

Is Commemorating the Auspiciousness of Historical Events From the Sunnah or is it Bid'ah?

As salaamu 'alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu. Allahu ta 'ala has mentioned that certain days are auspicious and the Holy Last Messenger Prophet Muhammad Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim observed certain days with fasting etc. because of the auspiciousness of those days based on certain historical events happening on those days.

The basis of all our actions are The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of Sayyidinaa Muhammad Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim. To understand clearly we need to understand the Sunnah. The Sunnah is divided into three categories;

1. Qawli [what was said or speech]
2. Fa'ali [what was done or actions]
3. Taqriri [what others did that was not objected to]

These three categories are also the three categories of hadith

We are reminded by Allahu ta 'ala to remember the favors [ni'mah] bestowed us"

And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth Allah make His Signs clear to you: That ye may be guided.
3:103

Allahu ta 'ala is us instructing to recount those favors. When the holy Prophet Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim made hijra to Madinah he observed the bani Israil [jews] fasting on the tenth of Muharram. He had the sahaaba enquire why they were fasting on that particular day. He was informed that they were fasting on that day because they had been led out of captivity by Sayyidina Musa

'alaihi salaam on the tenth of Muharram and because of the auspicious nature of that day they were fasting. This was indeed a favor from Allahu ta 'ala. Our beloved Prophet informed the companions to fast on the ninth and tenth of Muharram in observance of this auspicious day. He said that we are more worthy of Sayyidina Musa than they the Jews were. This fast became an established Sunnah of the Holy Last Messenger Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim.

Sheikh Jalaluddin As Suyuti in "Al Hawl lil Fataawa" mentions that this is one of the precedences for commemorating the day Allah sent the mercy to all the worlds, not just mercy to Bani Israeel. The day Allahu ta 'ala sent Rahmatulil 'Alameen as a mercy to all of creation is much more auspicious than the day Bani Israeel was shown mercy by being delivered and saved from the oppression of Pharaoh. Maulana Jalaluddin and the Scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence [Fiqh] mention that if there is no supposed clear evidence that a thing was not done, we look for evidence that something similar [precedence] to that action was done.

Allahu ta 'ala says:

Remember! Moses said to his people: "Call to mind the favor of Allah to you when He delivered you from the people of Pharaoh: they set you hard tasks and punishments, slaughtered your sons, and let your women-folk live: therein was a tremendous trial from your Lord."

Bani Israeel is told to remember these favors. They did so by recognizing that day as being special.

In Islam there are certain things that Allahu ta 'al has made superior to others. This includes days, months, people etc. In the Jumu'ah Khutbah we read;

Alhamdulillahil lathee Ja'ala yawmul jumu'ati "Sayyidil Ayyam" All Praise is for Allah who has established the day of Jumu'ah as the Chief of all the Days. We also know that the Holy Last Messenger Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim mentions that he will be Sayyidi wuldi Adam [The leader and chief of all the descendants of Prophet Adam 'alaihi salaam on the Day of Judgment. 14:6

In hadith we read:

Narrated Sayyidinaa Aws ibn Aws:

The Beloved Prophet said: Among the most excellent of your days is Friday; on it Adam was created, on it he died, on it the last trumpet will be blown, and on it the shout will be made, so invoke more blessings on me that day, for your blessings will be submitted to me. The people asked: O Rasul Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim of Allah, how can it be that our blessings will be submitted to you while your body is decayed He replied: Allah, the Exalted, has prohibited the earth from consuming the bodies of Prophets. (Sunan Abu Dawud)

Allahu ta 'ala especially mentions the births of several Prophets as a mercy, this establishes that these are auspicious occasions:

Sayyidinaa Yahya 'alaihi salaam

This is the remembrance of the mercy of your Lord upon His bondman Zakaria. When he softly prayed to his Lord. [Surah Maryam 19:2-3]

Note that Allah has called the birth of Sayyidinaa Yahya a "mercy", and it's mentioning in the Noble Qur'an as a "remembrance". What greater evidence would be required for the remembrance of the Beloved Prophet's birth?

Sayyidinaa 'Isa bin Maryam 'alaihi wa 'alaiha salaam

"And peace is upon me the day I was born, and on the day I shall taste death, and on the day I will be raised alive." This is 'Isa (Jesus), the son of Maryam; a true statement, in which they doubt. [Surah Maryam 19:33-34]

Allah mentions the birth of several prophets at the same time:

And when Musa said to his people, "O my people! Remember Allah's favor upon you, that He created Prophets among you, and made you kings, and has now given you what He has not given to anyone else in this world." [Surah Maidah 5:20]

Note that Allah has mentioned the creation of Prophets among the Bani Israel, separately from other favors, in order to especially highlight this.

How did Allah commemorate the day of the Prophet's birth?

1. He made the Ka'abah lean in prostration towards the place of the noble birth.
2. Allah caused the idols to fall down.
3. He extinguished the fires of Persia.
4. Only male children were born on that day.
5. The skies were illuminated.
6. Paradise was further decorated on this occasion.
7. Allah removed drought from Makkah, turned the earth green and made the trees bear fruit, and blessings came to the Quraish from every direction
8. Allah stopped sending down torments.
9. He sent down the maidens of Paradise to give company to Sayyida Amina.
10. He sent down Angel Gibreel to carry the Beloved Prophet, and announce his birth all over the world.

Based on these few things alone we see the day of the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the most auspicious day of all days. Those who oppose this are rejecting clear ayaah and hadith yet they themselves commemorate certain days as being of merit, just not the day that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was sent to this world. The Mawlid un Nabiyy or the Birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim is not so much a birthday celebration. It is a day wherein the believers remember the favors of Allahu ta 'ala on them and commemorate the sending down of the Savior of all the Worlds Rahmatulil Aalameen Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim. A day wherein the believers come together to remember his sayings, his actions and his deeds, his teachings, his guidance and mercy Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim.

On this day the believers listen to the recitation of Holy Qur'an Majid, here discourses about the life and mission of the Holy Last Messenger Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim and recite abundant salawaat and salaams on the Holy Last messenger Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim. We also recite Islamic poetry [Madih] just as several eminent companions such as Sayyidinaa Hassan bin Thabit did for the Prophet Muhammad both in his blessed presence and on other occasions.

The followers of Abdul Wahhab and the Salafi's in Arabia celebrate many "Mawlid" though they call them Mehrajaan or festivals to commemorate certain historical occasions as being auspicious among them:

1- Mawlid of Shaykh Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Wahhab, Shaykh-an-Najdi (Also, the title which was given to Shaytan), Shaykh al-Islam of "Salafis"/Wahhabis, and Imam of the Two Cities (Riyad and Dar` iyya):

Every year at the anniversary date of Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Wahhab's death, a great feast is held at the Ibn Sa`ud University in Riyad (in Najd) at which time they praise the unparalleled magnificence of their beloved religious leader, listing his qualities and reciting new poetry about his greatness. All over the world, their embassies also fulfill this important communal obligation (fard kifaya). This is NOT `ibada, of course.

2- Mawlid of the State, known as National Day:

This Mawlid, similar to Independence Day, Flag Day, and Army Day, is celebrated every year in the country with international gala festivities, fanfare, parades, army reviews, podiums and thrones, and also, of course, new poems of praise and Madih recitations for the State founders and current rulers, all at colossal cost, but whatever means leads to fulfilling an obligation (fard), is itself an obligation. Of course this is NOT `ibada.

3- Mawlid of the Nation's Century:

This was a gigantic and truly new Mawlid, the like of which was never seen before. In the year 1999 we all witnessed the great celebrations whose main slogan was "100 years KSA" to commemorate one century of freedom from the "innovated "Khilafa" and the establishment of the Sunni "Kingdom". On this occasion thousands of shiny and colorful lights, new constructions, inventive and tasteful decorations, posters, banners, placards, and other graphic art productions were displayed in public places and broadcast over the media with orchestral music, poems, and commentary of self-praise and glorification that filled the heart with warmth, love of dunya, and national pride. All Mawlid should be like this! (Needless to say, according to them this is NOT `ibada.)

4- Mawlid of the Mufti:

At the recent passing of the Grand Mufti of the Wahhabiyya Sect, Bin Baz, it was decided by the Mawlid Celebration Board to issue a special commemorative glossy publication praising his greatness, listing his achievements and merits, and deploring his demise with big tears of sadness. In fact, the magazine cover showed a delightful, artistic painting of a series of big tears stringed together like dhikr-beads, and inside each tear there was a small Ka`ba. Al-Hamdu lillah, the Grand mufti is gone, the tears dried up, but we still have the Ka`ba!

5- Mawlid of the Ministers:

From time to time, public sessions of high praise are held for certain ministers according to worldly (dunya) merit. In a recent incident one of our brothers unduly obsessed with the hereafter (Akhira) witnessed a TV program in Madina during Hajj 1999, in which one of the Ministers was lavishly praised (madih) by a 7-year old schoolboy dressed in a formal army suit, reciting poetry he had innovated for him. The boy was called to the podium (‘arsh) and asked by that minister what he would like to receive for praising him so much. The boy said on the spot: "Half a million Ryals." The Minister happily granted his wish. (Jazak Allahu Khayran for such a generous, noble gesture on National TV during Hajj, so that everyone young and old should learn to praise and magnify government officials instead of reciting Qasidat al-Burda or other such things!) The brother who witnessed this event on TV, as he was pleased with the Best of Creation - the Prophet Sall Allahu ‘alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim - went to the Prophet's Mosque and, standing at Bab Gibril in front of the blessed Green Dome (with other brothers who were also obsessed with Akhira), started excessively obeying the command of the Qur'an to invoke blessings and abundant greetings on the Holy Prophet Sall Allahu ‘alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim and recite Qasida in his praise. Immediately, the guards of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques went on Red Alert (special guards from the elite Tala` al Badru Emergency Alert Unit) as they noticed that the brothers were committing an act of love and respect for the Beloved of Allah Sall Allahu ‘alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim something known in their legal police code as SHIRKUFEBID`A (which only they can pronounce correctly). So the elite, frowning paratroopers yelled at the brothers to stop

immediately this violation of the National Mawlid Law, manhandled them, and threatened them with arrest and jail unless they stopped their crime. Moral: If only those brothers had used their intellects to recite Mawlid for a State Minister instead of Rahmatan lil-Alamin Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim, they would have been several million Ryals richer today! (And according to the Wahhabi's this would NOT be `ibada!)

6- Mawlid of Monuments and Inscriptions:

Unlike the preceding Mawlids which are seasonal or according to special circumstances, this Mawlid is a permanent Mawlid in Madina, steps away from the Prophet's Mosque in the ritzy Dar al-Tayba square. It consists in a 15-foot monument in the shape of a globe topped by a dome similar to the Prophet's dome, flanked by a flag, in the middle of a waterfall. Below, an inscription says: "In appreciation to the King for services rendered to Islam." This Mawlid of Monuments and Inscriptions fulfills two important functions. First, it is most suitable for photography as a memento of His Majesty the King in the City of the Holy Prophet Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim as, unfortunately, pictures of the real Dome are prohibited but happily, pictures of this dunya monument are welcome (as it is NOT `ibada).

Second, just like the inscription acknowledging His Majesty the King at the bottom of the door of the Ka`ba in Mecca (for every pilgrim to remember and commemorate) this monument and inscription fills the vacuum created - in the last century - by the destruction of the graves of the great past Muslim figures who contributed over 1,000 years to the greatness of Islam. Figures such as `Uthman ibn `Affan who used to ride on a donkey and sleep on the mosque floor when he was caliph; `Uthman ibn Mazun whose grave the Holy Prophet Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim personally built up; Malik ibn Anas who walked barefoot in Madina out of respect for Rasulullah Sall Allahu 'alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim our mothers the Prophet's wives; his daughters, uncles, cousins, and thousands of Sahaba all left without one sign - i.e. monument or inscription - reminding of their existence or "services rendered to Islam." But why remember them? Wouldn't that be... `IBADA!?

Conclusion:

It is hoped that this brief description will help dispel the false and unjust notion that no Mawlid of any kind is celebrated in the Wahhabi/"Salafi" world today. Yes, they celebrate Mawlid, rejoice and remember like everybody else - but in their own special way, according to them supposedly WITHOUT `ibada. As Allahu ta `ala said:

"Every party rejoices in what they have." And the Holy Prophet Sall Allahu `alaihi wa Aalihi wa sallim said: "When someone loves something, they make abundant remembrance of it." May Allah reward every one of them for NOT making `ibada with innovated Mawlids, all according to their intention and according to what they deserve!

Bear this one thing in mind: They say that Milad-un-Nabi (Sall Allahu alaihi wa Sallim) is Shirk & Bid'ah, yet in the LA Times, they openly join in the celebration of Christmas.

So let's get this straight. According to the Wahhabi/Salafiyya:

- a. Milad of Nabi Isa ibn Maryam, Christmas, which is actually a pagan Greco-Roman celebration, is considered to be a sacred event.
- b. Milad of the Holy Last Messenger, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Sallim, is "bid'ah, shirk, kufr." La'natullah 'alaa-l-kaadhibeen wa alaa-l-munafiqeen!