

Conditions of Bida'ah

Shaykh Muqbil bin Haadi al Waadi'ee, rahimahullah

Q: "What are the conditions for confirming a religious innovation (bida'ah) ?"

A: "All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all that exists, and may the peace and safety of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his family and companions collectively. I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship but Allah, alone, having no partners, and I testify that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger.

As for what proceeds:

Bida'ah in the Arabic language is something that is invented, unique to the example preceding it. In the Shari'ah of Islaam, it is something invented in the religion that was not present in the time of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم. So, for something to be labelled a bida'ah it must be concerning the religion. Therefore, if it's pertaining to the branches of industry or places of food and drink which Allah did not prohibit, then it is not considered a bida'ah. This is the condition and it applies to the religion. Hence, if it is not relevant to the religion, then it is only called a bid'ah in the context of the Arabic language, for example; airplanes and automobiles. These are considered to be an innovation (bida'ah) at the onset of their production, but only in the linguistic sense, and Allah, the Legislator did not prohibit them, due to His statement تعالى :

وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

And He creates that which you do not know

And His statement تعالى :

خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا

It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth."

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Translation: Abu Mohamed Abdul Kareem Hagedorn, 1st of Muharram 1437,
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