculous supernatural events, are restricted only to those mentioned and none of them fall under the general basis so nothing should be measured against them; remaining under the general base is stronger than being ruled out of it by measurement or analogy with supernatural events, while bearing in mind that measurement by analogy with exceptions from basic principles is prohibited, especially if the reason is unknown, as is the case in this issue; for it is among the unseen matters that can only be known by scriptural evidence provided by Shari'ah (Islamic Law), but as far as we know no scriptural evidence is authentically stated regarding this; therefore, it is obligatory to judge it according to the basic principle.

Second: The Ummah is commanded to keep the Qur'an written and memorized; it should be read in the same way taught to them by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) spoke correct Arabic for the scarcity of non-Arabs living among them, and took great care to recite the Qur'an the way it was revealed. This also continued during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs; there was no fear of Lahn (Incorrect reading due to mispronunciation of letters or syntax) on their part and it was not hard for them to read the Qur'an from the Mus-haf (Arabic copy of the Qur'an) without dots or diacritical marks. But at the time of the Caliphate of 'Abdul-Malik Ibn Marwan, when non-Arab Muslims increased and mixed with the Arab Muslims, fear of their committing Lahn in recital arose. It was also hard for them to read from the Mus-haf without dots or diacritical marks. Therefore, 'Abdul-Malik Ibn Marwan ordered that dots and diacritical marks be put in the Mus-haf, which was done by Al-Hasan Al-Basry and Yahya bin Ya'mur, may Allah be merciful to them, two of the most God-fearing, knowledgeable and trustworthy Tabi'un (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet). This was done to preserve the Qur'an and protect it from any distortion and to make it easier to read the Qur'an, teach it, and learn it, as authentically established by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

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Thus, it becomes clear that although both dots and diacritical marks were not used in reading the Qur'an during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), putting them came under the general command of preserving the Glorious Qur'an, teaching it as well as learning it the same way taught by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) to his Ummah, so that the message may be conveyed, the Law spreads and continues until Allah inherits the earth and whatever in on it. Hence, this is not a Bid'ah (innovation in religion), because a Bid'ah is a newly-invented matter, without there being any evidence specific or general to it, or other than it. Some of those who discussed acts of Sunnah and Bid'ahs may call it an act serving a Shar'i (Islamically lawful) interest, but certainly not a Bid'ah; it can be called a Bid'ah (literally, an innovation) only in the linguistic sense, for having no precedence, but not in the Shar'i sense, for they fall under the general evidences that indicate the obligation of preserving the Qur'an, to completely master reading it, learning it and teaching it. It is something akin to what 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) called, when he united the people for offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) behind one Imam, "What a good innovation this is!" Thus, it is apparent that dots and diacritical marks are grouped under the general texts that indicate the obligation to preserve the Qur'an as it was revealed.

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

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