

The Characteristics of Modern-Day Khawārij as Told by the Rulings of Modern-Day Scholars¹

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¹ This article is a compilation of quotes from contemporary scholars. The Arabic text can be found at: <http://fatwa1.com/anti-erhab/Irhabion/khwarjalasar.html>.

Introduction

All praise and thanks is for Allah, and may prayers and peace be upon the messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) said: I heard Allah's messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saying:

سَيَخْرُجُ فِي آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ قَوْمٌ أَحَدَاتُ الْأَسْنَانِ، سَفَهَاءُ الْأَحْلَامِ، يَقُولُونَ مِنْ خَيْرِ
قَوْلِ الْبَرِيَّةِ، يَقْرَأُونَ الْقُرْآنَ لَا يُجَاوِزُ حَنَاجِرَهُمْ، يَمْرُقُونَ مِنَ الدِّينِ كَمَا يَمْرُقُ
السَّهْمُ مِنَ الرَّمِيَّةِ، فَإِذَا لَقِيْتُمُوهُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ فَإِنَّ فِي قَتْلِهِمْ أَجْرًا لِمَنْ قَتَلَهُمْ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

“Near the end of time, a people will emerge, young in age and ignorant in intellect. They will speak with the best statements of creation, and they will recite the Quran but it will not reach beyond their throats. They will go through and out of the religion just as an arrow goes through its target. So if you meet them, fight and kill them because in killing them there is a reward with Allah on the Day of Resurrection for he who does so.”²

The *Khawārij*, or Kharijites, are not well-known by many people. This is because when the people of religious heresy and innovations portray common characteristics, the general masses are unable to distinguish them unless they be people of strength and standing or if there are no people around to oppose and refute them. The famous scholar of Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah, said in his book *Kitāb al-Nubuwwāt* (1/139):

² Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

“Likewise, when the Khawārij became people of weaponry and fighting, their opposition and aggression towards the mainstream community was made manifest as they began fighting people. As for today, most people do not even know of them.”

The Khawārij have certain distinguishing characteristics they are known by. However, it is necessary to know that some of these characteristics are only discovered by keeping up-to-date with them, studying them and from the speech of scholars. And it may not be the case that they always exhibit every single attribute commonly mentioned about them. Ibn Taymiyyah said in *Majmū' al-Fatāwá* (49/13), “We only came to know of the statements and views of the Khawārij by people passing information down over time about them. We did not simply stop at a single published book (about them).”

A scholar or researcher will find that the state and circumstances surrounding the former Khawārij, even though they were all united upon the same misguidance, were difficult and unclear for some people to discern during their time. So what about people who outwardly portray affiliation to the *Sunnah* (Prophet Muhammad’s methodology, statements, actions, etc.) during these modern times while they are actually the Khawārij whether they know it or not?

Presented to you, noble brother, are some of their more distinguishing characteristics as derived from the rulings of modern-day scholars.

Religiously Opposing and Revolting against the Leaders and Renouncing Allegiance and Obedience to Them

The eminent scholar, 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Bāz, was asked:

Question: Some brothers – may Allah guide them – do not consider it an obligation to give allegiance and obedience to the leader in these lands. So what is your advice, eminent father?

Answer: We advise the public to be peaceful and calm and to listen to and obey (the authority) as has been mentioned before. And we warn them from sowing dissension and revolting against the leaders (rulers, kings, presidents, etc) because that is one of the greatest crimes. This is the religion of the Khawārij. This is the religion of the Khawārij and the *Mu'tazilah* – revolting against the leaders and renouncing obedience to them when they enjoy that which is not sinful. This is incorrect and contradictory to what the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) instructed to do. The prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) commanded to listen and obey in anything that is good (not sinful), he said:

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْ أَمِيرِهِ شَيْئًا مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ فَلْيَكْرَهُ مَا يَأْتِي مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ وَلَا
يَنْزِعَنَّ يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ.

“Whoever sees from his leader something of a sin against Allah, then let him dislike whatever is sinful to Allah, but he should certainly not retract even a hand-span away from obedience.”

And he (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ أَتَاكُمْ وَأَمْرُكُمْ جَمِيعٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَشُقَّ عَصَاكُمْ وَيُفْرِقَ جَمَاعَتَكُمْ فَاضْرِبُوا
عُنُقَهُ.

“Whoever comes to you while you are united and he wants to divide your allegiance and disunite your unified community, then strike his neck.”

So it is impermissible for anyone to cause dissension and mutiny or revolt against the leaders or even call to that. This is one of the greatest crimes and one of the greatest means to evil and tribulations and causes of enmity among people. Whoever calls to this, this is the religion of the Khawārij and the dissidents. Capital punishment should be carried out against such a person because he is dividing the people and inciting rebellion. It is an obligation for people to be extremely cautious and warn against this. And it is an obligation for the leaders, when they know of anyone calling to or propagating this idea, that they strongly prevent him and arrest him so that tribulations and evil are prevented.³

And he (Ibn Bāz) – may Allah have mercy on him – said:

And in this country, by the grace of Allah, nothing really occurs or originates from it (the government) that would necessitate revolting against it. And those who consider it permissible to commit this sin of rebelling against the government, they are only the Khawārij. They are those who declare Muslims to be disbelievers just for making sins and they fight and kill the people of Islam while ignoring the people of idol-worship. The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said about them:

يَمْرُقُونَ مِنَ الدِّينِ كَمَا يَمْرُقُ السَّهْمُ مِنَ الرَّمِيَّةِ.

³ Taken from a cassette titled: “Ḥukm al-Ḥamalāt al-lāmiyyah ‘alā Bilād al-Ḥaramayn”.

“They will go through and out of the religion just as an arrow goes through a target.”

And he said:

أَيْنَمَا لَقَيْتُمُوهُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ فَإِنَّ فِي قَتْلِهِمْ أَجْرًا لِمَنْ قَتَلَهُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

“Wherever you meet them, fight and kill them, for in killing them there is a reward with Allah on the Day of Resurrection for whoever does so.”

[al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

There are many well-known *Ḥadīth* (statements of the prophet) about them.⁴

The famous scholar of Ḥadīth in these times, Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, said explaining the narration in which a companion said, “We gave the pledge to Allah’s messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that we would listen and obey...” after he refuted the Khawārij, he said:

What is meant is that they (the Khawārij) introduced an evil methodology in Islam, and they made rebellion against Muslim governments a religious fundamental throughout time. They did this despite the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) explicitly warning against them in many Ḥadīth, from them is his (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) statement:

الْخَوَارِجُ كِلَابُ النَّارِ.

“The Khawārij are the dogs of Hell.”

⁴ Taken from the book *Majmū’ al-Fatāwá* (4/91) of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Bāz.

And (they also persist in their crimes) despite the fact that they have not witnessed clear, explicit disbelief from their leaders; anything less than that may be oppression and sin (but not disbelief). History repeats itself as they say, because today some of the Muslim youth have begun to germinate and sprout, not having understood the religion except a little. They consider that the governments do not rule by what Allah has revealed except seldom. So they believe in inciting rebellion against them, having never consulted with the people of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Instead, they stubbornly and recklessly instigate tribulations and bloodshed in places like Egypt, Syria, Algeria, and even before at the sacred mosque in Mecca. By all this, they contradict authentic Ḥadīth that the actions of Muslims have always been based upon past and present, except by the Khawārij.⁵

Making Takfīr of Perpetrators of Major Sins

The scholar Ibn Bāz - may Allah have mercy on him – was asked:

Question: Noble father, we know that this speech (of yours) represents one of the fundamentals of the people of Sunnah and the unified community of Muslims. But unfortunately, there are some youth affiliated with the people of Sunnah and the community who think that such speech represents a defeatist attitude and has within it weakness; this has been said. And for this reason, such people call the youth to adopt a path of rigidity and harshness when trying to change (their circumstances).

⁵ See *al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* by al-Albānī (vol. 7, section 2, pgs. 1240-1243).

Answer: This is wrong whoever says it. He comprehends very little because he has neither known nor understood the Sunnah as it should be. But their fiery enthusiasm and zeal to remove evils has driven them to contradict the Islamic legislation just as the Khawārij and Mu'tazilah did. Their desire to make truth victorious or their zeal to defend it caused them to fall into falsehood so much so that they began declaring Muslims to be disbelievers just for committing sins as the Khawārij did, or they declare them to be eternal dwellers of the Fire because of their sins just as the Mu'tazilah do.

The Khawārij made *Takfir* (excommunication: declaring a believer to be a disbeliever) of people for committing sins and believed that all sinners were doomed to the Fire forever. The Mu'tazilah held the same opinion regarding sinners' final punishment in that they will remain in the Fire forever. However, they said a sinner is in this life between two states (disbelief and belief). All of it is misguidance and deviation.

The true understanding that the people of Sunnah have is that a sinner is not to be considered a disbeliever just because of his sin as long as he does not hold his crime to be permissible. So if a person, for example, commits adultery, he is not a disbeliever; if he steals, he is not a disbeliever; or if he drinks alcohol, he is not a disbeliever. Rather, he is then a sinner with weak faith and the appropriate law should be applied to him. He is not to be considered a disbeliever unless he clearly believes his actions to be permissible (in the sight of Allah) and openly says, "This is permissible." And what the Khawārij say is misguidance and distortion, and their Takfir of people is incorrect. The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said about them:

إِنَّهُمْ يَمْرُقُونَ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَرْوَقَ السَّهْمِ مِنَ الرَّمِيهِ، ثُمَّ لَا يَعُودُونَ إِلَيْهِ، يُقَاتِلُونَ
أَهْلَ الْإِسْلَامِ وَيَدْعُونَ أَهْلَ الْأَوْثَانِ.

“They will certainly go through and out of the religion like an arrow goes through its target, and they will not return to it. They fight the people of Islam while ignoring the people of idolatry.”

This is the state of the Khawārij because of their extremism, ignorance, and their misguidance. So it is not fitting for the youth or anyone else to imitate and blindly follow the Khawārij and the Mu'tazilah. They must instead keep to the methodology of the people of Sunnah and the mainstream body of Muslims just as the legislative evidences dictate; they leave the meaning of the texts as they have come. These people are not allowed to revolt against the authority or leader just because of a sin or even a number of sins he may have committed. Rather, they should sincerely advise by writing or meetings in a nice and wise manner. They could debate and contend in a respectful way until they succeed (in making a change) or until the evil is removed or at least lessened and that which is better comes about.

That is how the texts have explained the approach of Allah's messenger (صلى الله عليه) (عز وجل) says: (وسلم)

﴿ فِيمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَنْقِضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ﴾

It was only by a mercy from Allah that you were lenient with them. And if you had been discourteous and harsh-hearted, they would have fled from you.

[Sūrah Āli-'Imrān, 3:159]

So it is necessary for those eager to do something for Allah and for the callers to guidance and preachers that they be cautious of going beyond the limits of the Islamic legislation. They should offer sincere advice to those whom Allah has placed in authority over them with kind words, wisdom, and in a respectful manner until the evil decreases and good prevails. They take this approach so that sincere callers to Allah will increase and become active in their calling with respectful conduct, not with intolerance and harshness. They should earnestly advise whoever Allah places in charge of affairs by any number of nice, peaceful means available. They should pray that Allah guides them, that He establishes and assists them in doing what is right and that Allah helps them leave their sins and establishes justice and truth.

This is how a believer is, he calls upon Allah and humbles himself before Him, asking Him for guidance for the leader and that He helps them leave falsehood and establish the truth. He does so in a nice, gentle manner. He reminds them by preaching in a respectful way and not by strictness and harshness. In this way good will spread and evil will diminish and Allah will guide the authorities to that which is good and establish them upon it. The end result will then be beneficial for the whole society.⁶

Inciting People to Oppose Governments by Announcing their Faults, Criticizing Them, and Demonstrating against Them

⁶ From the book: *al-Malūm min Wājib al-'Alāqah bayna al-Ḥākim wa al-Maḥkūm*.

The eminent Imam, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Bāz – may Allah have mercy on him – was asked about some pamphlets published in London (from Muhammad al-Mas’arī). The questioners stated they had heard of opinions from some scholars but they wanted a ruling specifically from [Ibn Bāz] so they could be certain about the issue.

Answer: As for those pamphlets and publications that al-Mas’arī publishes and those with him in London to stir up doubt and confusion about this (Saudi Arabian) government and this land, we have already advised more than once that they should not be distributed or that they be destroyed when found. They result in tribulations, division, and discord. So they must be destroyed and not circulated among Muslims. Instead, people should pray for the leaders of political affairs for correctness, guidance, and uprightness. And (they should pray) that Allah assists them in everything good and that He removes their mistakes and bestows upon them righteous advisors. These supplications should be made in prayer and at other times; people should pray to their Lord while in prostration, after prayers, and in the last part of the night for correctness, guidance, righteousness, and for sincere advisors for all Muslims and the leaders.

As for publicly announcing (a leader’s) faults and criticizing him, this is a means to evil and tribulation. When the Khawārij began publicizing their criticisms during the leadership of ‘Uthmān (Islam’s third caliph), their ignorance and injustice drove them to murder ‘Uthmān and eventually to kill ‘Alī – all because of the initial, detestable spreading of their criticisms. Whether (they put forth) lies, truth, or anything in between, that does not make it permissible to revolt against the leader of political affairs. Rather, it necessitates that one pray for their guidance and rectification.

These issues that al-Mas'arī pursues and those like him, they are the same things that 'Abdullah Ibn Saba' did and those like him during the times of 'Uthmān and 'Alī, so much so that they disunited the Muslim nation, brought about tribulations, and both 'Uthmān and 'Alī were killed unjustly along with a large number of companions.⁷

And he (Ibn Bāz) was asked:

Question: Some people believe that a state of corruption has come over the Muslim communities to such an extent that it cannot be changed except by force and by inciting people against governments and publicly exposing their faults so that people oppose and reject them. Unfortunately, these people call others to this methodology, encouraging it. So, what does your eminence say?

Answer: Such a methodology has no support from the Islamic legislation because it contradicts the texts that order obedience to the leaders of political affairs in what they command of good, and it results in great corruption, chaos, and the breaching of peace and security.

When evil circumstances arise, it is incumbent to repel them by methods legislated by Islam and by clarifying these legislative evidences without harshness and intolerance. These circumstances are not to be repelled by force except by those who the government has appointed to do this (the authorities). This is so that peace and security is maintained and chaos is prevented. Authentic Ḥadīth from the prophet (صلى الله عليه) indicate this, such as the statement in which he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

⁷ Taken from a cassette titled: "Ḥukm al-Ḥamalāt al-l'āmiyyah 'alā Bilād al-Ḥaramayn".

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْ أَمِيرِهِ شَيْئًا مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ فَلْيَكْرَهُ مَا يَأْتِي مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَنْزِعَنَّ يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ.

“Whoever sees something of sinning against Allah from his leader, let him dislike that which is sinful against Allah but let him not move even a hand-span away from (or renounce the allegiance of) obedience.”

And his (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) statement:

عَلَى الْمَرْءِ السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ فِيمَا أَحَبَّ وَكَرِهَ فِي الْمُنْشَطِ وَالْمَكْرَهِ مَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ.

“It is an obligation upon every person to listen and obey in what he likes or dislikes, willingly or unwillingly, as long as he is not commanded to do anything sinful against Allah.”

The companions (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) pledged to the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that they would listen and obey, willingly or unwillingly, in hardship and ease, and that they would never renounce the allegiance of obedience, unless and until they see clear and explicit disbelief from them (the leaders) for which they have a supportive proof with Allah. And other Ḥadīth with the same meaning are numerous.

What is legislated in such circumstances is to sincerely advise the leader of political affairs, cooperating with them in righteousness and praying for them for correctness and assistance in doing what is right until evil circumstances diminish and good prevails.

We ask Allah to rectify all Muslim leaders, to bestow on them righteous advisors, to increase them with those who support them in what is right, and to grant them success in governing His servants with the legislation of Allah; He is surely bountiful and generous.

Imam Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn said:

...and it is amazing that he (Dhu al-Khuwayṣarah from whom the Khawārij descended) directly criticized the messenger (عليه الصلاة والسلام). He said to the prophet, “Be fair!” and “The face of Allah was not sought by this distribution (of goods).” He said this directly to the messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). The messenger then replied:

يَخْرُجُ مِنْ ضَيْضِي هَذَا الرَّجُلِ مَنْ يَحْقِرُ أَحَدَكُمْ صَلَاتَهُ عِنْدَ صَلَاتِهِمْ.

“There will emerge from this person’s descendants those who one of you would belittle his own prayer in comparison to theirs.”

This is one of the greatest proofs that opposing and rebelling against the leader can be by the sword or by speech because this person (Dhu al-Khuwayṣarah) did not take out his sword against the messenger, yet he still opposed and criticized him. And what you find in some books written by the people of Sunnah about rebelling against the leader, it is often rebellion of the sword (with violence); by this, they mean the worst and final form of rebellion. Similarly, the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) mentioned that infidelity (adultery, fornication) could be committed by the eye, the ear, the hand, or even the legs. But the greatest form of adultery is the actual act of fornication by the private parts. For this reason, he said that the private part may deny the other parts of this actual, final form. So when some scholars use wordings as these (rebellion, revolt), this is what they mean

(that it is of varying forms). We know for certain, especially considering the natural circumstances, that rebellion and opposition never occurs by the sword except that it was preceded by the tongue and speech. There must be something inciting them and it is surely someone's talk.

Therefore, opposition and rebellion against the rulers can be by speech as the Sunnah proves as well as the realities we witness. As for the Sunnah, we know about that (as has preceded) and as for what we witness, then we know for sure that rebellion by force is only an end result of rebelling by the tongue. This is because people do not just revolt against a leader all of a sudden by taking up arms; there must be some preliminary step, some force or prior defaming of the leaders and belittling of their good qualities. In this way, the hearts become filled with anger and hostility, and finally disaster and distress occurs.⁸

The great scholar Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān was asked:

Question: Does rebelling and revolting against the leaders occur only by the sword (by force), or does criticizing and slandering them and inciting people to resistance and opposition against them also fall into this?

Answer: We mentioned this to you before. We said that revolting against the leaders could be by the sword, and this is the worst form, and it could also be in speech: by insulting or reviling them. It could be in the form of speaking against them in private sittings or publicly upon the pulpits (in mosques during sermons). This provokes people

⁸ From a cassette titled: "Ḥukm al-Ḥamalāt al-lāmiyyah 'alā Bilād al-Ḥaramayn"

and rouses them to rebel against those in charge of political affairs and it diminishes the very status of leadership among people. So speech is (a form of) rebellion.

Şāliḥ al-Fawzān also said about the Khawārij:

In our times, anyone who believes that listening to and obeying political leaders in what is not sinful is labeled a “government agent” or “flatterer” or “simple-minded”. You see some people (those who call to rebellion) stand upon the pulpits and in their gatherings slandering the leader of their affairs, vilifying them because of their faults while the messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) says:

مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَنْصَحَ لِسُلْطَانٍ بِأَمْرٍ؛ فَلَا يَبْدُ لَهُ عِلَانِيَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَأْخُذَ بِيَدِهِ، فَيَخْلُوَ
بِهِ، فَإِنْ قِيلَ مِنْهُ فَذَلِكَ، وَإِلَّا كَانَ قَدْ أَتَى الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ.

“Whoever wants to advise a leader about something then he should not expose him publicly. Rather, he should take his hand and privately counsel him. If he accepts (his advice) from him then that (is beneficial), otherwise the person has then fulfilled his obligation.”⁹

If the political leader sees fit to silence one of them or prevent him from speaking publicly in gatherings, you then find them rallying together and marching in protests and demonstrations. They think, due to their ignorance, that when one of their people is silenced or imprisoned, rebellion is justified for them. Have they not heard the prophet’s statement (رضي الله عنه) in the Ḥadīth of ‘Awf Ibn Mālik al-Ashja’ī (رضي الله عنه) recorded by Muslim (no. 1855) (when asked if fighting the leaders is allowed):

⁹ Recorded by Aḥmad (3/404) from the Ḥadīth of ‘Iyyāḍ Ibn Ghanam (رضي الله عنه) and also recorded by Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim in his book *al-Sunnah* (2/522).

لا، مَا أَقَامُوا فِيكُمْ الصَّلَاةَ.

“No, as long as they establish the prayer among you.”

And in the Ḥadīth of ‘Ubādah Ibn al-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim:

إِلَّا أَنْ تَرَوْا كُفْرًا بَوَاحًا، عِنْدَكُمْ فِيهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ بُرْهَانٌ.

“Unless you all see clear, explicit disbelief (from them) for which you have a proof from Allah to support you in that.”

Those were some of his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) replies when the companions asked about the permissibility of fighting oppressive rulers.

Do those people not know how long Imam Ahmad remained in prison? And where did the famous scholar of Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah, die? Did Imam Ahmad not spend many years in prison while being compelled to say the Quran was created? Why did he not then allow people to revolt against the caliph? And do they not know that Ibn Taymiyyah remained in prison until he died? Why did he not permit people to revolt against the leader while Ibn Taymiyyah was such a person of great virtue, knowledge and standing? What about those less than him?

Certainly, these ideas and actions did not come to us except after the youth began taking their knowledge from so-and-so, the “modern thinker”; so-and-so, the “eloquent poet”; and from so-and-so, the “Islamic writer”. They took from these people while abandoning

the scholars and the books of the Salaf, throwing them behind their backs. There is no power or strength except by Allah.¹⁰

Making Takfir of Whoever Does Not Absolutely Judge or Rule with Allah's Revelation

Imam 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Bāz – may Allah have mercy on him – was asked:

Question: When is it considered disbelief that a ruler judges or rules by other than what Allah revealed, by other than His laws?

Answer: [Such is the case] if such a person believes it is permissible to do so, or he believes it (Allah's revelation) is not applicable or appropriate, or if he considers ruling by something else to be better. The ruling is applied only to one who considers it something lawful to do or considers something else to be superior than the rules of Allah.

As for the case of someone ruling by other than what Allah revealed and he does so just out of some personal whims or desires, then he is considered a sinner similar to the person who commits adultery or fornication out of his desires. A person may disobey his parents from some desire within himself or murder someone based on personal desires; in these cases he is a sinner. But if he kills considering it lawful, or disobeys his parents considering it lawful to be undutiful, or commits adultery believing it is permissible, then this is disbelief. In this principle, we distinguish and separate ourselves from the Khawārij.

¹⁰ Taken from a lecture delivered by Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān in the King Fahd Mosque in city of Taif in August, 1994.

In this, there is a great difference between us and the Khawārij. Otherwise, we would fall into the same thing the Khawārij did. And it is this point that has confused the Khawārij.

And he (Ibn Bāz) was asked on the same cassette:

Question: Do you consider this issue to be simply one of personal, independent interpretation (*Ijtihād*)?

Answer: By Allah, I firmly believe that, based on the texts from the people of knowledge about the difference between the people of Sunnah and the Khawārij and Mu'tazilah, especially the Khawārij, that committing a sin is not disbelief unless and until a person considers it lawful or defends the sin by fighting.¹¹

Imam Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn – may Allah have mercy on him – was asked about someone who declares the Muslim rulers to be disbelievers.

Answer: These people who declare others of disbelief are the inheritors of the Khawārij who revolted against 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه). A disbeliever is only someone who Allah and His messenger declared to be so. Making Takfīr has conditions, and from them is that the person (committing the sin) has knowledge of it and willingly does it. In other words, we must know that such a ruler contradicts the truth while fully aware of it and he willingly wants to do so...¹²

¹¹ Taken from a cassette debating the issue of Takfīr. [The cassette was not named in the original Arabic text nor was the lecture date mentioned.]

¹² Taken from the cassette: "Kash al-Lithām 'an Aḥmad Salām".

Making Takfir of the Ruler, Claiming He Has Abandoned and Terminated Jihād.

Şālih al-Fawzān – may Allah preserve him – was asked:

Question: There are some people who say that the political leaders and the scholars in these lands have abandoned and terminated Jihād and this issue amounts to disbelief in Allah, so what is your opinion of such speech?

Answer: Such speech is ignorance. It shows that the person has neither insight nor knowledge and that he declares people to be disbelievers. This is the thought of the Khawārij and Mu'tazilah – we ask Allah for correctness. Rather, we should not just suspect evil from them (the leaders). These people (who make such claims) are ignorant; they should learn something before they speak. As for those among them with some knowledge and he talks like this, this is the thought of the Khawārij and people of misguidance.¹³

Bombings

Muḥammad Ibn Şālih al-'Uthaymīn said about the (1996 Khobar Towers) bombing incident at Khobar:

No doubt, this act is not condoned by anyone with intellect, not to mention a believer, because it is in contradiction to the Book (the Quran) and the Sunnah, and because it

¹³ Taken from the book by Şālih al-Fawzān, *al-Jihād wa Dawābiṭuh al-Shari'yyah*, pg 49.

causes injury to Islam both inside the country and outside...And for this, such a crime is considered one of the most horrid crimes. Yet by the power of Allah, the oppressive criminals will not be successful. They will be found if Allah wills, and they will receive their due punishment. As for the students of (religious) knowledge, it is incumbent upon them to clarify to people that this is a filthy methodology, the methodology of the Khawārij.¹⁴

Legitimizing the Murdering of Security Officers

Şāliḥ al-Fawzān – may Allah preserve him – was asked:

Question: Some pamphlets are being distributed among many of the youth claiming it is permissible to kill security officers, especially secret detectives. These statements are supposedly taken from a ruling given by a student of knowledge claiming that security officers are considered apostates. So we hope from your Excellency that you will clarify the legislative Islamic ruling in this matter as well as the consequences resulting from such dangerous actions.

Answer: This is the methodology of the Khawārij. The Khawārij murdered ‘Alī Ibn Abī Tālib (رضي الله عنه), the best of the companions after Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān. So, those who have the audacity to kill ‘Alī Ibn Abī Tālib (رضي الله عنه), would they not then kill security officers? This is exactly the Khawārij methodology. As for the one who issues to them a religious verdict allowing this, he is just like them and one of them. We seek safety with Allah.¹⁵

¹⁴ Taken from the book by Fahd al-Ḥuṣayn, *al-Fatāwā al-Shar‘iyyah fī al-Qaḍāyā al-‘Aṣriyyah*.

¹⁵ Taken from *al-Fatāwā al-Shar‘iyyah fī al-Qaḍāyā al-‘Aṣriyyah*.

Their Claim that the Muslim Leader is Only He Whom All Muslims throughout the World, from the East to the West, Unite in Allegiance to Him

Şāliḥ al-Fawzān – may Allah preserve him – was asked:

Question: Is it correct to say that the Muslim leader, the Imam, is only considered to be such if all Muslims throughout the entire world, from east to west, unite in allegiance to him?

Answer: The Imam is he to whom the people of authority and policy from the Muslims pledge allegiance. Thereafter, the rest of the people must obey him. It is not a requirement that every single one of them from the east and west, men and women, each pledge allegiance to him. This is not the methodology of Islam in deciding leadership.

And he (Şāliḥ al-Fawzān) was also asked:

Question: Are there present today those who have the same ideologies of the Khawārij?

Answer: سبحان الله! All of this that is prevalent today, is it not from the actions of the Khawārij? Making Takfīr of Muslims and even worse, killing fellow Muslims and hating them? This is the exact methodology of the Khawārij. It includes three things:

1. Making Takfīr of Muslims.
2. Renouncing obedience to the leader or government.
3. Declaring the blood of other Muslims lawful to spill.

This is precisely the methodology of the Khawārij. Even if a person only believes this with his heart, though he may not actually speak or do anything of them, he still becomes one of the Khawārij in his baseless belief and opinions.¹⁶

¹⁶ Taken from the book by Fahd al-Ḥuṣayn, *al-Fatāwá al-Shar'iyyah fí al-Qaḍāyá al-'Aṣriyyah*.