

## Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and the Foundational Principles of the Khārijite Renegades (I): Making Takfīr Upon a Poor Understanding of the Qur’ān

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. Misunderstanding the Qur’ān (due to ignorance and not evil intent) was the characteristic that made the first Khārijites to err and deviate.

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) said: “The first innovations like the innovation of the Khārijites arose due to their poor understanding of the Qur’ān. They did not intend to [deliberately] oppose it, but they understood from it that which it did not indicate. They thought that [the Qur’ān] necessitates takfīr of those engaged in sins because a believer (mu’min) can only be the righteous, pious (barr, taqīyy). They said that whoever is not righteous and pious is an unbeliever and will remain eternally in the Fire. They further said that ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī and whoever allied with them are not believers because they judged by other than what Allāh revealed. Thus, their innovation has two preliminary foundations: The first: That whoever opposed the Qur’ān in deed or opinion erroneously is an unbeliever. The second: That ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī and whoever allied with them were like that.”<sup>1</sup>

This basic error in understanding the Qur’ān is what we find repeated in the writings of 20<sup>th</sup> century Khārijites such as Sayyid Quṭb, Abū Muḥammad al-Maqdisī and others whose exaggeration in matters pertaining to ḥukm, ḥākimiyyah and obedience (in legislation) and similar affairs have led them to make takfīr on account of matters

---

<sup>1</sup> Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (13/30-31).

that are not warranted. From them are legislation in matters of broad public interest which is permitted to fulfil Sharīah objectives and goals. Examples being road regulations, customs, border controls and what is like that. The result of this is that they make takfīr on account of what is permissible, praiseworthy and not a sin at all, let alone what is a sin.

As for the Khārijites' takfīr of 'Uthmān and 'Alī, it was on the basis that 'Uthmān abandoned judging by Allāh's law and that 'Alī associated partners with Allāh by granting men the right to judge and to clash with Allāh's law in that judgement. These are the very same considerations upon which the activities of the modern-day Khārijites are founded and their books are replete with this. The writings of the Khārijite hound, Abū Muḥammad al-Maqdisī, are very explicit in this regard, save that when his followers began to manifest activities that are a logical, natural consequence of these doctrines, al-Maqdisī began to deflect and conceal himself by writing against "exaggeration in takfīr", the very takfīr demanded and brought about by his misguided, fanatical writings.

Abu 'Iyaad Amjad Rafiq ♦ kharijites.com ♦ @abuiyaadsp  
21 Safar 1438 / 20 November 2016