



# The Enemy's Daughter

## SAFIYYAH

As a child, she was lovely and most endearing, the favorite of all her family. As a young woman, she was

### A Relative of Several Prophets

sought after by the most distinguished men among her own people. Besides, her family was highly distinguished for learning. Her father was a rabbi of high distinction, living in Yathrib, the old name of Madinah, among the Jews who had immigrated there to await the advent of the last of God's prophets and messengers. His knowledge was such that he could easily recognize the Prophet, *peace on him*, in one meeting; because all divine scriptures, in their original forms, included good descriptions of the man God would be sending to deliver His last message to mankind.

Huyayy ibn Akhtab was her father, and he certainly heard of Prophet Muhammad, *peace on him*, when he was still advocating his message in Makkah. Later on, when Islam began to make its way into Madinah with the early converts among its people, Huyayy was eagerly awaiting a chance to establish the truth about Muhammad, *peace on him*, realizing that Madinah was to be the place to which the last Prophet would migrate. When this happened, and the Prophet, *peace on him*, arrived in Madinah, Huyayy sought to meet him to determine whether he was truly the last prophet or an impostor. How did that meeting go? We have this report by his daughter, Safiyyah:

**“I was my father’s favorite child, and I was also the favorite of my uncle, Abu Yasir. They would never see me with a child of either of them without picking me up in preference to the other child. When God’s Messenger arrived in Madinah and stayed at Quba’, my father, Huyayy ibn Akhtab and my uncle, Abu Yasir, went to see him before sunrise. They did not return home until sunset. They were so tired when they came back that they could have dropped as they walked. My**

**face was beaming with a smile as I went toward them. Neither, however, took any notice of me, because they were obviously very depressed. I heard my uncle, Abu Yasir, say to my father, Huyayy: “Is it truly he?” My father answered: “Yes, indeed. By God, it is he.” My uncle said: “Do you recognize him perfectly?” My father answered in the affirmative. Then my uncle asked: “What are you going to do?” My father answered: “By God, I will be his enemy as long as I live.”**

Later events proved that Huyayy was true to his word, standing in determined opposition to the Prophet, *peace on him*, and to Islam, raising forces and forging alliances to try to suppress Islam and eradicate the Muslims. Why should he do that? Why does a man of religion stand in opposition to a messenger of God when he has determined that he is delivering God’s true message? Huyayy looked at the fact that Muhammad, *peace on him*, was not of Jewish descent as a great disaster that meant that the divine message was no longer entrusted to the Israelites. His pride would not allow him to follow a Gentile. Yet he could have stopped at that and refused to follow Islam. No one would have bothered him, had he chosen to do so. But he went further than that. He wanted to prove to God that His choice of a messenger was wrong by defeating Muhammad, *peace on him*, and killing him if he could manage that.

He was behind more than one attempt to assassinate the Prophet, *peace on him*, and he raised armies to attack Madinah. His hostility echoed that of Abu Jahl who was also motivated by tribal pride to oppose Islam, but Huyayy was the more dangerous and more hostile conspirator. Yet his daughter was to become the Prophet’s wife.



When it was clear that the Prophet, *peace on him*, decided to marry Safiyyah, the news was received with considerable expectation. On their arrival in Madinah, the Prophet, *peace on him*, accommodated her first in the house of his Ansari companion, Harithah ibn Al Numan. Many women, particularly from the Ansar, went there to see the Prophet’s new wife. This was only to be expected since the Ansar were used to have the Jews living in their city until they had recently been evacuated. Safiyyah’s own people, Al Nadir tribe, were evacuated only three years earlier. The Prophet, *peace on him*, even noticed his wife, Ayesha, going there, having covered her face. He observed her movement until he saw her going into that house. When she came back home, he asked her: ‘How did you find her?’ Her answer expressed her jealous feelings: ‘I only saw a Jewish woman.’ The Prophet, *peace on him*, said: ‘Do not say that. She has become a Muslim and she is a good Muslim.’

**A report by Umm Sinaan, a companion of the Prophet, states that she saw four of the Prophet’s wives coming to that house to look at Safiyyah. They had heard of her beauty. Umm Sinaan says: ‘I heard Zainab speaking to Juwairiyah: ‘I fear that this young woman will be the Prophet’s favorite.’ Juwairiyah answered: ‘I do not think so. She belongs to a type of woman who are rarely favored by their husbands.’ Whatever Juwairiyah saw to make her give this judgment is not mentioned.** The Prophet, *peace on him*, however, did not treat Safiyyah any differently from his other wives. She established her position in his home and she loved him dearly. When he suffered illness, shortly before his death, she said she would willingly bear the pain if he would only recover. He said that she was expressing her genuine feelings.

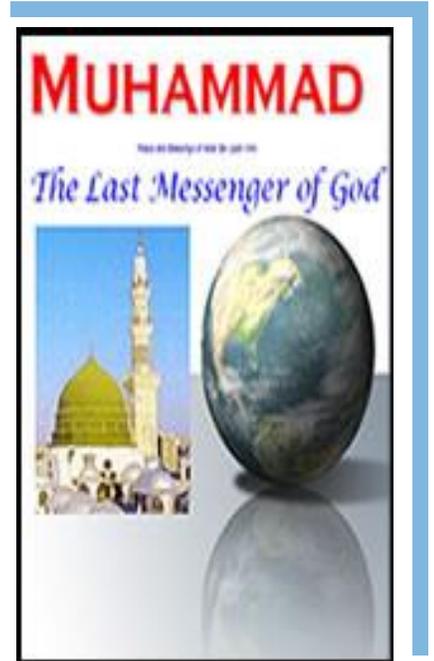
After their marriage the Prophet, *peace on him*, did all he could to help Safiyyah forget the events of the past, which were naturally a source of grief to her. **She is reported to have said later: “God’s Messenger, *peace on him*, was very hateful to me because he killed my husband and my father. However, he kept**

**apologizing to me, saying that my father had raised the Arabs against him, and did this and did that, until all my hard feelings disappeared.”**

One day, the Prophet, *peace on him*, went into Safiyyah’s room to find her crying. When he asked her why, she said that Ayesha and Hafsa, who were both his wives, kept talking about her, belittling her position. They said that either of them was far superior to her because they were distant cousins of the Prophet and that he married them for their personalities, not for any other reason. He said to her: **“Why did you not reply to them and said: ‘how can you be superior to me when Aaron is my father (meaning her lineage ended with him), and Moses is my uncle and my husband is Muhammad.”**

It is reported that when Safiyyah was still a young girl, she saw in her dream that the moon fell into her lap. She mentioned her dream to her father and he hit her hard in the face. He said to her: “You surely wish to be wed to the King of the Arabs.” The slap left a visible mark on her face which the Prophet noticed when he married her. He asked her about the mark and she told him its cause.

Safiyyah died in year 50, when she was around 70 years of age. She reported several Hadiths which are transmitted in anthologies of authentic Hadiths.



## BORN INTO A VERY NOBLE FAMILY

**MUHAMMAD**, *peace and blessings of Allah on him*, WAS born in Makkah at the beginning of the last third of the sixth century.

At that time, the world generally was in a miserable state, as if general collapse was about to overwhelm everything. Nowhere in the world was there a coherent faith or a solid system under which a community and a state could prosper. The two superpowers, the Byzantine and the Persian empires, were on the verge of collapse. In Byzantine, the Christian faith was no longer the guiding light. In fact, its intellectuals were engaged in endless, futile debates about everything real or imaginary. Its power, in land and sea, had weakened. Commanding vast areas of land, it could only maintain its rule by leaving its different

provinces in a state of practical autonomy. Muslims were soon to deprive it of most of its provinces in Asia and North Africa.

The Persian Empire was in no better shape. Its religion had been distorted. Monotheism gave way to dualism, with good and evil represented by two different deities that were engaged in a permanent fight, and women were made the vehicle used to spread evil. Moreover, political chaos prevailed, with many instances of rebellion and sedition.

Elsewhere we could see no solid system based on coherent beliefs that satisfied thinking minds, or on a set of moral values that could sustain law and order and establish a proper human society that knows its way to progress.

In Arabia, a tribal society existed that gave affiliation to one's tribe supreme importance. Makkah had a special status, as a result of its religious importance with the Ka'bah at its center. Moreover, it enjoyed economic prosperity due to its organization of proper international trade. In fact, most of the wealth of Arabia was concentrated in Makkah, and held by a small group of its noblemen. This led to a life of luxury with its associated vices, such as gambling, drinking, loose sexual morality and exploitation of the poor.

A hierarchy of tribes established itself on the basis of certain values, such as wealth, numbers and military prowess. Yet the top position in the hierarchy indisputably belonged to the Quraish, as it lived in Makkah and was the custodian of the Ka'bah, the temple built by the Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail and consecrated for the worship of God alone.

Within every major tribe there were a number of clans, each clan comprising a number of families. The system meant that loyalty to one's immediate family transcended all claims of

loyalty. Yet loyalty moved upward, stage by stage, from a small clan to a larger one, then to the tribe. Among the Quraish, the Hashimite clan, was considered the most noble, but it was not the richest. Its nobility derived from its direct descent from the Prophet Ismail and from the fact that for several generations it held custody of the Ka'bah and provided food and water to the pilgrims who came from all over Arabia.

The chief of the Hashimite clan was Abd Al Muttalib, grandfather of Muhammad, *peace on him*, who by the time of the Prophet's birth was a very old man. He was not rich by Makkan standards, but was recognized by all as the noblest person in Makkah. His standing was enhanced a couple of decades before the birth of his grandson, when he dug the well of ZamZam in response to a dream he saw on successive nights, giving him its exact location.

THUS, Muhammad, *peace on him*, was the son of the noblest family in Arabia, where nobility of birth was given a very high degree of importance. Yet he was not born into a rich family where children could be spoilt.



**Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet. O you who believe, call for blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation.**



*Some people celebrate an occasion called “Koondas” in Urdu which involves reciting the Fatihah for Ja’afar Sadiq a great many times, and feeding the poor as Sadaqa (charity) on his behalf, in the month of Rajab. On the night before this celebration, which might take place any day in Rajab, women from the locality are invited to help prepare food and sweets for the occasion. Women who are in their period are assumed to be unclean, and they are, therefore, not allowed to help or even to eat of the food and sweets after the Fatihah is recited. Neither they, nor even pregnant women, are allowed to enter the room where the food is served, because, as the custom would have it, it can be only served in a room, which has been cleaned very thoroughly and sprayed, with perfume and incense. I have been told by a friend who has good knowledge of Islam that such practices are innovations and cannot be sanctioned by our religion. What she could not tell me however was that if one could not decline an invitation to attend or help in such celebration, because of family commitments and traditions, would it be still wrong for her to attend. I know from experience that it could be very embarrassing for one to refuse such an invitation from very close friends who believe that they are only inviting others for a celebration of worship. May I add that the embarrassment is not only momentary; it could make relations within the family strained, which, I understand, is not something to be encouraged by Islam.*

**A:** I cannot find anywhere in the Qur’an or in the Hadiths any indication that such celebrations are encouraged, recommended or indeed appropriate. As such, they cannot be part of Islamic worship. This is the only verdict that can be given on the question. Now let us consider it in detail.

When you are asked what makes a person a Muslim, your immediate answer will be that he must declare that he believes that **“there is no deity save Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger.”**



This declaration, as you realize, is made of two parts: the first concerns the Oneness of Allah and the second stresses the importance of the Prophet’s role as Allah’s messenger. What the second part of declaration means in practice is that we can receive our teachings, values and practices, with respect to our faith, only from the Prophet, *peace on him*. If we were to receive these from any other source, we do not give credence to our belief in Muhammad as a messenger of Allah. The role of a messenger is to convey a message; he is expected to convey it to people complete, without omissions or additions. Our Prophet, *peace on him*, has stressed, time and again, that he only conveys what he has been asked to convey. Moreover, throughout his life after receiving his message, he never hesitated to convey anything entrusted to him, even when he was certain that conveyance of such a thing would be received with derision, ridicule and cries of “lies”. At the end of his long and

*Continued from January 2014*

INNOVATIONS

OR

BID’AH

“DEVIATION  
IN  
MATTERS  
OF  
RELIGION”

blessed mission, the Prophet, *peace on him*, addressed the great congregation who went with him on pilgrimage, and enumerated in his farewell address the basic principles and important duties of Islam, asking his followers time after time;

**“Have I conveyed to you Allah’s message?”**

Every time he asked that question, the Muslims gathered in the Grand Mosque in Makkah answered in the affirmative. He then prayed Allah to bear witness to that fact.

If the message delivered to us by the Prophet, *peace on him*, is complete, then it cannot be made “more complete” by an addition made by any person, be he a scholar or devout, or indeed a direct descendant of the Prophet, *peace on him*. For any person to tell us a certain practice would endear us to Allah, or earn us any reward from Him, although it has not been taught or recommended to us by the Prophet, *peace on him*, is to make a false claim that he can never substantiate. He indeed, commits a bigger sin than that. By saying this, he says that he knows something which the Prophet, *peace on him*, either did not know or he actually knew but did not convey to us as part of his message. Whichever case he implies, he is guilty of an enormity, which takes him out of the pale of Islam altogether. To say that he knows something of the faith of Islam which the Prophet, *peace on him*, did not know is to give himself a position higher than that of the Prophet, *peace on him*. To say that the Prophet, *peace on him*, kept quiet about it, despite his knowledge of it, is to accuse the Prophet, *peace on him*, of being unfaithful to his trust, negligence of his mission, or a deliberate concealment of part of it. No Muslim who truly loves the Prophet, *peace on him*, would entertain any such thought.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن  
كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

**Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the Latter day, and remembers Allah much.**

When we read the Qur’an carefully, we realize that Allah has chosen Muhammad to be His messenger, giving him all the qualities which make of him a messenger who is faithful to his trust, able to convey his message with clarity, accuracy and precision. We then go through the Hadiths from beginning to end to find out whether such celebrations as the one you have described has any place in Islam. The result of our search is bound to be in the negative. Indeed, the Prophet, *peace on him*, has not recommended us to hold or organize any celebrations related to his own person. We are not required to celebrate the Prophet’s birthday or indeed any other occasion in his life. How, then, could it be possible that we should celebrate any occasion in anybody else’s life or career? Had it been mentioned or recommended by the Prophet, *peace on him*, we could have done it willingly. The fact that he has always insisted that no one can be treated in any particular or exceptional way with regard to Islamic worship means that all

such celebrations, dedicated in the honor or for the benefit, of any person are no more than false “worship.” It indeed incurs Allah’s displeasure.

The falsehood of the celebrations you have described appears in more ways than one. For example, reciting the Fatihah thousands of times in parrot-like manner is alien to Islamic worship. When we read the Qur’an, we should dwell on the meaning of its verses. The recitation done on such occasions pays no attention whatsoever to the meaning of the recited parts of the Qur’an. The special care taken with regard to the room where the food is served is also not Islamic. Incense has no special significance, although many people associate it with special “functions” of worship. There is no advantage in burning incense; indeed some people find its smell unhealthy.

What is more infuriating from the Islamic point of view is that some women are barred from help with the preparation of food or entering the place where it is served, simply because they are in their period or they are pregnant. How can such a practice be justified when the Prophet, *peace on him*, expressly states that:

**“A believer can never be impure.”**

This statement was made in the context of what is discharged by people in different situations. The import of this statement is the exact opposite of what is practiced in such celebrations. If a woman in her period is assumed to be impure and that her impurity affects the food she prepares, then we would have been told by the Prophet, *peace on him*, that we must not eat any type of food prepared or served by a woman during her period. The notion itself is absolutely absurd.

Your friend is absolutely correct when she states that such celebrations are innovations. No innovation should be encouraged or accepted or attended by any Muslim. The only situation where attendance in such places is permitted is when the person goes with the intention of making the teachings of Islam in respect of such traditions clear to the people present and try to persuade them not to go ahead with them. If someone whose knowledge and opinions are respected by the people organizing or attending such a celebration goes there and makes it clear to them that they incur Allah’s displeasure instead of earning a reward for their efforts, then it is perfectly proper for him to go and do so. But if a person knows that whatever he says to the people would not affect the situation one way or another, then he should not go. The basis for this judgment is that celebrations of the sort you have described are not only innovations, but they constitute a violation of Islamic teachings. They come under the heading of *Munkar*, which means something opposed or contrary to Islamic teachings. As such they should be changed or stopped. Allah states in the Qur’an:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ  
أَمَّنْ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

**You are the best nation raised up for men: you enjoin good and forbid evil and you believe in Allah. And if the People of the Book had believed, it would have been better for them. Some of them are believers but most of them are transgressors.**

If one is invited to such a celebration and circumstances make it extremely difficult for him or her to decline the invitation, and he or she still finds it impossible to persuade the people not to go ahead with their celebrations, one may go with the intention of visiting his or her relatives and friends. The visitor should try to make his or her visit brief, leave place early and find some excuse in order not to take part in any aspect of the celebration. This concession is made only for the specific purpose of avoiding causing a strain in one's relations with one's friends and relatives. That, however, does not allow one to take part in a celebration which is a total innovation, or Bid'ah, as is known in Islamic terminology.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ  
الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

**O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is best and more suitable to (achieve) the end.**

*Apparently there is no authentic statement to suggest that the Prophet, peace on him, held the "QUL" ceremony on the third, tenth or fortieth day of the death of a person. Is there any harm in holding such a function, particularly since it encourages people to do something highly recommended, i.e. reading the Qur'an.*

*A:* On an authentic Hadith, Lady Ayesha quotes the Prophet, peace on him, as saying:

**"He who innovates something in the matter of ours {i.e. our religion} that is not of it will have it rejected."** (Al Bukhari / Muslim)

You started your question by saying that there is apparently no authentic statement or report to support this ceremony you name as "Qul". Hence, it must not be practiced, particularly since it is of a religious nature. We rely on the Prophet, peace on him, for explaining to us what part of our faith is and what is not. He has conveyed to us Allah's message complete.

**Therefore, any addition, even though it may have a religious appearance, must be rejected.** The point is that if that addition is part of Islam, then why the Prophet, peace on him, has not explained it. Since the Prophet, peace on him, has given us our religion complete, then how can we add to what he has given us?

You mentioned that it encourages people to do something good. Yes, but it also has the great disadvantage of inventing something the Prophet, peace on him, has not mentioned. If people will not read the Qur'an normally, then their reading of the Qur'an on these occasions does not give them the habit of reading it. It is indeed of little benefit to them or to others. We should always confine ourselves to what the Prophet, peace on him, has taught us. We accept NO addition and NO omission.



*🔗 We are told that voluntary worship wins us great rewards from Allah. On the other hand, we are repeatedly warned against innovations that lead us to hell. Any voluntary worship is not obligatory and therefore, shall I say an undefined worship. How does one differentiate between innovation and voluntary worship?*

*🔗* We often talk about innovations in highly unfavorable terms. We say that we cannot accept them in our religion and we must not practice them, no matter who encourages us to do so and how keenly they are advocated. Heated arguments often take place between those who insist that innovations have no room in our religion and those who say that there is no harm in doing something additional, which does not contravene the teachings of Islam. The new thing, they argue, has no aim other than to worship Allah and earn His pleasure. This may be so, but it is pertinent to ask: how do you earn Allah's pleasure? Indeed, how can you endear yourself to anyone: a parent, a teacher, a supervisor at work, a ruler, etc? Do you think any of these will be very pleased with you if you pay no attention to what they request of you or order you? Or will you be more likely to please them if you do exactly as they have told you?

Someone may suggest that it is not improbable to visualize a situation where your keenness to please someone takes you well beyond what he has requested. Your father may ask you to do something in a particular fashion, but you exert yourself to do something extra, only to bring happiness to his heart. He will be ever so pleased with you; so they argue. The fact is that you are just as likely to incur his displeasure. May be he knows something which you do not know, and your extra effort will prove to be counterproductive. If this is true in human dealings, it is more so in our relationship with Allah. In human relations, we are just as likely to know the result of a particular action as the other party who requests something of us or orders us to do it in a particular fashion. When we are dealing with Allah, our knowledge is limited to our world and surroundings. Allah's knowledge is infinite. Therefore, when He tells us, through His Messenger, something, we stick to it and add nothing unless we are told by Allah's messenger that an addition is in order.

We must not forget an essential fact about our religion of Islam. It is a religion, which provides a complete way of life for us to follow in order to achieve our own happiness. The cornerstone of this way of life is that embodied in the declaration by making which we become Muslims: **“I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is Allah's messenger.”**



The first part of this declaration relates to submission to Allah's will. When we make this declaration, we consciously make a binding pledge that we surrender ourselves to Allah and we abide by His orders. The second part of the declaration defines how we should go about putting this into practice. We declare that Muhammad, *peace on him*, is Allah's messenger. This means that only through him we learn how to submit to Allah and do his bidding. We accept from no one else any teachings or instructions on how to behave in this life, how to submit to Allah and worship Him, or now to go about any business of ours. Therefore, anything that relates to faith and the religion of Islam which is not communicated to us

through Muhammad, *peace on him*, is unacceptable, simply because to accept it would tantamount to a negation of the Prophet's role as Allah's messenger. The Prophet, *peace on him*, puts this principle in the clearest of terms. As mentioned above on page 8, he says:

**“He who innovates something in the matter of ours {i.e. our religion} that is not of it will have it rejected.”** (Al Bukhari / Muslim)

The way the Prophet, *peace on him*, has phrased this most important principle is highly significant. To start with, he does not refer to “Islamic worship” or to “concepts of traditions or practices”. He refers to “this matter of ours” which is a very general term that incorporates all these and much more. Hence, the area in which no innovation is admissible is wide indeed. It comprises everything that Islam involves, and Islam we should remember, is a complete way of life. The innovation the Prophet, *peace on him*, denounces must be the one which does not belong to Islam: it is “not of it”. Hence, we should determine whether any practice or belief or idea we may entertain belongs to Islam as conveyed to us by Allah's messenger or not. If it belongs to it, then it is perfectly right. If it does not, then we should reject it without hesitation. Since there is only one way to know what belongs to Islam, we must have recourse to it. That way is to identify what has been conveyed to us by the Prophet, *peace on him*, and to follow it.

The Prophet, *peace on him*, says that any innovation is sure to be rejected. The rejection is from Islam itself in the sense that Islam resembles a living organism or a body, which rejects any foreign element that is introduced into it. It is, more importantly; rejected by Allah who does not allow anyone to add to the faith He has revealed to His messenger. By adding anything, one is placing oneself on the same level with Allah. This cannot be accepted from anyone. When we offer any worship, which is not obligatory but voluntary, as has been shown to us by His messenger, we are only doing what we have been told to do. Thus we are not indulging in any kind of innovation.

Should we not ask ourselves: What is the purpose of innovation or addition? If it is to please Allah and to be religious, then an innovation does not fall within this category of actions. What we have to remember here is that the Prophet, *peace on him*, was the most sincere of all servants of Allah. His worship was the most perfect any human being can do. Hence, if something was not done or practiced by him at any time, it does not belong to Islamic worship or Islamic faith.

Someone may suggest here that we may do something which the Prophet, *peace on him*, has not done, but still falls within Islamic worship. What view is taken of such an action? To give an example, is it permissible to offer a certain prayer, of the same type and form as ordinary prayer, but which the Prophet, *peace on him*, did not practice? The answer is simple: If the Prophet, *peace on him*, has said that it can be practiced, then we can go ahead and do it. If it has not [been practiced], then we are inventing something new. This is not open to a Muslim to do. The reason is that if we leave the door open for such actions, it will never be closed and Islamic worship may swell to larger and larger proportions. To illustrate, let us take the case of fasting in Ramadan. We are required to begin our fast when we have made certain that the new moon of the month of Ramadan has been born and sighted. If some people cannot determine whether the moon could be sighted, because the sky was a little cloudy, should they fast the following day just in case the moon has been born? The answer is definitely no. The Prophet,

*peace on him*, has forbidden us fasting on the day of doubt. We have to start our fasting in the certainty that the month has started. This can only be ascertained if the moon has been actually sighted or the previous month has been completed. Hence, the Prophet, *peace on him*, says:

**“Fast when you have sighted the moon and end your fast when you have sighted the new moon. Should the sky be too to sight the new moon, complete the month of Sh’aban to 30 days.”**

We must strictly follow this order. If we were to fast a day in advance “just in case”, we may take the count of the month of Ramadan to 31 days which is impossible. Moreover, it is easy to visualize a situation where, by the passage of time, fasting 31 days becomes the norm and an addition of another day, “just in case”, may be preferred.

There is a clear rule, which is of great help in such matters. If the new innovation is part of Islamic worship, but it is simply just a little extra and it has certain rules and regulations and specific times to offer it, then it is an innovation to which the description “erroneous” ---- which the Prophet, *peace on him*, has used to describe all innovations ---- applies. There are numerous examples to be taken from the Sufi circle of such innovations. All these must be rejected because the Prophet, *peace on him*, has not endorsed them.



## Who Belongs to My Community, and Who Does Not !

“Having explained all these things, I repeat once more that you must not rest satisfied merely because in an outward form you have taken *baiyat* at my hand. The outward form means nothing. Allah sees what lies in your hearts, and He will deal with you on the basis of what He sees there.

I herein discharge my duty to you by making it plain that sin is a poison. Do not take it. Disobedience to Allah is a dirty death which you should avoid. Turn to prayer so that you should get the strength to repel sin. At the time of prayer, if a man does not firmly believe that Allah has power over everything except what may be contained in a previous promise, **then such a one is not of my community.** He, who is caught in a web of worldly greed and

never even raises his eyes to things which pertain to the next life, **is not of my community.** Whosoever does not wholly and completely keep away from every sin and every evil action, like wine, gambling, looking lustfully at women, dishonesty, bribes, and from every kind of illegal gratification, **is not of my community.** Whosoever is not constantly turning to prayer, and does not remember Allah in absolute humility of spirit, **is not of my community.** Whosoever does not respect his parents, whosoever does not render obedience to them in things which do not run counter to the Holy Qur’an, and whosoever is neglectful in rendering to them the service to which they are undoubtedly entitled **is not of my community.** Whosoever does not live with his wife and her relations with

gentleness, goodness and generosity **is not of my community.** Whosoever deprives his neighbour of the very least good in his power **is not my community.** Whosoever has no wish to forgive the faults of those who may have transgressed against him and desires to nurse malice **is not of my community.** Every man or woman who is dishonest towards his or her spouse **is not of my community.** Whosoever in any way violates the pledge he took at my hand at the time of the *baiyat* **is not of my community.** Whosoever does not really hold me to be the Promised Messiah **is not of my community.** Whosoever is not prepared to obey me in all things known to be right and virtuous **is not of my community.** And

whosoever, as a habit, sits among those who are hostile towards me falling into tacit and silent agreement with them **is not of my community.** Every adulterer, debauchee, drunkard, murderer, thief, gambler, dishonest person, bribe-taker, usurper, oppressor, tyrant, liar, forger, and the associate of these, and whosoever brings false accusations and scandal against his brothers and sisters, **is not of my community unless he fully repents of his misdeeds and totally abandons his bad associates and turns a new leaf.** Indeed, all these things are poisons. You cannot partake of them and live, for light and darkness cannot exist together.”

عزیز

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# FORGIVENESS

## Even For the Hardened Enemies

Nothing shows a person's mettle and whether he is magnanimous or unforgiving more than his treatment of his enemies when he has complete power over them. In open warfare people may kill each other and not feel any qualms about it, realizing that in war, unless you kill your enemy, you will be killed. But when the battle is over and you have achieved victory, it is how you treat your enemy that reveals your true character. History is full of stories about how cities were destroyed, civilians killed, women raped, and wealth pilfered and mass graves filled when a victorious army marched into defeated enemy land. Many were the occasions when whole regions were laid to waste and their populations suffered unmitigated misery.

But this was never the case under Islam, apart from isolated cases and situations when Islam was no longer the guiding light of Muslim communities. In the early periods of Islam, when Muslim armies moved against the Persian and Byzantine Empires to liberate their populations from injustice, they set a shining example of compassionate treatment of defeated enemies. Only this treatment enabled Islam to

penetrate into these areas and influence their populations to the extent that within a very short period all these areas became Muslim. Such magnanimity is inherent in the Islamic culture. None other than Prophet Muhammad, *peace on him*, planted its seeds, **peace and blessings of Allah on him**. It was he who showed the highest degree of magnanimity, knowing that even the most hardened enemy should be addressed with the message of Islam and given a chance to know it. He never allowed revenge to dictate his action. Indeed he never sought revenge against anyone, even when he was certain that the person was out to kill him.

Let us take the case of the Jewish women who gave him a cooked sheep so that he and his companions would eat. As he was about to eat of it, he stopped and said: **“Something tells me that this sheep is poisoned.”** The woman was brought in and she admitted having poisoned the sheep. When she was asked about her motive, she said frankly: “I wanted to kill you.” He told her: **“God would not let you have power over me.”** His companions asked him whether to put the woman to death, and he said: “No.” *[Al Bukhari and Muslim]*

Another version of this Hadith says that the Prophet, *peace on him*, realized that the sheep was poisoned when he ate the first bite. Apparently the woman put a large dose of poison, because even a small bite affected the Prophet, *peace on him*, for a long time. In fact, one of his companions, Bishr ibn Al Baraa', who was the first to eat of the sheep died of poisoning. Some reports suggest that the woman had been executed for killing Bishr. Although the Hadith that states that the Prophet, *peace on him*, refused to allow his companions to kill the woman is more authentic, since Al Bukhari and Muslim related it, it does not preclude that the woman was subsequently executed for murdering one of the Prophet's companions. The Prophet's pardon applied to his own right against a woman who plotted to kill him, but when her action resulted in the murder of another man, justice had to be done.

One of the people who did the Prophet, *peace on him*, much harm over a long period was Abdullah ibn Ubayy, who was considered the chief of the hypocrites in Madinah. He spoke ill of him, spread false rumors about him and his family, deserted with his supporters the Muslim army shortly before a crucial battle, cooperated with the enemies of Islam and plotted to undermine the Muslim state. Nevertheless, before his death, he specifically requested that the Prophet, *peace on him*, should lead his Janazah prayer, i.e. prayer for a deceased person. Omar ibn Al Khattab reports:

**“When Abdullah ibn Ubayy died, the Prophet, *peace on him*, was asked to pray for him. When the Prophet, *peace on him*, stood up to do so, I jumped to him and said ‘Messenger of God! Are you going to pray for Ibn Ubayy while he said this and that and the other?’ I reminded him of what the man said. The Prophet, *peace on him*, smiled and said to me: ‘Leave me alone, Omar.’ But when I was too persistent, he said to me: ‘I have been given a choice and I made my choice. Had I known that if I pray for his forgiveness over 70 times God will forgive him, I would certainly do so.’ He then offered the Janazah prayer for him and left. It was not long before two verses of Surah 9 were revealed, stating:**

وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَّاتَ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَىٰ قَبْرِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ  
وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

**'You shall not pray for any of them who dies, and you shall not stand by his grave. For they have denied God and His Messenger and died as hardened sinners.'**

[At Tauba 9:84]

The Prophet's argument about the choice he was given is based on the Qur'anic verse that addresses the Prophet, *peace on him*, saying:

اسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

**'You may pray for their forgiveness or may not pray for them, [for it will be the same].**

**Even if you were to pray seventy times for their forgiveness, God will not forgive them, for they have denied God and His Messenger, God does not guide those who are transgressors.'** [At Tauba 9:80]

This verse tells the Prophet, *peace on him*, that God will never forgive the hypocrites even though he may pray for their forgiveness, but it does not prevent the Prophet, *peace on him*, from praying for them. Indeed, at its face value, the verse gives him the choice. Hence, the Prophet, compassionate as he was, was willing to grant wish of Abdullah ibn Ubayy and pray for him. He even stated that he would pray for him any number of times, if that would ensure his forgiveness.

Considering all that Abdullah ibn Ubayy said and did against the Prophet, *peace on him*, over a period of several years, the Prophet's conduct was far greater than even the most magnanimous person could achieve. Ibn Ubayy did not merely indulge in defamation against the Prophet, *peace on him*, and his family, he in fact aided the enemies of Islam in every way he could. He was always quick to side with the unbelievers. In any other situation, he would be arrested, tried for treason and sentenced to death. The Prophet, *peace on him*, was fully aware of his conduct as many authentically reported events confirm. Nevertheless, the Prophet, *peace on him*, never said a harsh word to him, hoped for his reformation and would have dearly loved that Abdullah ibn Ubayy would mend his ways. This was not to be. Still, the Prophet, *peace on him*, prayed for his forgiveness.

It is on the basis of such practical examples that magnanimity has become a cherished quality Muslims always try to ensure in dealing with others. Hence, the groups that claim to advocate Islam yet engage in killing civilians or taking hostages, justifying their action on grounds of retaliation for similar actions by the enemy, are in error. The example they should follow is that set by the Prophet, *peace on him*, not by non-Muslims. We must abide by the rules of Islam, and Islam does not approve of avenging wrongs committed against us by similar, indiscriminate actions against innocent bystanders.

نبی کا آنا ہمیں ہے مگر جسے دید ہو یا قدیم کوئی  
خدا کے احمد یہ جاں نثا تے ہیں تو سو سال ہو گئے ہیں

# PARENTS

*The Most Important, after*

# ALLAH

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي  
الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ  
الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا

{An-Nisa .... 4:36}

**And serve Allah, and associate naught with Him, and be good to the parents** and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbour of (your) kin and the alien neighbour, and the companion in a journey and the wayfarer and those whom your right hands possess. Surely Allah loves not such as are proud, boastful,

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ **أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا**  
**وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا** وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِّنْ إِمْلَاقٍ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ  
وَآيَاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَلَا  
تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تَعْقِلُونَ

{Al An' am .... 6:151}

Say: Come! I will recite what your Lord has forbidden to you: **Associate naught with Him and do good to parents** and slay not your children for (fear of) poverty — We provide for you and for them — and draw not nigh to indecencies, open or secret, and kill not the soul which Allah has made sacred except in the course of justice. This He enjoins upon you that you may understand.

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ  
عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٌ وَلَا  
تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

{Bani Israel .... 17:23}

**And thy Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and do good to parents.** If either or both of them reach old age with thee, say not “Fie” to them, nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا  
لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ  
تَعْمَلُونَ

{Al Ankabut .... 29:8}

**And We have enjoined on man goodness to his parents.** But if they contend with thee to associate (others) with Me, of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not. To Me is your return, so I will inform you of what you did.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ