

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

It is the *Khawārij* Who Praise the *Khawārij*

By Abū al-Ḥasan Mālik al-Akhḍar

IT WAS THE NOBLE SCHOLAR of Islām Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Ājurri (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ), in his book *al-Sharī'ah*, who mentioned the consensus of the scholars, past and present, that the *Khawārij* are an evil people. Undoubtedly, he intends a consensus of scholars upon the *Sunnah*, for their agreement in this affair is well-known. Thus, if one looks for praise of the *Khawārij*, he will not find it in their works: the books of Ḥadīth and *Athar*. Where he *will* find praise for such a people, however, is in their own prose and poetry. An example of this comes in the biography of 'Imrān b. Ḥiṭṭān. A narrator of ḥadīth who was originally from the people of *Sunnah*; he had a cousin known for her beauty, and he sought to take her as wife. Unfortunately, she was upon the methodology of the *Khawārij*. In spite of this, he still desired to wed her, stating, "I will marry her and dissuade her from her false ideology." But when they married, it was she, instead, who dissuaded him from the *Sunnah* and ushered him into the ranks of the *Hururiyyah*. How low he sank into their depths, until penning a poem in memoriam of the assassin of the noble companion, cousin and son in law of Allāh's Messenger, 'Ali b. Abū Ṭālib (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ). This assassin, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam, attacked 'Ali with a sword dipped in poison, striking the leader of the faithful as he entered the *masjid* for morning prayer.

After Ibn Muljam took the life of 'Ali, and was put to death, 'Imrān b. Ḥiṭṭān blackened his pages with the lines:

*O that blow from a righteous man who desired only  
to reach the Owner of the Throne while He is pleased with him.  
I recall him sometimes and deem him from the most  
faithful of the people with Allāh.*

Such excessive praise (any praise for that matter), for the most contemptable of creatures, for the most sinful of acts, could only emanate from the *Khawārij*. Indeed, it was the *takfirī* dog Uṣāmah b. Laden who lauded the nineteen hijackers of 9/11, calling them brothers in faith—martyrs even—exalting their destruction and devastation. And who would extol a group of deranged killers, armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles and suicide belts, shooting and bombing innocent civilians in the streets of Paris? The *Khawārij* of ISIS would. In an announcement published by the group, they called these terrorists "youth who divorced the world and went to their enemy seeking to be killed in the cause of Allāh." How much today resembles yesterday. For when we compare the praise of 'Imrān b. Ḥiṭṭān for 'Ali's assassin with the praise of the modern day *Khawārij*, the people of *takfir*, for their brothers in blood, we witness the same excessive, unconscionable praise for those worthy of nothing but contempt; the kind of contempt found in the Prophet's *Sunnah*. Was it not Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) who said that they were the worst of creatures, dogs of the Hellfire?\*

\* Collected by Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan* (no. 169) narrated by Ibn Abū Awfā who said: Allāh's Messenger said: "The *Khawārij* are the dogs of the Hellfire."

As for those who erringly believe that the Prophet (ﷺ) praised the *Khawārij*, let them consider the statement of al-‘*Allāmah* Aḥmad al-Najmī (رحمة الله) in *Sharḥ Usūl al-Sunnah* (*al-Dar al-Athariyyah*, 1430–2009):

And some have been tempted by the people of innovation due to what they have seen from them of devotion [to worship], display of humility, tears, and other than this from an abundance of worship; however, this is not the true gauge in learning the truth. For indeed the Messenger of Allāh said to his Companions, in describing of the people of innovation: “One of you will be jealous of your prayer next to their prayer and your fast next to their fast and your recitation beside their recitation.”\*

Here the *Shaykh* clarifies that these innovators’ dutifulness in worship is oftentimes a temptation, so Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) warned from them, informing his *Ummah* that these worshippers would “leave the Religion faster than the arrow passes through game.” All they needed to do to was simply finish the ḥadīth.

And while these dogs of the Fire may describe one another as “the most faithful of the people with Allāh” or “martyrs” or “youth who divorced the world,” it was the noble *Salafī* scholar Imām Ibn Baz (رحمة الله)—in keeping with the methodology of the Prophet (ﷺ)—who called them “the brothers of the Devil.” And while ‘Imrān b. Ḥiṭṭān celebrated Ibn Muljam in verse, it was one of the *Sunnī* scholars of past who replied:

*O that blow from a wretched man who desired  
from it to meet the Owner of the Throne in utter loss.  
I recall him sometimes and deem him from the most  
despicable of the people with Allāh.*

So when we turn the pages of the books of *Sunnah*, this is all we find concerning the descendants of Dhū al-Khuwayṣarah: disdain and disparagement; pages of chapters, volumes of books, nothing but their dispraise. For no one praises the *Khawārij* but the *Khawārij*.




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\* This is part of the ḥadīth collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 6933 and 6934), and Muslim (no. 2448)