

Salaamun Alaykum

Dear Brothers and Respected Sisters

Bid'ah and the Preservation of Tawhīd in Contemporary Muslim Practice

Abstract: *This paper examines the concept of harmful Bid'ah (religious innovation) and their implications for the preservation of Tawhīd within Islam. The discussion highlights how subtle and apparent forms of Shirk have infiltrated Muslim societies through practices such as excessive ritualisation, and cultural customs. The need for Muslims to distinguish between authentic 'ibādah (worship) grounded in the Qur'an and Sunnah, and Bidah that compromise faith. A contemporary example is the adoption of Halloween by some Muslims in Western societies, a practice rooted in pagan beliefs and contrary to the Talim of Islam. The paper also addresses the issue of unnecessary obstacles to Nikah, focusing on social and cultural barriers imposed by families and unrealistic expectations of spouses. It argues for the simplification of marriage in accordance with Qur'an guidance. Ultimately, the analysis underscores that the safeguarding of Tawhīd requires both individual vigilance and communal reform, rejecting harmful innovations and strengthening devotion to Allah through authentic practices.*

Keywords: *Tawhīd, Shirk, Bid'ah, 'Ibādah, Salaat, Dhikr, Islamic reform, Marriage in Islam, Cultural practices, Halloween and Shirk*

Bid'ah in Islam refers to innovation in religious matters, specifically adding new practices, beliefs, or rituals to the Deen that weren't present during the time of Muhammad (S) or his Ahl al-Bayt (as), with no basis in the Qur'an or Sunnah Talim. While linguistically meaning "Something New," in Shariah, it primarily concerns acts of Ibadah intended to draw closer to Allah, which are generally condemned as misguidance, though some scholars distinguish between Sayyi'ah and Hasanah, such as worldly advancements. Qur'an says:

"Surely, Allah will not forgive anyone who commits shirk (associating partners with Him). But He may forgive anything else for whomever He wills. Whoever commits shirk has committed a very great sin." (Qur'an 4:49)

While modern inventions bring benefits, they also spread bad habits. Muslims often copy others in wrongdoing, forgetting true faith. Some Muslims think these wrong things are small, but they can lead to very bad results. One of the worst sins is shirk. Even the smallest form of shirk is not accepted by Allah. Muslims must be very careful to avoid it, especially in today's fast-changing world.

Rasulullah(S) said:

"Shirk is more hidden than the footprints of an ant."

He advised Muslims to pray:

"O Allah, I seek refuge in You from knowingly committing shirk, and I ask forgiveness for doing so unknowingly."

Muslims must work to remove wrong practices and show the world that Islam is about worshipping Allah alone. All earlier religions lost their true form because people added Bid'ah (innovations) and did not follow the original Talim. Islam too has been affected by harmful Bid'ah, including Shirk. True religion is to follow the Qur'an, offer Salaat with sincerity, and Ibadah Allah alone. Even seemingly good practices can become harmful if they distract from real Ibadah. For example, doing Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) is good, but if it replaces Salaat, it becomes Bid'ah. True worship must always follow the Sunnah of Rasulullah (S).

One harmful custom that has spread is Halloween. Some Muslims, especially in the West, allow their children to take part in it without thinking. Halloween has pagan roots and is based on beliefs about dead spirits returning on October 31. People once gave offerings to protect themselves from spirits, wore masks to scare them, and lit bonfires. Later, Christianity adopted these customs, and now it has spread worldwide as "fun." But its origin is based on shirk. It teaches belief in witches, spirits, and superstitions. Even if people take it lightly, the concept is wrong. Muslim children should not dress up in strange costumes and beg for sweets from door to door. Such practices lower their dignity and promote superstition. Today, Halloween also causes mischief, with older children frightening people and creating trouble. Parents should guide their children to avoid it and instead strengthen their connection with Allah.

True 'ibādah is not about long rituals or endless reciting. Real 'ibādah comes from the Maḥabbah (love) of Allah. A true believer feels that nothing matters more than Allah, finds peace only with Him, and fears no one but Him. Such closeness to Allah is the essence of worship. May Allah protect us from shirk and Bid'ah. May He help us become true worshippers who love Him above all else. Āmīn. Many young women have dreams about their future husbands. But sometimes unnecessary obstacles prevent marriage. Some of these are:

1. Education is important, but it should not delay marriage unnecessarily. A woman can study and still be married if there is understanding between husband and wife.

2. Some fathers wrongly stop their daughters from marrying suitable men. They may reject proposals due to pride, money, or culture. This is a serious Zulm (oppression). Islam clearly says: *"Do not prevent them from marrying their husbands if they agree on reasonable terms."* (Qur'an 2:232)

If a father unfairly blocks marriage, relatives, society, or even the courts must help the woman.

3. Young men want wives like movie stars: very beautiful, wealthy, pious, and young, all at once. These unrealistic expectations come from media influence and cause disappointment. Men should be realistic and responsible.

4. High costs weddings, dowries, and unnecessary demands make marriage difficult. Families and society must work together to make marriage simple and affordable. Scholars and leaders should encourage this. In short, marriage should not be delayed for pride, money, or culture. Islam encourages early and simple marriage.

With Best Regards

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