

Answer: The 'ulamā' provide several definitions of bid'ah. 'Allāmah Shāmī *rahimahullāh* and 'Allāmah Ibn Nujaym Mi

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Similarly, it is also a bid'ah to specify certain times and forms of worship from one's own side. A narration of *Muslim Sharīf* states:

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.الشيء المباح الذي يرفع من رتبته إلى ما هو عليه في الشرع من حيث الأهمية [3]

A bid'ah includes adhering to specific forms of worship in specific times which are not established in the Sharī'ah.

To take a desirable or permissible act and give it importance more than its rank to the extent of considering it essential is also a bid'ah. This could take the form of not practising on the concession of the Sharī'ah, rejecting the concession or considering it bad. 'Allāmah Shabbīr Ahmad 'Uthmānī

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(1305-1369 A.H.) explains the previously-quoted

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adīth as follows:

الشيء المباح الذي يرفع من رتبته إلى ما هو عليه في الشرع من حيث الأهمية [4]  
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Desirable acts become undesirable when they are elevated from their actual rank. It is desirable to commence with the right side in all acts of worship. However, when Ibn Mas'ūd radiyallāhu 'anhu feared that people would believe it to be obligatory, he said that it is undesirable.

*Ad-Durr al-Mukhtār* states:

.الشيء المباح (الذي يرفع من رتبته إلى ما هو عليه في الشرع من حيث الأهمية) [5]

Any permissible act which leads to it (i.e. believing it to be Sunnah or obligatory) is makrūh.

'Allāmah Shāmī *rahimahullāh* said:

..... :..... [6]

Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

..... [7]

Do not allow Shaytān to influence you in your salāh into thinking that you have to turn to your right only because I often saw Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam turning to his left.

*Mirqāt* states:

..... [8]

We learn from this that the one who persists in carrying out a desirable act by insisting on doing it and does not practise on the concession given has been deceived by Shaytān. What, then, can be said of the one who insists on carrying out a bid'ah or an evil!?

However, if a person does something which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* did not do, it is not correct to say that it is a bid'ah. For example, someone says that the present form of assemblies of dhikr and the work of da'wah were not done by Rasūlullāh

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*sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*  
and the

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. They are therefore bid'ah. This is not correct. When the Sharī'ah is silent about something, it is labelled mubā

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– permissible. It will be a bid'ah if it is done by according it the status of the Sharī'ah and Sunnah.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

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Hold on to what I order you to do and desist from what I prohibit you.

He did not say:

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Desist from what I remained silent.

The jurists and legislators laid down four sources for the establishment of injunctions: (1) Qur'ān, (2) Sunnah, (3) Ijmā', (4) Qiyās. The same four are laid down for prohibitions.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* abstaining from something is not laid down as a fifth proof. Moreover, the definition of Hadīth includes the statements of Rasūlullāh

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*sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

, his actions and his tacit approvals. His abstaining from something is not included in this definition.

A few examples of abstentions:

### (1) Eating a lizard according to Shāfi'īs:

*Bukhārī Sharīf:*

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Ibn 'Umar radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: I neither eat a lizard nor do I say that it is unlawful...

(2) Two rak'ats before maghrib

*Bukhārī Sharīf:*

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### (3) The construction of the Ka'bah

*Bukhārī Sharīf:*

...[12]

(4) The fasting of Hadrat Dāwūd *alayhis salām*:

*Bukhārī Sharīf:*

...[13]

The above are examples of abstentions – Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu alayhi wa sallam* did not do them. At the same time, they are not prohibitions. In fact, some of them are desirable.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu alayhi wa sallam* said:

...[14]

Whatever Allāh made lawful in His Book is lawful, and whatever He made unlawful is unlawful. Whatever He is silent about is pardoned.

We learn from this that when the Sharī'ah is silent about a thing it is pardoned. If it is given the

rank of the Sharī'ah, it is a bid'ah. Our 'ulamā' of Deoband prohibit us from the three day, ten day and forty day after-death customs because these are accorded the rank of the Sharī'ah. When it comes to the assemblies of dhikr and the special ways of dhikr, no one considers them to be the Sharī'ah and no one considers them to be the objectives. In fact, some Sufis found a particular programme to be beneficial for a seeker and adopted it for him. Others adopted a different programme. Someone prescribed loud dhikr, others prescribed silent dhikr, yet others prescribed dhikr with the forceful movement of the head, and others prescribed the 12-tasbīhs. These different programmes are similar to waging jihād which is an objective, but different ways are adopted. For example, the sword, guns, tanks, fighter jets, etc. – it is permissible to choose anyone [or all of them]. This is because this does not involve the Sharī'ah. They are means and avenues. Similar is the case with the syllabi in the madāris, the times when holidays are given and so on. They are not objectives even though they are not established from Rasūlullāh

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allallāhu ﷺ alayhi wa sallam

and the

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Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ﷺ alayhi wa sallam said:

... [115]

Whoever introduces in this religion of ours something which is not of it then it is rejected.

Introducing something in Dīn is prohibited. In short, it is a bid'ah to consider something which is not part of Dīn to be a part of Dīn. It is also a bid'ah to accord the level of Sharī'ah and Sunnah to something which was abstained from or left out. During the days of ad-hā, Hadrat Abū

Hurayrah

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yallāhu ﷺ anhu

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rat Ibn 'Umar  
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iyallāhu   anhu

used to go around in the markets and read the takbīr in a loud voice. However, because they did not accord it the level of the Sharī'ah, it is not considered to be a bid'ah. The following narration makes mention of this:

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There was a Sahābī who used to lead the people in salāh. It was his habit to read Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, Sūrah al-Ikhlā

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and then another sūrah in every rak'at. His followers complained about him to Rasūlullāh

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allallāhu   alayhi wa sallam

because this was an action which was not done by Rasūlullāh

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allallāhu   alayhi wa sallam

. He did not read Sūrah al-Ikhlā

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before a sūrah. He called for him and asked him the reason for doing this. He replied: “I love  
this sūrah.” Rasūlullāh

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allallāhu   alayhi wa sallam

said: “Your love for this sūrah will admit you into Paradise.” The

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adīth in this regard is as follows:

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وكان يقرأ سورة الكهف من المحبة وليس من السنة :فكان يقرأها بعد الصلاة من غير أن يقرأها من قبل الصلاة .[18]

This means that he used to read Sūrah al-Ikhlās out of love and not because he considered it to be Sunnah. As for reading a sūrah after it, he used to read it because that was the practice of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This Hādīth has opened a very large door of knowledge for us, viz. if we make a habit of an action which was not done by Rasūlullāh

while thinking it to be Sunnah, it is objectionable and a bid'ah. But if an action is done due to some wisdom, out of love or for some other reason, it is not a bid'ah. Read the above Hādīth a few times and understand the point which is made in it.

When Hadrat Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu ʿanhū* used to read the talbiyah of hajj, he used to add the following words to it:

...[19]

However, he never considered it to be Sunnah and did not ask others to do it. It is therefore not a bid'ah.

It was the practice of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* (194-256 A.H.) to take a bath and perform two rak'ats of optional *salāh* before recording a Hadīth. This practice is mentioned in *qaddamah Jāmi' al-Masānīd wa as-Sunan* Mu

...[20]

Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* (80-150 A.H.) used to perform the fajr salāh with the wudū' which he performed for 'ishā  
s  
alāh.

(Arabic text-pp. 250-251)

Even though 'Allāmah Kautharī *rahimahullāh* considers this incident to be far-fetched, there should be no objection to it because there were many such incidents during the era of the Tābi'īn. Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* writes in *Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*  
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...[21]

The transmission of this incident [about Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*] is certainly weak. However, senior erudite scholars such as Ibn Kathīr, Imām Nawawī, Imām Muzzī, Mullā 'Alī Qārī and various other jurists quoted it without any hesitance.

The practices mentioned above were not given the level of the Sharī'ah, but of love. They therefore do not fall under the category of bid'ah.

At this point, one objection could be made, viz. the jurists use Rasūlullāh's abstention from certain actions as proof that a particular action is a bid'ah. For example, they say that optional s  
s  
alāh should not be read before the 'id  
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alāh because Rasūlullāh

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allallāhu ʾalayhi wa sallam  
did not perform it.

*Hidāyah* states:

[illegible]

'Allāmah Ibn Nujaym *rahimahullāh* writes:

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Shaykh Abul Fadl 'Abdullāh ibn Muhammad ibn as-Siddīq al-Ghimārī provides an answer for this objection. The gist of it is that abstaining from doing an action is not proof of bid'ah. Yes, in acts of worship, remaining silent on occasions where one would normally explain things suggests a restriction. This is the principle which is applied. Rasūlullāh

*s*  
*allallāhu ʾalayhi wa sallam*  
explained the injunctions and etiquette of ṭīd verbally and practically, but did not do this with respect to optional

s  
alāh before the 'īd

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alāh. So this is proof of a restriction and to abstain from performing optional  
s  
alāh.

[24]

Another example is that the adhān ends with *Lā llāha llallāh*. The fact that he did not say, *Muhammad Rasūlullāh*

is proof that it should not be said. Or take the example of the 'a  
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Another answer to the objection is that when a person has a Sharī or natural desire towards doing something and still does not do it, then it is proof that it is makrūh, more so when there is no apparent obstacle or impediment from carrying it out. For example, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

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### Proof for ishrāq salāh:

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### Proof for chāsht salāh:

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.[27]

On the day of 'īd he did not perform it. It therefore proves that it is makrūh.

When *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* used to be read, it was always accompanied by *Muhammad Rasūlullāh*. The fact that it is not read at the end of the adhān is proof that it does not exist at the end of the adhān. The presence of adhān on jumu'ah, its absence on the day of 'īd, abstaining from eating a lizard despite having a natural like for meat is proof that it is makrūh.

When the author of *Hidāyah* said:

He did not perform it despite his deep attachment to salāh.

He was making reference to this reason. Had the author of *Hidāyah* considered abstention from an action to be proof of it being a bid'ah or makrūh, why would he have said that it is desirable to make a verbal intention before commencing  
s  
alāh:

He says in this regard despite a verbal intention not being established from Rasūlullāh *sallallāh u alayhi wa sallam*  
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. [28]

In other words, in the presence of an imposing reason and cause, abstaining from doing an

action is proof that it is makrūh.

Shaykh Ghimārī writes:

(Arabic-p. 254)

Allāh *ta'ālā* knows best.

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[1] .: 1349 : 1560 : .

[2] .: 1361 : .

[3] .: 129 : .

[4] .: 4598 : .

[5] .: 2120 : .

[6] .: 2120 : .



[18] .00000 0 4491 :000000 0000

[19] 00000 0 544 :000000 00 000000000 0 1209 :0000 0000 0 1169 :000000000 0 1375 :0000 0000  
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[21] .000000 00000000 00000000 000 0000 0 1370 :000000 0000 000000

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[23] .000000 0 2160 :0000000 000000

[24] *Husn at-Tafahhum wa ad-Dark li Mas'alah at-Tark*, p. 24. Bear in mind that we do not agree with some of the subject matter of this book.

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[26] .891 000 0000000 00 0000 00 0000 0 1108 :00000000 0000

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[28]. 196 : 196