Appendix B

# BIDÁH

*Translation of the complete topic in* ***Qawāýid al-Kubrā*** *of Imām Ibn Ábd as-Salām*

***Bidáh***: Praxes not in vogue in the time of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

It is classified as following:

1. *Bidáh Wājibah (Wājib)*[73] – Obligatory
2. *Bidáh Muĥarramah (Ĥarām)* – Forbidden
3. *Bidáh Mandūbah (Mandūb)* – Recommended, Praiseworthy
4. *Bidáh Makrūhah (Makrūh)* – Disliked
5. *Bidáh Mubāĥah (Mubāĥ)* – Permissible

The method to ascertain the category to which a bidáh belongs is to evaluate it against principles of sharīáh. If it corresponds to the principles of wājib, it is wājib; and likewise ĥarām, mandūb, makrūh or mubāĥ according to respective conditions.

***Examples of Obligatory Bidáh***:

- Arabic Grammar: it is obligatory[74] to teach and learn [Arabic] grammar to be able to understand the Book of Allāh and the tradition of His Messenger ﷺ. This is obligatory because, it is obligatory to preserve the sharīáh; and it is not possible to protect it unless we understand it well. That which is required to fulfil an obligation is also obligatory.

[73] In Arabic, it is *wājibah,* etc. due to agreement with gender, which is ignored here.

[74] Obligatory for a group of scholars.

- Conservation of language of the Book and Sunnah.[75]
- Establishing[76] the discipline of principles of fiqh [*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*]
- Criticism of narrators,[77] so as to differentiate between authenticated and weak reports.

The principles of sharīáh mandate its preservation as a collective obligation,[78] and it is impossible to preserve except by adopting the aforementioned innovations.

### *Examples of Forbidden Bidáh*:

- The Qadarīyyah[79] sect – deniers of destiny
- The Jabarīyyah sect – deniers of free will
- The Murjiyyah sect – who deny punishment in the hereafter
- The Mujassimah sect – anthropomorphists

It must be noted that refuting these sects is an obligatory bidáh.[80]

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[75] *Ĥifż al-gharīb*: preserving meanings of antiquated words. For example dictionaries like *Mishkātu'l Anwar* of Qāđī Íyāđ, *Nihāyah* of Ibn al-Athīr, *Tuĥfatu'l Arīb* of Abū Ĥayyān and *Tahdhīb al-Asma'a wa'l Lughāt* of Nawawī.

[76] Which is an innovation and not formalised in the time of the Companions or their followers.

[77] *jarĥ - tádīl*

[78] *farđ kifāyah*: It is collectively obligatory such that if a group of people are engaged in it, the community is absolved; and if nobody engages in it, every individual is culpable and bears the sin of not fulfilling the obligation.

[79] Not to be confused with *Qādiriyyah*, due to proximity in transliteration; Qādirīs are the followers of Shaykh Ábd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī – a sufi school within Ahl as-Sunnah. Qadarī is a sect that denies in Divine preordination or *taqdīr*.

[80] That is, none of the Ṣaĥābah and Tābiýīs refuted anthropomorphists as they did not exist in their time; and since they appeared later, it is obligatory on us to refute them, like the Wahābīs, Salafīs and their offshoots – may Allāh táālā destroy their mischief.

### *Examples of Recommended Bidáh:*

- Establishing schools, cloisters; building bridges and alcoves.[81]
- Every good thing or charity which was not established among the first generation of Muslims.
- *Tarāwīĥ*: Supererogatory prayers in Ramađān.
- Expounding finer points of taşawwuf; theological discourse and refutation.
- Gatherings to discuss and elucidate proofs for religious issues, as long as such conferences are for the sake of Allāh táālā.

### *Examples of Disliked Bidáh*

- Decorating and adorning mosques
- Embellishing copies of the Qur'ān
- [According to one opinion,] reciting Qur'ān in a melodious voice and tempo such that it violates the structure of Arabic words; but the accurate position is that it is forbidden [when variation of the tone adds or elides a letter, thereby distorting its meaning].

### *Examples of Permissible Bidáh*

- Shaking hands after morning and evening prayers.[82]
- Preparing and eating luxurious and delicious food and drink; wearing expensive and fine clothes; living in spacious and comfortable dwellings; wearing newer forms of Muslim headgear[83] and other accessories.[84]

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[81] *qanāţir*

[82] *şubĥ - áşr*

[83] *ţayālisah*: is a form of cap which was not present in the first generation and is a foreign import.

[84] *akmām*: cuff links.

There may be a difference of opinion in some of these issues – where a group of scholars consider it a disliked innovation [*bidáh makrūhah,*] others may consider it as an actionable sunnah present in the time of RasūlAllāh ﷺ or thereafter similar to recitation of *istiáādhah* and *basmalah*[85] in the prayer. Allāh táālā knows best.

[85] ***istiáādhah***: aúūdhu billāhi mina'sh shayṭāni'r rajīm;
***basmalah***: bismillāhi'r raĥmani'r raĥīm.