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Non-Islamic Practices

Shirk, bid'ah and khurāfāt weighed against the Quran and Sunnah — with clear examples, and the way back to pure tawhīd.

BELIEF

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SCAN

NON-ISLAMIC PRACTICES

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This guide is educational, sourced from verified Quran and hadith records. It is not a substitute for the guidance of qualified scholars. Questions? Ask at deen2u.com/ask/.

CHAPTER 01

The principle

Islam separates *worldly life* — where the default is permission, so cultures differ freely — from *worship and belief*, where nothing is legislated except by evidence. Worship is accepted only when it meets two conditions together: it is **sincerely for Allah alone** (ikhlaṣ), and **in the way the Prophet ﷺ taught** (ittibā'). Break the first → shirk; break the second → bid'ah.

مَنْ أَحْدَثَ فِي أَمْرِنَا هَذَا مَا لَيْسَ مِنْهُ فَهُوَ رَدٌّ

"Whoever introduces into this matter of ours something that is not part of it, it is rejected." SAHIH

‘Ā’ishah (ra) – Sahih al-Bukhari 2697, Sahih Muslim 1718

A practice being old, widespread, or well-intentioned does not make it Islamic. "Unquestionably, for Allah is the pure religion" (Quran 39:3).

CHAPTER 02

How to weigh any practice

Run an inherited custom through three questions:

Q1. Is it worship, belief, or seeking benefit/harm from the unseen?

If no → worldly custom, permitted (if it breaks no ruling).

Q2 (if yes). Does it direct any worship — du‘ā’, vow, sacrifice, reliance, calling for help — to *other than Allah*? **If yes** → **Shirk**, the gravest sin; return to tawḥīd.

Q3 (if no). Is it established in the Quran or authentic Sunnah on the way of the Salaf? **If no** → **Bid‘ah**, rejected. **If yes** → legislated worship, do it.

CHAPTER 03

Shirk that hides in custom

Shirk is directing worship to other than Allah — the one sin not forgiven if one dies upon it unrepentant (Quran 4:48). It slips in through veneration of the dead and the unseen:

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا

"The places of worship are for Allah [alone], so do not invoke anyone along with Allah." — Quran 72:18

Grave & shrine veneration: calling on a "saint" or ancestor for children, healing or rescue (10:106; 46:5); vowing or sacrificing at tombs ("Allah cursed the one who slaughters for other than Allah" — Sahih Muslim 1978); building over, kissing or circling graves, or lighting them as ritual sites (the Prophet ﷺ cursed those "who take graves as places of worship and put lamps on them" — Sunan Abi Dawud 3236; and cursed the nations who "took the graves of their prophets as places of worship" — Sahih al-Bukhari 435).

Charms & soothsayers: "Incantations [of shirk], amulets, and love-charms are shirk" (Sunan Abi Dawud 3883). "Whoever comes to a soothsayer and believes him has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad ﷺ" (Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī 135). The unseen is Allah's alone.

CHAPTER 04

Bid‘ah — inventing acts of worship

Below shirk but still serious: treating as devotion what the Prophet ﷺ and Companions never did — especially around death.

Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullah said: "We used to consider gathering at the family of the deceased and their preparing food, after the burial, as part of wailing (niyāḥah)." **SAHIH**

Sunan Ibn Mājah 1612

So the fixed 3rd/7th/40th/100th-day feasts hosted *by* the grieving family have no basis — the Sunnah is that food is *brought to* them. Likewise wailing and ritual mourning: "He is not one of us who strikes the cheeks, tears the garments, and cries with the cry of ignorance" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1294). Invented dhikr forms, annual religious occasions, and additions of fixed numbers/times to legislated worship all fall under "...it is rejected."

CHAPTER 05

Khurāfāt — and the way back

Superstition: "There is no ‘adwā, no ṭiyarah (evil omen), and no hāmah" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5707) — so no "lucky/unlucky" days, no omens stopping a good act, no evil-eye charms (the protection is the adhkār and ruqyah, seeking from Allah alone).

Balance: Islam did not come to erase culture — food, dress, language and custom that make no religious claim are free. The line: *does this worship or belief have a basis in revelation, and is it kept for Allah alone?*

The way back. None of this condemns the sincere who inherited it. Learn tawḥīd (Allah is nearer than the jugular vein, 50:16, and answers you directly, 2:186); turn back in tawbah (it wipes away even shirk for the one who returns); and *replace*, not just remove — grief with patience and du‘ā’ for the dead, fear with the adhkār, correcting others with wisdom and gentleness (16:125).

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وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

"And say: My Lord, increase me in knowledge." (Quran 20:114)

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