

The Khawaarij¹

(The translation summarized)

Abu Saeed al-Khadri (Radiyallahu anhu) narrates from Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) that he said “There will emerge from the East some people who will recite the Qu’ran but it will not exceed their throats and who will go out of (renounce) the religion (Islam) as an arrow passes through the game, and they will never come back to it unless the arrow, comes back to the middle of the bow (by itself) (i.e., impossible). The people asked, “What will their signs be?” He said, “Their sign will be the habit of shaving (of their beards and their heads). (Saheeh Bukhari 2/1131).

Khawaarij: This is an infamous deviated sect. Their brief background² stems from when Hazrat Ali (Radiyallahu anhu) and Hazrat Muawiyah (Radiyallahu anhu) agreed to announce in the battle of Siffeen that they will nominate two representatives who will arbitrate the difference of opinion between the two parties. A group of people became enemies to these two Sahabah and opposed them by saying that “only Allah Ta’ala can be the true arbitrator”. Upon hearing this Ali (Radiyallahu anhu) stated that “this statement is true but this group of people are intending strife” (as in the statement of the Khawarij was correct in itself however they were only intending to intensify the friction between the two groups of muslims). This group endeavored to eliminate both Hazrat Ali (Radiyallahu anhu) and Hazrat Muawiyah (Radiyallahu anhu) but were only successful in martyring the former. Hazrat Ali (Radiyallahu anhu) had sent Hazrat Ibn Abbas (Radiyallahu anhu) in an effort to reconcile with the Khawarij. Since the Khawarij did not concur with the offer, they were finally defeated in Naharwaan.

Majority of the ulama are of the view that the Khawaarij are not Kaafir rather they are a deviated sect. According to Imam Malik (Rahmatullahi alayh) they are Kaafir.

¹ The following discussion was transcribed from the first Bukhari Jalsah of Darul Uloom Nomaniiyah (branch) held in the Jaami’ Masjid of Azaadville. Some extra notes have been taken from a previous Bukhari Dars of the chapter of killing the Khawaarij and Murtadeen.

² For extra details, refer to Fathul Bari 12/284, Umdatul Qari 24/85, Irshaadus Saari 10/86, Aqaaidul Islam 1/168.

The Commentary of the Hadith

This Hadith previously came in Bukhari multiple times.³ Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) prophesied that there will emerge from the East a group of people who will recite the Qu'ran excessively but it will not exceed their throats. They will perform so much Ibadah that you will view your Ibadah to be insignificant in comparison to their Ibadah. Their condition will be such that they will fight with the Muslims and leave the Idol-Worshippers alone (Bukhari 1/472). Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said "If I find them (in my era) then I will kill them like the people of A'ad". Thereafter he mentioned, "Whichever era they emerge in, the people of that time are responsible for killing them. Whoever kills them will be the best from amongst the muslims and whoever is martyred by them will also be the best of muslims.

From amongst the core beliefs of the Khawaarij is that the one who commits a sin becomes a Kaaafir. This belief of theirs is mentioned when discussing Kitab-ul-Imaan (in the beginning of Bukhari) and is described as the following. Any muslim who commits a major sin becomes a Kaaafir and it is permissible to kill him.

Allamah Kashmiri states "Just like the modern day Ahl-e-Hadith, they take the Ayaat which refer to the forefathers of the Mushrikeen, they apply these same Ayaat upon the Muqallideen. This resembles the behavior of the Khawaarij".⁴

The Khawaarij of South Africa

The reason why I'm presenting this Hadith in front of you people is so that you may think and ask yourselves, have the Khawaarij not yet emerged in South Africa? Nowadays, there is excessive Takfir occurring in our circles and if they were given the ability the fighting would ensue. However these people are aware that if they begin fighting in these countries then they would be able to save themselves. This is why I'm alerting you people. I am not the judge. You people think for yourselves, Have the Khawaarij come out? Hazrat Ali (Radiyallahu anhu) went to war with these people in his time and killed them. Generally, people who study Bukhari Shareef think that these people died out, however there is a Hadith in Ibn Majah with a Sanad that is graded as Hasan. The Hadith states that this group of people will emerge more than 20 times and right after them Dajjal will emerge.⁵

³ Bukhari 1/472, 509, 2/623, 673, 756, 910, 1024

⁴ Refer to Bukhari 2/1024, Faydhul Bari 4/473, Raddul Muhtaar 4/262, Majma Bihaaril Anwaar 2/23 and 1/453

⁵ Refer to Ibne Majah 1/61 (page 15), Misbaahuz Zujaajah 1/26, Majmauz Zawaa'id 6/299-330, Mustadrak Haakim 6/620, Kanzul Mutawaari 12/407, Nasai 2/172, Ahmad 33/27, Mishkaat 2/308.

Some Signs of the Khawaarij

1. They will pull-out from the Muslim and persist on their opinions (Fathul Bari 12/283 and Umdatul Qari 25/102). Hazrat Ali (Radiyallahu anhu) and Hazrat Muawiyah (Radiyallahu anhu) endeavored to reconcile with these people, however the Khawarij only went to war with them.
2. They deem others as Kafirs on the basis of their bad deeds. According to them many Sahabah are Kuffar as well. (Refer to books of Hadith and Aqaaid)
3. Extremism in Ibaadah. Excessive Tilaawah, Salah, and Fasting (Bukhari 1/471, 2/1024, etc)
4. Incorrect Tafseer of Ayaat. After the battle of Siffeen they said, “only Allah Ta’ala can be the true arbitrator”. Upon hearing this Ali (Radiyallahu anhu) stated that “this statement is true but this group of people are intending strife”. (Refer to books of Hadith and Aqaaid)
5. Those Ayaat which apply to the Kuffar, the Khawarij apply them to the Muslims. (2/1024)
6. Those Ayaat which apply to the Jews, the Khawarij apply them to the Ulama of the Muslims. (Majma bihaaril Anwaar 1/465)
7. This is a political group, not an Ilmi(learned) group as stated by Allamah Kawthari (Introduction of Tabyeenu Kadhibil Muftari)
8. They oppose the people of Islam instead of the Idol-worshippers (Bukhari 1/471, etc)
9. Shaving the head (Bukhari 2/1024, 1128, Fathul Bari 12/291, Umdatul Qari 25/102, etc)
10. This group will emerge multiple times and will be followed by Dajjal (Ibn Majah page 15, Kanzul Mutawari 12/407, etc)
11. Their lifespan will be small and their understanding of deen will be flawed (Bukhari 2/1024)
12. Their speech will be appealing but their actions will be despicable. (Bukhari 2/1024)

The great Fitnah to emerge from this group can be known due to the fact that the authors of Kutub-e-Sittah and other famous compilations of Hadith have set aside multiple chapters just for this group and have mentioned numerous Ahadith regarding them. This is not the case for other deviated sects. Just in Bukhari Shareef there are 7 to 8 places where the Ahadith pertaining to the Khawarij are mentioned and very harsh wording is used for them: 1/471, 1/509, 2/623, 2/673, 2/690, 2/756, 2/910, 2/1024, 2/1128. In Muslim Shareef there are multiple Ahadith from 1/340 to 1/343. Other sources include Nasai (Kubra) 2/311 and 2/172 (in Sughra), Abu Dawud 2/299, Tirmidhi 2/42, Ibne Majah page 15, Sunan-e-Darimi 2/133, Muwatta of Imam Mohammed page 369, Abdur Razzaq 10/118, Ibne Abi Shaybah 15/203-330.

Allamah Ibne Katheer has mentioned 14 Ahadith regarding the Khawaarij (Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/72-90. One of the leaders of the Khawaarij was Abdullah bin Wahab who was nicknamed Dhuth Thafanaat due to marks appearing on his feet because of excessive Ibadat. (Al Milal wan Nihal 1/117).