218022 - Is it permissible to celebrate the naming of the newborn?

the question

My question has to do with a tradition that is followed here in East Africa and is widespread among the people here. It is celebrating the naming of the newborn, meaning that when a child is born, the people slaughter a sheep or goat, then they cook rice and so on, and offer fizzy drinks, and they serve that to friends and relatives who attend the celebration of the child's naming. What is the Islamic ruling on this practice? According to my knowledge, the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) did not cook food for the naming of the child, and they did not gather for that purpose.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The Sunnah is to offer the 'aqiqah for the child on the seventh day, slaughtering two sheep for a boy and one sheep for a girl, because of the report narrated by Abu Dawud (2838) from Samurah ibn Jundub (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Every child is in pledge for his 'aqiqah, which should be sacrificed for him on the seventh day, and his head should be shaved and he should be given a name." Classed as sahih by al-Albani in *Sahih Abi Dawud*.

Secondly:

The purpose of the 'aqiqah is to sacrifice the animal as an act of worship to draw closer to Allah, may He be exalted, and as an act of gratitude for the blessing of being given a child. Whatever you do after that – such as cooking the meat and inviting relatives to eat it, or distributing cooked meat or distributing raw meat, or cooking some of it and distributing some of it raw – all of that is

permissible, and there is nothing wrong with it.

Please see the answer to question no. 167711 .

Thirdly:

The Sunnah with regard to naming the child is that it may be done on the first day or on the seventh day.

There is nothing wrong with slaughtering the ‘aqiqah on any day, or naming the child on any day.

Please see the answer to question no. 155627 .

Fourthly:

There is nothing wrong with celebrating the naming of the child and gathering for that purpose, and offering food and drinks, on the basis that it is a happy occasion, not on the basis that it is Sunnah.

The scholars of the Permanent Committee were asked:

Is it permissible to gather loved ones, neighbours and friends for the naming of the newborn, or is such a celebration regarded as an innovation (bid‘ah) and disbelief (kufr)?

They replied: Celebrating the naming of the newborn is not part of the Prophet’s Sunnah, and his companions did not do that at his time. So the one who does that on the grounds that it is an Islamic Sunnah and tradition has introduced something into the religion that is not part of it, and that is regarded as an innovation that is to be rejected, because the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever introduces into this religion of ours anything that is not part of it, it is to be rejected.” Agreed upon. But it does not constitute disbelief (kufr).

But in the case of someone who does that by way of expressing joy, or to eat the meat of the ‘aqiqah, and not on the grounds that it is Sunnah, there is nothing wrong with that. It is soundly narrated from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that it is prescribed to

slaughter the ‘aqiqah and name the child on the seventh day."(*Fatawa Islamiyyah* 4/490).

Conclusion:

The celebration that you mention for the child or for his naming comes under the heading of people’s customs and traditions, which vary from one country to another. There does not seem to be anything wrong with it in principle, for one for whom that is his tradition, or who wants to bring happiness to his family and friends, or to express joy at the blessing that Allah has bestowed upon him.

There is nothing wrong with doing the ‘aqiqah on this day and cooking it, or cooking part of it on that day.

For more information, please see the answers to questions no. 134163 and 89705 .

For information on the rulings on the ‘aqiqah, please see the answers to questions no. 12448 and 60252 .

And Allah knows best.