



Celebrations

First question from Fatwa No. 1002

Q 1: What is the ruling on the joyful celebrations held by Muslims in Trinidad on particular occasions; such as weddings, moving to a new house, birthdays, and many others? They celebrate them by reciting the Qur'an, singing eulogies to the honorable Prophet (peace be upon him) and at the end of the celebration they stand out of respect and appreciation to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

A: Firstly, the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade secret marriages and ordered people to announce weddings. This announcement involves celebrating the wedding and moving the bride to the groom's house. Thus, it is permissible to hold these celebrations so long as they contain no unacceptable songs, are in a place where there is no mixing between women and men, or what is similar to these forbidden things.

Secondly, the Islamic Shari`ah states that there are three festivals for Muslims: `Eid-ul-Fitr (the Festival of Breaking the Fast), `Eid-ul-Adha (the Festival of the Sacrifice), and Friday. As for birthdays and the other festivals that people celebrate,

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such as New Year's Day (A.H. or A.D.), the 15th night of Sha`ban, Mawlid (the Prophet's birth day), and the day on which a king or president is appointed, these occasions and their likes were not celebrated during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the times of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, or the first three centuries recognized by the Prophet (peace be upon him) as the best centuries. These celebrations exported throughout the Islamic world are considered Bid`ahs (innovation in religion) that attract Muslims in such a way that they celebrate them the same as they celebrate the Islamic festivals. In some celebrations the Muslims show great reverence for other people, spend lavishly, and permit women to mix with men. Moreover, they imitate the customs of the non-Muslim celebrations. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (Beware of newly-invented matters, for every newly-invented matter is a Bid`ah and every Bid`ah is a goingastray.) He also

said, (Whoever innovates something in this matter of ours that is not part of it, will have it rejected) These innovated practices are clear whether they are glorifying or seeking the blessings of a person or a reward for celebrating such occasions; such as the Mawlid, the birthday of Al-Husayn the birthday of Al-Badawy, etc. These innovations also include the showing of reverence for a certain day or night such as the 15th day or night of Sha'ban and the night of Isra' (Night Journey) and Mi'raj. These celebrations and their likes are celebrated with the intention of drawing nearer

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to Allah and seeking His blessings. As for other celebrations that are not celebrated with the intention of seeking blessings and reward, they are innovated customs. Among these festivals are birthdays, new year's day and the day during which leaders are appointed. Moreover, these acts involve imitating the non-Muslims and are regarded as a means to other kinds of forbidden celebrations which are based on glorification and drawing nearer to people other than Allah. Such acts are prohibited out of blocking the means leading to sins and avoiding copying the non-Muslims in the festivals, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (Whoever copies any group of people is one of them.)

Thirdly, reciting Qur'an is one of the best good deeds and things that draw a person closer to Allah. However, it is an act of Bid'ah to recite the Qur'an at the end of innovative celebrations. This act involves diminishing the Qur'an. As to the eulogy to the Prophet (peace be upon him), it is good as long as it shows no excessive reverence for him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mary, for I am only a slave. So, call me the slave of Allah and His Messenger.) He also said, (Do not exceed the limits in your religion for those who preceded you were destroyed due to their excessiveness.)

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Moreover, it is impermissible to single out this eulogy for a particular day that would be taken as a festival and special occasion.

Fourth, making everyone stand at the end of the celebration out of respect for the Prophet (peace be upon him) is not acceptable in Shari'ah and is considered a forbidden Bid'ah.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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