9485 - Attending a feast for a child’s birthday and eating that food

the question

Muslims in this region are celebrating naming ceremony for babies and doing maulid or salatun naaria and the give food to the guests. some of us say that we will not come to eat that food because the whole gathering is a bid'a but we participate in that gathering so that the people dont get offended. but the people who r conducting this celebration r saying we hav made food only for the guest and has no relevance to maulid. and also they force us to eat. is it allowed to eat if they force us and they asking daleel bas to why we r refusing to eat. pls explain with proof in hadeeth that what we r doing is correct or not as we r not able to give concrete evidence

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Celebrating birthdays is an innovation in the religion of Allah, and it is not permissible to do this. It is not permissible to eat the food that has been prepared for this occasion. Their claim that the food for the birthday celebration is for the guests does not make it excusable to eat it. Hospitality is subject to its own rulings, and matters are judged according to the intentions behind them. It is very clear that the food is being prepared for this innovated occasion, and eating this food is one of the things that helps them to persist in doing this. It is a kind of co-operation in sin and transgression. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Help you one another in Al Birr and At Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression” [al-Maa’idah 5:2]

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Kareem al-Khudayr

With regard to al-salaah al-naariyah, this is one of the innovated Sufi prayers; it is not permissible to attend those gatherings or to take part in them.