

Innovations 3- Every innovation is misguidance even if the people hold it to be something good

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)¹ used to deliver this sermon amongst his Companions, and it is called the Sermon of Need [Khutbatul-Haajah]. Some of them [i.e., people] use it during the marriage contract ... and its place is in every sermon and every dars in which the teacher hopes to reach his desired goal in his lecture which is that the people present benefit from what they hear.

So the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to begin all of his khutbahs and lectures with this sermon which is known amongst the scholars as the Sermon of Need and he used to repeat these statements found in this khutbah so that it would take root in the minds of the Companions, and they, following on from that, transmitted it to those who came after them.

“As for what follows ... the best guidance is that of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم),” and in another narration, “the best guidance is that of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) the worst of affairs are the newly-invented matters, and every newly-invented matter is an innovation. And every innovation is misguidance. And all misguidance is in the Fire.” The scholars who were researchers say that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to repeat this khutbah on every [relevant] occasion so that the great principle that, “... every innovation is misguidance. And all misguidance is in the Fire,” would become firmly established in the minds of those listening to it.

From the many proofs which support the fact that righteous actions must be according to what Allaah’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was upon is the hadeeth agreed upon by the two Shaykhs, Bukhaaree and Muslim, the first is the one about the Khutbatul-Haajah in Saheeh Muslim. The other one has been reported by both Bukhaaree and Muslim from Sayyidah ‘Aaishah² (رضى الله عنها)³, she said, “Whoever introduces into this affair of ours something which is not from it, then it is rejected,” this hadeeth contains an explanation needed by many people who are unclear about innovations in worldly matters and those in the religion.

And we must be clear about this point so that the truth does not become mixed up with falsehood, and this is because Islaam came to complete acts of worship ... [it came] to pave a way for the Muslims to be happy in this life and the next by legislating these righteous acts which will bring them closer to Allaah in rank/proximity. It did not come to reform worldly things, which [is something] the people can reach through their own discretion, invention, creation, as you can now see the unbelievers have greatly surpassed the Muslims in inventing and innovating things connected to facilitating worldly affairs. These things are connected to the world and have no connection at all to legislatively censured innovation.

The second hadeeth clarifies the first for us where he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Whoever introduces into this affair of ours ...” i.e., whoever introduces into this religion of ours, “...something which is not from it,

¹ (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

² ‘Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers

³ (رضى الله عنها) (rad iyallaahu `anhaa) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with her

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then it is rejected,” *** thus it is not fitting that anyone finds it problematic as we have heard many, many times when encouraging all the Muslims to go back to the Sunnah of their Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in their worship and when we, following his example, (عليه الصلاة والسلام)⁴, warn them from every newly-invented thing in the religion, as you heard, “... **beware of newly-invented matters, for every newly-invented matter is an innovation. And every innovation is misguidance. And all misguidance is in the Fire ...**” this second hadeeth clarifies that innovations which are misguidance are those which are connected to worship and the religion, “**Whoever introduces into this affair of ours ...**” i.e., into this religion of ours, “...something which is not from it, then it is rejected.”

... maybe in the last sitting I touched on this aspect, that the Salaf as-Saalih are the ones who received the Qur’aan and hadeeth of the Prophet (عليه السلام)⁵ from his mouth, fresh and new, and then they received it from him (عليه السلام) implemented practically, so they are the ones who understood it correctly and so following on from that it is obligatory on us to understand the issues related to our religion from the Book of our Lord, the Sunnah of His Prophet and its implementation by the scholars of the Salaf.

Here, regarding his saying (عليه السلام), “**And every innovation is misguidance,**” we mention the statement of Abdullaah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattaab (رضي الله عنهما)⁶, which is regarded as an explanation of this general [statement], “**And every innovation is misguidance,**” [so] Ibn Umar, clarifying and explaining it said, ‘Even if the people hold it to be something good.’

Every innovation is misguidance even if the people see it to be something good.

And this draws our attention to an issue which we have constantly heard, and those who advocate it have deviated from the Sunnah of our Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Maybe I will deal with it later, soon Inshaa’allaah, because I want to remind you of the end of some of these texts which confirm this very, very, great principle, “... **every innovation is misguidance. And all misguidance is in the Fire,**” and especially after Ibn Umar’s explanation of it with his saying, ‘Even if the people hold it to be something good.’

I think many of you will have read or heard the hadeeth of Irbaad ibn Saariyah (رضي الله عنه)⁷, who said, “The Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) gave us a sermon which frightened the hearts and caused the eyes to shed tears. So we said, ‘O Messenger of Allaah! [it is as if it is a farewell sermon] so advise us.’ He said, ‘I advise you to fear Allaah and to hear and obey even if an Abyssinian slave were to rule over you. For surely, he who lives from amongst you will see much differing, so it is upon you to be upon my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Bite on to it with your back molar teeth and beware of newly invented matters, for verily, every newly invented matter is an innovation, and all innovation is misguidance.’” The addition, “**And every misguidance is in the Fire,**” is not found here, but however is found in the first hadeeth, the hadeeth about the Khutbatul-Haajah.

The point from this hadeeth is that it gives us a new benefit which was not mentioned in the previous one ...

⁴ (عليه الصلاة والسلام) (alayhi as-Salaat wa Salaam) Upon him prayer and peace

⁵ (عليه السلام) (alaihis-salaam) Peace be upon him

⁶ (رضي الله عنهما) (rad iyallaahu 'anhumaa) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with them both

⁷ (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him