

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and the Foundational Principles of the Khārijite Renegades (B): Three Consecutive Stages in the Khārijite Methodology

In the various works of Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (728H) is a very insightful, detailed and elaborate analysis of the Khārijite doctrine and the underlying reasons for its appearance.

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) stated: “The basis of their misguidance is their belief that the leaders of [religious and political] guidance and the main body of Muslims had departed from justice (‘adl) and are misguided. This was the objection of those who departed from Sunnah from the Rāfiḍah and their likes. Thereafter they began to treat what they saw to be injustice (ẓulm) as disbelief (kufr). Thereafter, they laid down judgements which they had innovated which they made to follow on from [the charge of] disbelief. So these are three [consecutive] situations of the Ḥarūrī [Khārijites], the Rāfiḍah and their likes. In every situation, they abandoned some foundations of Islām until they passed through it [completely] just as the arrow passes through the prey.”¹

Notes

There are three consecutive stages in the fruition of the Khārijite ideology until it transforms from its conceptual starting point to its practical and physical conclusion. The first is that they find fault

¹ Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (28/497).

with some of the ijtihāds of the rulers as the first Khārijites did with ‘Uthmān (رضي الله عنه) and as the Khārijites do today of with respect to the ijtihāds of the rulers in matters of economy, internal politics, public interest, and international relations. They claim that these rulers have not abided by justice (‘adl) or have judged by other than Allāh’s law, which commands justice, and this was the very first charge levelled by the father of the Khārijites, Dhul Khuwayṣarah al-Tamīmī against the Prophet of Islām, Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and it remains a slogan of all Khārijite movements till the establishment of the Hour. This is the first stage. Thereafter, slowly this charge of oppression (ẓulm) is converted to a charge of disbelief (kufr) through numerous considerations. Amongst those who revolted against ‘Uthmān and assassinated him were those who considered him a disbeliever due to his departure from justice. They justified revolt and his murder on that basis. The second phase leads to the third phase since the charge of disbelief itself requires subsequent judgements and practical measures – all of which are innovated and opposes the legislation because they are founded upon falsehood in the first place. This process can be seen clearly in the modern era when the Khārijites treated ijtihāds of governments of some of the Gulf states to constitute departure from justice. Over time – due to the same faulty understanding and exaggeration of the first Khārijites – this led to charges of disbelief culminating in acts of terrorism and bloodshed after a generation had been brainwashed upon this ideology.

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