

A Critical Study of the Goals of Innovation in Religion and Its Social Impacts

¹Muhammad Riaz Khan Al-Azhari, Muhammad Shah, ¹Muhammad Fayyaz, ²Saleem-ur-²Rahman, Nisar Muhammad, ³Wahidullah Al-Azhari

¹Islamic and religious studies, Hazara University, Mansehra Pakistan

²Department of Islamic Theology, Islamia College Peshawar Pakistan

³NUML Islamabad Pakistan

Received: July 29, 2016

Accepted: October 28, 2016

ABSTRACT

Any Muslim wants to spend a successful life. For the achievement of such a life, the Muslim should follow the Sunnahs of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW). The Muslim who follows Sunnahs is undoubtedly a successful one, while who does not follow them, is indeed an unsuccessful one. The followers of Sunnahs lead a life full of beauty and satisfaction, while those who are far away from Sunnahs, lead a life enriched with troubles and agonies. It is obvious from the study of Sunnah that it gives the lesson of simplicity of life which is far away from that wordly life which is full of ritziness and sophistication because it is the nature of every human to earn grace and honour in the society by hook or by crook which becomes unbearable for him sometimes. In the dealings of day to day life, the ways of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) are considered as Sunnahs while defection from these ways is called innovation in religion. In my research article(A Critical Study of the Goals of Innovation in Religion and its Social Impacts),I am going to present some essential points regarding innovation in religion.

KEYWORDS: Innovation, religion, Quran, Sunnah, goals, defection, saints, Translation.

INTRODUCTION

In the dealings of day to day life, the ways of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) are considered as Sunnahs while defection from these ways is called innovation in religion. Allama Sayyuti defines dogmatism in these words[1]:

"البدعة عبارة عن فعلة تصاليم الشريعة بالمخالفة أو توجيه التحاطي عليها بزيادة أو نقصان"

Translation: Innovation in religion is that act which is against Sharia or it maximizes or minimizes the acts of sharia.

In the light of the above-mentioned definition, innovation in religion is that act which is appulsive to sharia or it brings variation to the acts of sharia. Therefore, all those acts which are not appulsive to sharia or which does not bring variation to the acts of sharia, will not be considered as innovation in religion. The identification of innovation in religion can be found in many Quranicayaas and hadiths which not only describe innovation in religion in detail but also highlight its impacts and objectives on social life of a muslim.

In the following lines, the goals of innovation in religion and its social impacts have been tried to evaluate critically.

The objectives of innovators in religion are as follow:

Demolition in Islam:

The innovators in religion are trying hard to demolish Islam. For this filthy purpose, they have created such things in Islam which have no place in the teachings of Islam. For example, they have created and introduced Eid-e-milaad, distribution of sweets on Shab-e-Bara'at, Rasm-e-qul, 11th, anniversary, Konday, Ursetc. which are considered rightful by them. The innovators has gained success to establish these customs. People consider them virtuous and act upon them from the core of their hearts. Therefore, it is obvious that the innovators have succeeded in their mission of demolition in Islam[2]. In the Holy Quran, Allah says[3]:

"الْيَوْمَ أَكْلَمْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ نَعْمَلُ بِرَبِّي وَرَضِيَتْ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامُ دِيَنًا"

Translation: "I have completed your religion for you today, completed my blessings upon you and I have chosen to like Islam for you."

It is revealed in this ayah that everything of your need is there in the Holy Quran. Therefore, what has been said and what has been ordered in the Holy Quran, must be acted upon. But contrary to this order of the Holy Quran, innovation in Islam is increasing day by day. Islam has almost lost its real soul due to such false innovations.

*Corresponding Author: Muhammad Riaz Khan Al-Azhari, Islamic and religious studies, Hazara University, Mansehra Pakistan.

To Make Astray from Monotheism and Mercy of Almighty Allah:

One of the objectives of the innovators is to astray people from monotheism and mercy of Allah. For the fulfillment of this purpose, they have prevailed innovations like grave-worshipping, dedication to others than Allah, asking from saints, amulets etc. Due to this curse, people are indulged in polytheism and regularly visit the tombs of saints and ask from them regarding their worldly as well as divine needs. Some people have become disappointed from Allah's blessings and they have started to believe in amulets given by saints. Allah says about such saints in the Holy Quran [4]:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عَبَادُ أَمْكَلِكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ فَلَيَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَابِقِينَ (194) أَلَّهُمْ أَرْجُلْ بَمْشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَطْشِنُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يَبْصِرُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أَفْلَأْ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ لَمْ كَيْدُونَ فَلَا تَنْظُرُونَ

Translation: "Whom you are calling to seek help from are merely human beings as you are yourself human beings. Judge them by asking them. If you believe in them, they will respond to you. Whom you are calling to seek help except Allah, neither they can help you nor do they know about their own help."

It is explained in this ayah that saints cannot do anything, then why you ask them to help. It is also said in the Holy Quran that human beings must trust only Allah. Allah says[5]:

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

Translation: "Trust Allah only if you are Muslim".

But in spite of all these clear instructions of the Holy Quran, today's Muslims are dragging themselves in such innovations and the innovators are constantly succeeding in their mission of innovation in Islam.

To Make Astray from Sunnah:

The innovators have also the objective to make astray Muslims from Sunnah as they have partially succeeded to make astray them from the path shown by Allah in the Holy Quran. For the fulfillment of their purpose, they have invented such things in Islam which can never be found in Sunnah. But in spite of all these innovations, Muslims try their hard to act upon those things which are the invention of innovators in Islam. This is the real cause that today's Muslim is very far away from Sunnah. It is plainly explained in the Holy Quran[6]:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْنَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

Translation: "Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct)"

This ayah explains that anyone who needs help, should seek it from Sunnah. But the innovators have a derogation that (Na'oozoBillaah) the Prophet(SAW) has shown dishonesty by performing his duty to spread Islam in its true sense. If the life of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is studied, it is revealed that the Prophet (SAW) has not left Islam incomplete when was leaving the world. He successfully conveyed the message of Almighty Allah because it was an order of Allah¹. In the Holy Quran Allah says[7]:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ يَلْعَبُ مَا أُنزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ أَنْ تَعْلَمْ فَمَا يَلْعَبُ رَسَالَتِهِ

Translation: "O messenger of Allah! That has been revealed on you from Allah, convey it to people. If you did not do that, then you have not performed your duty of blasphemy."

It is obvious from this ayah that besides Allah's order it is a right of blasphemy as well which is successfully done by the Holy Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) enquired about it from his followers on the sermon of Hujja-tul-Wida. The Prophet (SAW) said:

Translation: "Did I convey the message of Allah to you properly?" The followers of the Prophet (SAW) answered positively.

Therefore, it is crystal clear that when the followers of the Prophet (SAW) verify it, then who we are to blame the Prophet (SAW) for dishonesty (Na'oozo Billaah). But the speedy preaching of innovations in Islam particularly aim to astray the Muslims from Sunnah and to make them believe that (Na'oozo Billaah) the prophet (SAW) has a breach of trust while preaching Islam.

To Divide the Muslims:

An important objective of innovation in Islam is to divide Muslims and to create sectarianism among them. The innovators have got success to great extent in this regard because Muslims have been divided into seventy-three sections due to innovations in Islam and every section has established its own innovations which are being followed by them so strictly that they even do not accept to offer prayers with the Muslims of other sections. Everyone in this regard considers itself rightful and just. This is the reason that Muslims are no more united and all the sections are against one another. They use to hoot against one another and even use to attack one another. Though, Allah clearly

says in the Holy Quran that if the Muslims strictly follow the teachings of Quran, they will never be divided. It is said[8]:

"وَاعْصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا"

Translation: "O Muslims! Seize the rope of Allah firmly and do not divide yourselves."

The Holy Prophet (SAW) also says in this regard[9]:

"تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَصِلُوا مَا تَمْسَكْتُمْ بِهِمَا: كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَسُنْنَةُ نَبِيِّهِ"

Translation: "I am leaving for you two things at my departure, if you hold on them firmly, you will never go astray. One is Quran and the other one is my Sunnah."

It is quite clear from these ayah and hadith that if the Muslims truly act upon Quran and Sunnah, they will never be divided. But we have forgot the great teachings of Quran and Sunnah and have indulged ourselves in such type of innovations which are carrying us away from the right path. We have been divided into different sections and are continuously blaming one another. The success of innovators lies in the sectarianism of the Muslims in today's world.

It is clearly guessed after knowing the objectives of innovation in Islam that the aim of such innovations is to astray Muslims from the right path.

Effects of Innovations in Islam on Society:

Innovations in Islam so adversely affect the Muslim society which is difficult to discuss. However, the effects of innovations in Islam are described below:

Distortion in Islam: Islam has a number of worships today due to innovations in it which can never be found in real teachings of Islam. But we consider these innovations virtuous and rightful and are performing them with great care. We are so much indulged in these useless activities that we have forgot to offer our actual prayers. For example, prayer of five times a day is obligatory upon us but we are so much busy in Shab-e-Bara'at, Milaad etc. that we forget to offer that most essential prayer. Similarly, we do not give Zakat which is also obligatory upon us but we happily and regularly give alms and charities on different names introduced by innovators. Due to these types of innovations, Islam has lost its real form. Distortion in Islam was the habit of other Ummas because they had invented their own methods of worships and they did not listen to and act upon their respective prophets (AS). They also told people that these methods were from Allah[10]. The Holy Quran says about those people in these ayahs[11]:

"فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَشْوِلُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيُشْتَرِوْنَ بِهِ شَمَّاً قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ أَهُمْ مَّا كَتَبْتُ لَهُمْ مَّا يَكْسِبُونَ"

"It is annihilation for those who write book of their own and say that it is from Allah. It is merely for the pursuit of some wealth for worldly pleasure."

In this ayah, it is described about the religious scholars of Jews and other non-Muslims that they used to create something of their own and used to tell the people that it was from Allah. Therefore, there remained no difference in their invented acts and the real religion of them. Gradually, their religion has lost all its teachings and actually they have no real religion at all. Same is the case with Islam. The innovators which are known as nominal religious scholars, have introduced such things in Islam with great mastery which is regularly and very carefully performed by Muslims as they consider them the part of Islam. Actually, Islam is that religion which is revealed to our Holy Prophet (SAW) from Almighty Allah. Today's religion is Scholars' religion. It is expected that if the case remains the same regarding innovation in Islam, (Na'oo Zoo Billah) real Islam will be unknown to the Muslims. Therefore, we must try to remove innovations from Islam and to act upon the religion which is taught by our Holy Prophet (SAW) and which is purely the religion liked and imposed upon us by Almighty Allah. Allah likes that religion which is revealed by Him on his beloved Prophet (SAW). Allah says in the Holy Quran[12]:

"إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عَنْ دِيَنِ اللَّهِ ابْرَاجُوا"

Translation: "Indeed, the religion that is liked by Almighty Allah the most is Islam."

Imam Malik (RA) also says in this regard, "The things/acts which are not the part of Islam in the days of the Holy Prophet (SAW), those things/acts cannot be considered the part of Islam today[13]."

Infusion of Polytheism: Polytheism is one of the false belief which has been enforced by innovators gradually. It is indeed one of the worst effects of innovations in an Islamic society. Some of the acts of innovations cannot be perceived as false clearly but some of them are so dreadful for the Islamic belief that the Muslims become unintentionally polytheists by performing such acts in their day to day worships. For example, grave-worshipping, asking from nominal saints, offering dedication to their names, offering immolations on their tombs, covering their tombs, believing in amulets etc. in sufferings instead of Allah etc. These are the acts of polytheism which has

prevailed in our society so firmly that it is difficult to eradicate them now. These false beliefs were of Arabs in the era of ignorance which were strictly forbidden by the Holy Prophet (SAW). Quran also says about such type of innovators in this ayah[14]:

"ابْعَضُ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَلَاثَةٌ: مُّحَدٌ فِي الْحَرَمِ، وَمُبْتَغٍ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، وَمُطْلَبٌ دَمَ امْرِي بِعَرَفٍ حَقِّ الْمُهَرِّبِ ذَمَّهُ"

Translation: "The rage of Allah is for three persons among the people. One is who commits sin in Haram, second is who wants to adopt the acts of non-believers and third is who demands blood-shedding of Muslims without reason." It is clearly said in this ayah that those who prevalent the habits of non-Muslims in Islam, the rage of Allah is for them. But every person is seemed to be engaged in such habits in our society. This is the reason that Allah's blessings are no more upon us. Everywhere riots and brawls flourish. This is indeed the rage of Allah which is upon us due to these innovations in Islam adopted by us. Though, in the Holy Quran, Allah orders the Muslims not to ask anyone except Allah. It is said in the Holy Quran [15]:

"وَلَا تَدْعُ مِنْ ذُنُونَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يُنْفَعُكُ وَلَا يُنْصُرُكُ"

Translation: "Don't ask anyone except Allah. Those who neither benefit you nor harm you."

It is plainly said in this ayah that those whom are called by us neither benefit us nor harm us. But still we ask them and believe in their amulets in diseases and disasters considering that we will gain health and fortune with the help of these amulets. Whereas Almighty Allah says in the Holly Quran[16]:

"وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلَيَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ"

Translation: "The Muslims should lean on Allah only."

Therefore, it is strictly needed to lean on Almighty Allah only because there is no one but Allah who can eradicate troubles of people. It is said in the Holy Quran[17]:

"أَئُنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضطَرُ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ"

Translation: "Who is he that responds to the call of the drawn when he calls and He removes uncomfortableness."

In spite of these orders from Almighty Allah, we are going to be indulged in the darkness of polytheism which is a great cause of the Muslims' downfall. Those Muslims who were once the greatest of all nations in the world, now are in decline. This is due to negligence towards the teachings of the Holy Quran by the Muslims.

Detract of Sunnah:

One of the worst effects of innovation in Islam is the detraction of Sunnah from our day to day lives. Though Sunnah is considered the best sample for the Muslims yet the people have a susceptive belief that (Na'oo Zoo Billah) the Prophet (SAW) was dishonest in the preaching of Islam i.e. the Prophet (SAW) did not convey many orders from Allah. Therefore, the innovations which are in practice now-a-days, are actually those about which the prophet (SAW) did not say anything. Indeed, even thinking so is the biggest sin. The fact is quite obvious that the Prophet (SAW) has decently and efficiently performed his duty as the messenger of Almighty Allah. If it is not so then why Allah orders the Muslims to follow Hazrat Muhammad (SAW). In this regard, Allah says in the Holy Quran[18]:

"يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَوَلُوا عَنْهُ"

Translation: "O people! Obey Allah and His Prophet (SAW) and refrain from insubordination."

Moreover, Almighty Allah has concluded that prophet's (SAW) obedience is His own obedience. As Allah says in the Holy Quran [19]:

"مَنْ يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّ فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكُ عَلَيْهِ حَقِيقَةً"

Translation: "Those who obey the prophet (SAW), actually they obey Almighty Allah. And those who refused to obey the Prophet (SAW) (the curse will be on them). We did not send you a guard upon them."

It is very clearly said in this ayah that those who do not act upon the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW), the curse will be on them i.e. they will be responsible for their own calamity. If we look around us in this modern world, it reveals to us quite clearly that today we are surrounded by a number of calamities and miseries and they are due to our detraction from Sunnah. Actually, we are gradually detracting from Sunnah without knowing its seriousness. The foretelling of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is found true here when He (SAW) had said:

Translation: "Spiritual knowledge will lose its effects. Ignorance will prevail. Sunnahs will be in no practice and everywhere, innovations in Islam will be in prominence."

Therefore, Sunnahs are in no practice because of the upper hand of innovations in Islam. Moreover, some nominal religious scholars have established some of these innovations by calling them Sunnah. The people have also believe in them, considering them as Sunnahs and regularly bring them into practice. Whereas, the Holy Prophet (SAW) says about those who are telling a lie on behalf of the Prophet (SAW)[20]:

"لَا تَكُنُبُوا عَلَيَّ فَإِنَّمَّا مَنْ يَكُنُبُ عَلَيَّ يُلْجِعُ النَّارَ"

Translation: “O people! Don’t attribute falsehood to me because anyone who attributes mendacity to me, will enter into hell.”

It is quite obvious that anyone who will attribute mendacity to the Holy Prophet (SAW), the fire of hell is indeed a severe punishment for him/her. Therefore, innovations in Islam are often condemned because most of the acts of innovation have no proof in Sunnahs. People are losing their right way of real Sunnahs by acting upon these false innovations.

Sectarianism:

Our Muslim society has been divided into many sects is one of the worst effects of innovations in Islam because every sect has invented its own innovations and it considers them the best. It has also a sound belief that the other sects lead astray from the right path. Although those people are on the right path who follow Quran and Sunnah. As the Holy prophet (SAW) says[21]:

”ثَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَحْلُوا مَا تَمْسَكْنُ بِهِمَا: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنْنَةَ نَبِيِّهِ“

Translation: “I am leaving for you two things at my departure, if you hold on them firmly, you will never go astray. One is Quran and the other one is my Sunnah.”

Similarly, in the Holy Quran, Allah has instructed us to follow Quran strictly and forbid us to be divided[22]:

”وَاعْصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَنْقِرُوهُ“

Translation: “And (O Muslims!) Hold firmly the rope of Allah together and do not put yourselves in sectarianism.” In spite of this order of Allah, we have forgot the teachings of Quran and Sunnah. This is the reason that we are divided into seventy-three sects and every sect is acting upon the instructions of its leader. This is the reason that among these sects, religious narrow-mindedness is extensively so much severe that they consider one another’s prayers as wrong. Moreover, fights take place on this issue now-a-days and they try to damage worshipping places of one another. It is very common now-a-days to listen that a Sunni has attacked on Shias’ mosque. This is going on regularly which resulted in the eradication of Muslim unity in this world today. Brotherhood can nowhere be seen today. Jealousy and animosity has become personal traits of the Muslim today. Everyone blames other for being Sunni, Shia etc. considering them wrong while considers himself/herself Qadria and calls himself/herself pious. Therefore, Muslims have lost that integrity and grace which they had possessed in the past. These calamities is because of negligence towards the Holy Quran.² Thereupon, the Holy prophet (SAW) will be grumbling to Allah (due to the act of His (SAW) ummah) on dooms day[23]:

”وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا“

Translation: “And the Holy Prophet (SAW) will say, O my Allah! My ummah had ignored this Quran.”

The same words are said by Allama Iqbal in this couplet[24]:

”وَهُوَ زَمَانٌ مِّنْ مَعْزَزٍ تَهْمَ مُسْلِمٌ بُوْ كَرِ“

اور ہم خوار ہوئے تارک قرآن ہو کر

Translation: “Being the actual Muslims they earn grace and honour for themselves, and we lost everything because we did not follow Quran.”

Therefore, if we want to become united, we must hold the Quran firmly. We must eradicate those innovations which are prevailed in Islam today. After knowing the effects of innovations in Islam, it can be easily observed that Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet (SAW) have strongly condemned innovations in Islam because these innovations deteriorate Islam and the people go astray from Quran and Sunnah.

REFERENCES

- [1] Haqiqat e Alsunnah wal Bidaa, Jalaluddin Al-Sauotvi, Page No.88
- [2] Bidaatsa daman Bachai, Shah Ismail Shaheed, Page No.15, Qadeemi Kutab Khana Muqabil Aram Bagh Karachi
- [3] Quran, Surrah Al-Maida, v.No:3
- [4] Quran, Surrah Al-Aaraf, v.No:194-195
- [5] Quran, Surrah Al-Maida, v.No:23
- [6] Quran, Surrah Al-Ahzab, v.No:3
- [7] Islami Maheenawr Bidaat Murwaaja, TafSeel Ahmad, M-A, page No:49, Darulundulass Back Road Chowberjee Lahore 2006
- [7] Quran, Surrah Al-Maida, v.No:27

- [8] Quran, Surrah Al-Imran, v.No:103
 - [9] MutuaImama Malik, Malik bin Anas, Hadith No.1874, Noor Muhammad kutab Khana Aram Bagh Karachi
 - [10] SunnatwaBidaat, Mufti Muhammad Shafai, Page No:17, Idarutul Maarifdarululoom Karachi
 - [11] Quran, Surrah Al-Baqara, v.No:79
 - [12] Quran, Surrah Al-Imran, v.No:19
 - [13] Deen ma Bidaat, Shiekh Abu bakkar Al jazairi, Translation: Saifur Rahman Alflah, page No:7, Markaz aldewaalaslamia
 - [14] Al Sahihul Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Hadith No.6882, Maktaba Qudosiaurd Bazar Lahore, 2001
 - [15] Quran, Surrah Al-Imran, v.No:106
 - [16] Quran, Surrah Al-Imran, v.No:122
 - [17] Quran, Surrah Al-Namal, v.No:62
 - [18] Al-Maida, v.No:29
 - [19] Quran, Surrah Al-Annisaa, v.No:80
 - [20] Al Sahihul Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Hadith No.106
 - [21] MutuaImama Malik, Malik bin Anas, Hadith No.1874
 - [22] Quran, Surrah Al-Imran, v.No:103
 - [23] Bidaatsadaman Bachai, Shah Ismail Shaheed, Page No.28, Qadeemi Kutab Khana Muqabil Aram Bagh Karachi
 - [24] Quran, Surrah Al-Furqaan, v.No:36
 - [25] Jawabe Shikwa, Allama Muhammad Iqbal
-