

## The Wahhabi and the Khawarij

Surprising, there are many similarities between the Wahhabi and the Khawarij which distinguish them from the rest of the Muslim. Some of these common points follow.

1. The Khawarij disagreed with all Muslims by maintaining that whoever commits a cardinal sin is a heretic. The Wahhabis copied them by equating heresy with committing what they considered to be sins. [1](#)
2. The Khawarij decreed that if committing cardinal sins become common in a Muslim land then it deserved to be considered *dar harb*, literally a land of war and those who live in it forfeit their lives and possessions.

This is also the Wahhabi's verdict on the nation of Islam if they believe that it is permissible to travel to the Prophet's tomb and the shrines of pious men and ask for their intercession with Allah, though they worship only Allah and perform good deeds.

It is clear from the previous two points that the Wahhabis are more disruptive and evil than the Khawarij. While the khawarij based their verdict of heresy on deeds that all Muslims agreed on being cardinal sins, the Wahhabis chose acts which are not actually sins but favourable deeds performed by devout early Muslims including the Prophet's Companions.

3. The Wahhabis and the Khawarij are similar in their strict application of religion and their ossified interpretations of its doctrines. Thus when the Khawarij read the Quranic verse: «Judgment belongs to Allah» they said that whoever allowed resort to settlement is an idolator. 'There is no judgment but Allah's' became their slogan. And though it is indisputable it was misapplied to justify their deviant ways. This attitude illustrates their ignorance of Islam and rigid thinking since the principle of settlement of dispute through adjudicator or third-party intervention was established by the Holy Quran, the Prophet's Tradition and the deeds of the Companions and early Muslims. It is also supported by common logic.

Similarly, the Wahhabis interpreted the following verses:

**«You alone we worship and You alone we pray for help».** [2](#)

**«Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His own permission».**[3](#)

**No intercession shall avail with Him but that which He Himself allow».**[4](#)

To mean that anyone who justifies visiting the Prophet's Mosque or the shrines of pious Muslim and ask for their intercession is an idolator. They considered such acts as tantamount to worshipping the Prophet or those pious Muslims instead of Allah. Accordingly, they declared that there is no deity but Allah and there is no intercession except His.

While these heated declarations are indisputable, the intentions behind them are open to suspicions. The Wahhabis chose to ignore the tradition established by the Companions and early Muslims regarding the legality of visiting the Prophet's Mosque and other shrines and asking for intercession.

4. Ibn Taimia observed that the deviant group the Khawarij was the first *bida'* or corruption in Islam because its followers judged other Muslims as heretics and legalized killing them.[5](#)

It can be added that the Wahhabia, and for the same reason, is the last *bida'* in Islam.

5. Some of the Prophet's comments on the rise of the Khawarij and their deviation from Islam also apply to the Wahhabis. Consider, for example, the Prophet's saying that: «a group of people shall emerge from the east who reads the Quran without understanding it. They shall deviate from it like an arrow missing its target. Shaving the head shall be their distinguishing characteristic.»[6](#) In commenting on this saying, al-Qastalani said that «'due east' means east of al-Medina such as Najid and further.»[7](#)

Najid is the birthplace of Wahhabia from which it spread to other places. Also, shaving their heads was one of the Wahhabis' established tradition which was mandatory for all their followers including women. None of the deviant groups who predated them was known to impose it. Some of the religious scholars who witnessed the rise of this movement maintained that there is no need to write books to refute the Wahhabia because it is sufficient to repeat the Prophet's saying that 'Shaving the head is their distinguishing characteristic,' since none has done it before them.[8](#)

6. The Prophet described the Khawarij as «those who will slaughter Muslims and leave the pagans unharmed.» This also applies to the Wahhabis who fought only Muslims. Their scholars and books also call for waging war on other Muslims only.[9](#)

7. Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn Omar described the Khawarij as «having applied verses revealed regarding pagans to the believers.»[10](#) Ibn Abbas is reported to have said on the same subject:

Don't be like the Khawarij who interpreted some [verses] of the Quran to apply to the faithful. Those verses were revealed regarding followers of other divine messages and pagans. The Khawarij were ignorant of their meanings and as a result they killed [Muslims] and looted their possessions.

The Wahhabis followed suit by applying verses revealed in the case of idolaters to the believers.

8. We can now imagine the following dialogue between a Sunni and a Wahhabi:

-The Wahhabi: The Hanabila [i.e. followers of Imam Ibn Hanbal] books are also ours. Which of these books do you disapprove of? If you indeed have something against them then you must cite their books and not their critics!

-The Sunni: What do you think of the Karamita? [a dissident group formed during the Abbasid rule].

-The Wahhabi: They are pagans and idolaters.

-The Sunni: But they claim adherence to the Prophet Household's doctrines and that their books are also theirs. But the books of the Prophet Household contain nothing but words of enlightenment and truth.

-The Wahhabi: The Qaramita were liars and historians have demonstrated their heresy and falsification.

-The Sunni: Then you accept evidence presented by historians?

-The Wahhabi: Yes! Imam al-Shafi said that the historian's methodology in relying on multiple sources is better, in his opinion, than the acceptance of a single source by the narrators of the Prophet's Tradition.

-The Sunni: Then you must accept what the historians considered as evidence of the Wahhabi heresy. A person's deed may be held as evidence against him or her even if he denies doing it. And when the Qaramita legalized murdering Muslims and stealing their possessions no doubt regarding their heresy remained. This also applies to your Wahhabi masters.

-The Wahhabi: (was angry and speechless).

- The Sunni then added: What is your opinion of the description of the Khawarij as heretics who shall be punished with Hell's fire?

-The Wahhabi replied: The consensus is that the Khawarij deviated from the true path and thus incurred Allah's wrath. But the Khawarij were put to rout at the Nahrawan battle and the Wahhabis do not belong to them!

-The Sunni said: Why do you think the Khawarij deserved Allah's wrath? was it because of the inadequacy of their prayers and fasting?

-The Wahhabi: No!

-The Sunni: Was it then because of their devotion, or recital of the Quran or paying lipservice to the truth?

-The Wahhabi: No!

-The Sunni persisted: Why then? Tell me!

-The Wahhabi stammered and could not manage a reply.

-The Sunni: There is one and only one reason for incurring Allah's wrath and that is legalizing the slaughter of innocent Muslims and the theft of their possessions after calling them heretics and also whoever makes the claim that he is the only true Muslim. Anyone who commits such deeds and makes such claims deserves the same fate.

- [1.](#) Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab, Kashful al-Shubuhah; Al-San'ani, Tat'hear al-Itiqad.
- [2.](#) The Quran 1:5.
- [3.](#) The Quran 21:28.
- [4.](#) The Quran 34:23.
- [5.](#) Ibn Taimia, Majmut al-Fatawa, vol. 13, p. 20.
- [6.](#) Saheeh al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Tawheed, part 57 No. 7123.
- [7.](#) Al-Qastalani, Irshad al-Sari, Dar al-Fikr, vol. 15, p. 626.
- [8.](#) Zaini Dahlan, Fitnat al-Wahhabia, p. 19.
- [9.](#) Ibn Taimia, Majmut al-Fatawa, vol. 13, p. 32.
- [10.](#) Saheeh al-Bukhari, Kitab Istitabat al-Murtadean, part 5.

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