
Innovations 1- Whoever approves something in the Religion has legislated it

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Indeed all Praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him, and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah, the Most High, from the evils of our own selves and from our wicked deeds. Whomsoever has been guided by Allaah, none can misguide him, and whomsoever has been misguided by Allaah, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no true god worthy of being worshipped except Allaah, Alone, without partner or associate. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His true slave and Messenger.

Indeed the best speech is the Speech of Allaah and the best guidance is that of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه)¹, 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.

Maybe all of the brothers present will know the meaning of this hadeeth and those like it which are established in the books of the Sunnah and have authentic chains of narration to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), the hadeeth of Aaishah, **“Whoever introduces into this affair of ours something which is not from it, then it is rejected,”** and like the hadeeth of al-Irbaad ibn Saariyah, (رضي الله عنه)² 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.”**

These hadeeths confirm what I think you understand and believe that innovating in the religion—all of it is misguidance. And I mean, ‘in the religion,’ because the disparaged innovating is that particular to the religion.

As for [innovating] in worldly matters then some of it is praiseworthy and some blameworthy, [and that is judged] according to this newly-invented thing [itself]—if it goes against the Legislation then it is blameworthy and if it doesn’t then at the very least it is permissible.

From the best of what has been reported in this regard is the statement of the Shaikh of Islaam Ibn Taymeeyah, (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)³ in which he laid down a very important principle which he extracted from those hadeeths in addition to other texts which show that the foundation regarding things is that they are permissible, and this is an Usool principle.

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

² (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah be pleased with him

³ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

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So he, (رَجْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said that the foundational principle in the religion is abstention except for those things that have a text [establishing them], and [conversely] the foundational principle regarding worldly affairs is that they are permissible except those that have a text [forbidding them]. And he means that every newly-invented thing in the religion is forbidden [and that] as for a newly-invented worldly matter then it is permissible except if it contradicts a text, as we mentioned.

Thereafter, that which should be given attention is that his statement (عليه السلام)⁴, ‘**Beware of newly-invented matters,**’ means every act of worship that was introduced after the Prophet (عليه السلام) is misguidance even if in the eyes of many people it is seen as something good.

And Abudullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattaab, (رضي الله عنهما)⁵ rightfully said, ‘All innovation is misguidance even if the people see it to be something good,’ and that is because approving something in the religion means that this person who approved that thing has paired himself up with the Lord of the Worlds, besides whom no one has the right to legislate [anything] except what Allaah the Mighty and Majestic wills.

For this reason Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee, (رَجْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said, ‘Whoever approves something has legislated [into the Religion],’ because this person who approved something does not know if that which he approved using just his intellect and reasoning without obtaining it from the Book of his Lord or the Sunnah of His Prophet ... how can he know whether it is something good?

For this reason it is obligatory that the stance of all of us regarding every newly-invented matter in the religion be to refrain from it due to the authentic hadeeths whose mention has preceded.

Al-Hudaa wan-Noor, 1.

⁴ (عليه السلام) (alaih-salaam) Peace be upon him

⁵ (رضي الله عنهما) (rad iyallaahu 'anhumaa) May Allaah be pleased with them