

COMMON DOUBTS REGARDING THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

“Verily (O Muḥammad) for you there will be an endless reward and verily you are upon an exalted standard of character”

(Qur’ān 68:3-4)

Is his birthday a celebration?

Was he light?

Does he know the unseen?

Will he answer your call?

Is he dead or alive?



COMMON DOUBTS REGARDING THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD (ﷺ)

Question 1: Is it permissible for Muslims to celebrate in the mosque, in order to remember the life of the noble Prophet (ﷺ) on the night of the twelfth of Rabī‘ al-Awwal on the occasion of the birthday of the noble Prophet without turning the day into a holiday, like the ‘Īd? We are in disagreement over it. Some say it is a good innovation and some say it is a bad one.

Answer: It is not permissible for Muslims to organise celebrations for the birthday of the Prophet (ﷺ) on the night of the 12th Rabī‘ al-Awwal, nor on any other night. Neither is it permissible for them to organise celebrations for any other person’s birthday, because celebrating a birthday is an innovation in the religion, for indeed the Prophet (ﷺ) did not celebrate his own birthday at any time in his life, and he was the conveyor of this religion and the one who carried out the rulings conveyed to him from his Lord (تبارك وتعالى). And he did not command others to celebrate it, neither the righteous Caliphs, nor the rest of his Companions. And none of the successive generations known as the Tābi‘īn celebrated the birthday either and neither those who followed them! And they were the best of mankind and the closest to the Prophet in terms of following his example and in terms of their love of him. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said, **“The best of mankind is my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them”** (Reported by al-Bukhārī). So we therefore state it is a forbidden innovation known as a bid‘ah. And the Messenger (ﷺ) stated, **“Whoever innovates into this affair of ours that which is not from it, will have it rejected”** (reported by al-Bukhārī). And in a variant wording, he stated, **“Whoever performs a deed which is not from this affair of ours, will have it rejected”** (reported by Muslim). So whether one initiates a new act of worship or merely imitates an innovated act in worship, it is rejected by Allāh since it is not in conformity with the revealed texts. Acts of worship are done based only upon revelation contained in the Qur’ān and Prophetic Sunnah; one is not allowed to introduce new acts of worship into the religion. And this is due to the fact that our religion has been completed and perfected, as Allāh has said, **“This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you and I am pleased with Islam as your religion”** (Qur’ān 5:3). That which has been completed and perfected by the Lord of the universe (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) requires no further perfection or completion or addition! Allāh forbade any legislation or

worship to be added to His completed Religion, **“Or have they partners alongside Allāh who have legislated for them from the Religion that which Allāh has not ordained”** (Qur’ān 42:21). So celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (ﷺ) is a newly invented religious act, which does not conform with the texts of the Qur’ān and Prophetic guidance. It was innovated into this pure Religion centuries after the passing away of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say during his Friday sermon, **“Verily, the best speech is the Book of Allāh, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad, and the worst of all affairs are the newly invented matters (in religion), and every innovation is misguidance. And every misguidance is in the Fire”** (reported by Muslim and al- Nasā’ī). If celebrating the Prophet’s birthday had been legislated, the earlier generations would have been the first to celebrate it, since they were the best of generations and the closest to the noble Prophet and the most beloved to him from mankind. The Companions of the Prophet would have been the first to enact the celebration had it been legislated or something good, and they would have called others to it, and the knowledge of it would have been present in their authentically reported statements and actions. Yet this celebration was unknown to the earliest three generations of noble believers, and is rejected by religious text. So the Muslim should keep away from these newly innovated celebrations, for they do not bring you closer to Allāh and nor increase you in goodness. In these times we find certain Muslim sects gathering in the streets, or in mosques and houses making dhikr and distributing sweets and gifts in celebration of the birthday of the Prophet (ﷺ). All of this is forbidden, regardless of how beautiful it may seem.

“Whoever performs a deed which is not from this affair of ours, will have it rejected” (reported by Muslim)

Question 2: Was the light of Muḥammad (ﷺ) from the Light of Allah, or from some other light?

Answer: The light of the Prophet (ﷺ) is the light of the Message and the Guidance by which Allāh guides whom He wills from amongst His creatures. Without doubt, the light of the Message and the light of Guidance are from Allāh. He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said, **“It is not for any human being that Allāh should speak to him unless it be by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or that He sends a Messenger to reveal what He wills by His leave. Verily, He is Most High, Most Wise. And thus We have sent to you, O Muḥammad, an**

inspiration of Our command. You knew not what is the Book, nor what is Faith. But We have made it (this Qur'ān) a light where with We guide whosoever of Our slaves We will. And verily, you (O Muḥammad) are indeed guiding mankind to the Straight Path. The Path of Allāh, to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth" (Qur'ān 42:51). Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was created from a father and a mother and he was a human being. Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) stated, "Say (O Prophet), 'Indeed I am only a man like yourselves'" (Qur'ān 18:110). And the Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Indeed I am a man like yourselves, I forget like you forget. So if I forgot, then remind me." (Reported by Bukhārī and Muslim). The affirmation of these texts does not entail any belittlement of our noble Prophet, indeed we clearly state as Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) stated, "The best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad" (reported by Muslim). And Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said, "Say to them O Prophet: If you truly love Allāh then follow me and then Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins" (Qur'ān 3:31). And His saying, "Indeed in the Messenger of Allāh, you have a fine example" (Qur'ān 33:21). As for narrations which claim that Allāh created the light of the Prophet Muḥammad or that Allāh filled His Hand with light from His Face and that this handful of light was Muḥammad (ﷺ), or that Allāh created the whole of creation from the light of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), then none of these narrations can authentically be attributed to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). It is not permissible to describe the Prophet with descriptions that are not established in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. We find in our times some Muslim sects claiming that the Prophet (ﷺ) was not a human, that he was light, that he has independent knowledge of the unseen and that he is present in Ṣūfī gatherings etc. All of this is falsehood not supported by any evidence.

Question 3: There are people who believe that the Prophet (ﷺ) is light from the light of Allāh, and that he was not a human, that he has knowledge of the unseen, we should seek deliverance, rescue and aid from him, believing that the Prophet (ﷺ) possesses the ability to bring about benefit and harm. What is the ruling forbidding innovation known as a bid'ah. And the Messenger (ﷺ) stated, "Whoever innovates into this affair of regarding this?

Answer: Whoever believes that the Prophet (ﷺ), is light from the light of Allāh and not a human being, and that he has knowledge of the unseen, then he has disbelieved in Allāh. Such a misguided person cannot be considered a friend (walī) of Allāh, because this statement entails rejection of the sayings

“Say (O Muḥammad), ‘I possess no power of benefit or hurt upon myself except as Allāh wills. If I had knowledge of the unseen, I would have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil would have touched me. I am but a warner and bringer of glad tidings to people who believe’” (Al-A‘rāf: 188)

of Allāh and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). The proof for this is Allāh’s statement, “Say (O Prophet), ‘I am a man like yourselves’” (Al-Kahf: 110), and His (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) statement, “Say (O Prophet), ‘None in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen except Allāh’” (Al-Naml: 65), and His statement, “Say (O Prophet), ‘I do not tell you that with me are the treasures of Allāh, nor that I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an Angel. I only follow what is revealed to me’” (Al-An‘ām: 50). Allāh (جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ) also said, “Say (O Muḥammad), ‘I possess no power of benefit or hurt upon myself except as Allāh wills. If I had knowledge of the unseen, I would have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil would have touched me. I am but a warner and bringer of glad tidings to people who believe’” (Al-A‘rāf: 188). As for seeking divine aid and rescue, then we seek it only from Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى). To seek aid or rescue from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) is polytheism (shirk), i.e. to associate partners with Allāh in worship. Allāh stated in the Qur’ān, “And your Lord said, ‘Invoke Me and I will respond to you.’ Verily, those who scorn my worship they will surely enter Hell in disgrace” (Ghāfir: 60). And His statement, “Say (O Muḥammad), ‘It is not in my power to cause you harm, or to bring you to the right Path.’ Say (O Muḥammad), ‘None can protect me from Allāh’s punishment, nor do I find refuge except in Him’” (Al-Jinn: 21-22). The Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to his own daughter and family, “I cannot avail you with Allāh anything” (Reported by Bukhārī and Muslim). If this is what the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to his own daughter, Fāṭimah (رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهَا), then how much more is that true for other than his own family?!

Question 4: Is the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) alive now? Did he ever die? Many people say that he never died and he is alive now.

Answer: Our Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) is alive in his grave, living the life of the Barzakh (i.e. the life between this world and the next), where he is enjoying the ease and comfort which Allāh

has prepared for him as a fitting reward for that which he earned in the life of this world. But his soul is not returned to him in the manner it was when he was in the world and nor in the manner as it will be on the Day of Resurrection. Rather, it is the life of the barzakh, which is in between the life of this world and the life of the Hereafter. And everyone will go through these stages. Based upon this, it is clear that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) died, just as the Prophets before him died. The exception being 'Isā Ibn Maryam (عليه السلام), Jesus the son of Mary, who was raised up to the heavens and will descend at the end of time, after which he will die. Allāh (تبارك وتعالى) said, **“And We never granted immortality to any human being before you (O Muhammad). Then if you are to die, would they live forever?”** (Al-Anbiyā': 34). He also stated, **“Whatsoever is on earth will perish. And the Face of your Lord, full of Majesty and Honour will abide forever”** (Al-Raḥmān: 26-27). Allāh informed the Messenger Muḥammad (ﷺ) in a clear verse of the Qur'ān, **“Verily, you (O Muḥammad) will die and verily, they too will die”** (Al-Zumar: 30). And there are many other such examples among the verses which prove that Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) brought death to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) washed his body and prayed over him and buried him. Had they considered him to be alive, as in the life of this world, they would not have buried him in the ground! And just to seal this discussion, when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) died, his closest friend, Companion and successor, Abū Bakr al- Siddīq (رضي الله عنه) entered and kissed the Messenger's (ﷺ) forehead and said, **“May my mother and father be your ransom! You were good in life and in death.”** And he then said, **“He who worshipped Muḥammad, then know that Muḥammad has died. But he who worships Allāh, then Allāh is above the sky, He lives and does not die”** (authentically reported by Al-Dārimī).

This article was compiled by Abū Khadījah 'Abd al-Wāhid based upon the verdicts of Shaykh Ibn Bāz (رحمه الله) and Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn (رحمه الله).



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