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Innovation (Al-Bid'a)

Innovation (Al-Bid'a) **البدعة**

Innovation

التَّحْذِيرُ مِنَ الْبِدْعَةِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : شَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحَدَّثَاتُهَا ، أَلَّا وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ ، أَلَّا وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ 1

1- The Prophet (S) said, 'The worst of matters are the innovations. Certainly, every innovation is a [source of] error and every error is destined for Hell.' [Amali al-Mufid, p. 188, no. 14]

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : إِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَسُنَّ سُنَّةَ بَدْعَةٍ ؛ فَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا سَنَّ سُنَّةَ سَيِّئَةٍ لَحِقَهُ وَزُرُّهَا وَوَزُرُّ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهَا.

2- The Prophet (S) said, 'Never start a practice based on an innovation; for a man who initiates a bad practice will incur its sin and the sins of the people who imitate him.' [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 77, p. 104, no. 1]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : مَا أُحْدِثْتُ بَدْعَةً إِلَّا تَرَكْتُ بِهَا سُنَّةً ، فَاتَّقُوا الْبِدْعَ وَالزَّمُوا الْمَهْيَعَ ، إِنَّ عَوَازِمَ الْأُمُورِ 3 أَفْضَلُهَا ، وَإِنَّ مُحَدَّثَاتِهَا شَرُّهَا.

3- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'No sooner is an innovation initiated than it leaves behind a common practice. So eschew innovations and adhere to the clear path. Verily the established traditions are the best, while innovated ones are the worst.' [Sharh Nahjul Balaghah li Ibn Abi al-Hadid, v. 9, p. 93]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام) : ما هَدَمَ الدِّينَ مِثْلُ الْبِدْعِ 4

4– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Nothing destroys religion like innovations.’[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 78, p. 92, no. 98]

The Innovators

أَهْلُ الْبِدْعِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : أَهْلُ الْبِدْعِ شَرُّ الْخَلْقِ وَالْخَلِيقَةِ 5

5– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The innovators are the worst of all of [God’s] creation.’[Kanz al–’Ummal, nos. 1095 and 1126]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : أَهْلُ الْبِدْعِ كِلَابُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ 6

6– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The innovators are the dogs of the inmates of Hell.’[Ibid. no. 1125]

The Meaning Of Innovation

مَعْنَى الْبِدْعَةِ

- الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام) : أَمَّا أَهْلُ الْبِدْعَةِ فَالْمُخَالِفُونَ لِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ وَلِكِتَابِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ، الْعَامِلُونَ بِرَأْيِهِمْ وَأَهْوَائِهِمْ وَإِنْ كَثُرُوا 7

7– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The innovators are those who contradict the command of Allah, His Book and His Messenger; they are those who follow their own opinion and desires, even if they are the majority.’[Ibid. no. 44216]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) : مَنْ دَعَا النَّاسَ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ وَفِيهِمْ مَنْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مِنْهُ فَهُوَ مُبْتَدِعٌ ضَالٌّ 8

8– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Anyone who calls people to give him their allegiance, knowing that among them is someone superior to him, is an erroneous innovator.’[Tuhaf al–’Uqul, no. 375]

Rejecting Innovators

الإِعْرَاضُ عَنْ صَاحِبِ الْبِدْعَةِ

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : مَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ صَاحِبِ بِدْعَةٍ ، بُغِضَ لَهُ ، مَلَأَ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ أَمْنًا وَإِيمَانًا⁹

9– The Prophet (S) said, ‘When a man rejects an innovator, out of dislike for him, Allah will fill his heart with peace and belief.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 5599]

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : مَنْ تَبَسَّمَ فِي وَجْهِ مُبْتَدِعٍ فَقَدْ أَعَانَ عَلَى هَدْمِ دِينِهِ¹⁰

10– The Prophet (S) said, ‘A man who smiles at an innovator has aided the destruction of his own religion.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 47, p. 217, no. 4]

The Innovator And Worship

المُبْتَدِعُ وَالْعِبَادَةُ

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : مَنْ عَمِلَ فِي بِدْعَةٍ خَلَاهُ الشَّيْطَانُ وَالْعِبَادَةُ، وَأَلْقَى عَلَيْهِ الْخُشُوعَ وَالْبُكَاءَ¹¹

11– The Prophet (S) said, ‘When a man acts in accordance with an innovation, Satan will leave him to worship and incite tears and emotion in him [i.e. that he may continue in its performance].’[Ibid. v. 72, p. 216, no. 8]

Invalidity Of The Worship Of An Innovator

بُطْلَانُ عَمَلِ الْمُبْتَدِعِ

.. رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : عَمَلٌ قَلِيلٌ فِي سُنَّةٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ عَمَلٍ كَثِيرٍ فِي بِدْعَةٍ¹²

12– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Little worship following a correct [Prophetic] practice is better than a lot of worship following an innovation.’[Amali al-Tusi, p. 385, no. 838]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : أَبَى اللهُ لِصَاحِبِ الْبِدْعَةِ بِالتَّوْبَةِ¹³

13– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Allah denies the innovator a chance to repent.’[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 72, p. 216, no. 8]

A Scholar’s Duties When Faced With The Appearance of Innovations

مَا يَجِبُ عَلَى الْعَالِمِ عِنْدَ ظُهُورِ الْبِدْعِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : إِذَا ظَهَرَتِ الْبِدْعُ فِي أُمَّتِي فَلْيُظْهِرِ الْعَالِمُ عِلْمَهُ ، فَمَنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ¹⁴

14– The Prophet (S) said, ‘When innovations arise in my community, the scholar must display his knowledge; and those who do not do this deserve the curse of Allah.’[al–Kafi, v. 1, p. 54, no. 2]

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