

Present Day Terrorists are the Kharijites of the Time of the Prophet (PBUH)

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Abstract:

Terrorism is one of the major world issues which has affected the whole of mankind in general, but it has more specifically troubled Muslims all over the world. Terrorism has been bracketed with Islam across global media due to terrorist groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda claiming to be Muslims and chant slogans claiming to follow the Qur'an. This paper looks into the Prophetic Narrations in regards to the Kharijites of the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and compares them to present day terrorists. The outcome indicates that present day terrorists are the Kharijites of the time of the Prophet (PBUH), which the Prophet (PBUH) prophesized, and as stated by the Prophet (PBUH), they have nothing to do with Islam and their atrocities will take them to Hellfire.

Keywords: Kharijite of Our Time, Present Day Terrorists, History of Terrorism, Islam and Terrorism

Introduction:

One of the greatest world problems and major security issues at present is terrorism (Al-Thagafi, 2008) which has not only been encountered by Muslims in particular but also by humanity as a whole for nearly two decades. Although terrorism is presently annexed with the religion of Islam and Muslims, which inclines a layman to think that terrorism originated from Islam, the reality is completely different. Terrorism actually goes back to the first century where history records the first manifestation of organized terrorism in Palestine, which was pre-Islam. "The Zealot sect was one of the very first groups to practice systematic terror" (Chaliand and Blin, 2007, p. 55). They were a sect of Judea who involved themselves in terrorist activities to force insurrection in Judea against the Romans. These terrorist activities used killers that would enter Roman-controlled cities by infiltrating in them and would carry out stabbing of Jewish collaborators or Roman legionnaires with a knife, as well as taking members of the staff of the Temple Guard as hostages to seek a ransom. Furthermore, they would largely use poison as part of their campaign (Hudson, 1999, p. 17). Nevertheless, the focus of this paper is to discuss the present-day terrorists such as members of ISIS, they are the Kharijites of the time of the Prophet (PBUH). This paper aims to highlight that these so-called Muslims committing these atrocities have nothing to do with Islam and are destined to Hellfire in the light of Prophetic Narrations.

1. Terrorism in the History of Islam

There are many dimensions to why Muslims are in the limelight in the emergence of terrorism since 9/11. One of the dimensions of the issue is that the so-called terrorists have been claiming to be Muslims and have used Qur'anic verses and narrations of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to legitimize their inhumane atrocities. They validate their practices by using the term 'Jihad', therefore, they alter, twist and obscure the Islamic concept of Jihad (Tahir-ul-Qadri, M. 2010, p. 3). In another dimension, the terrorists use the Qur'anic texts wrongfully by twisting the meanings and brainwash, radicalize and take on young Muslims as part of their campaign (Minhaj.org 2015). Another major aspect of this issue which has struck the west is that usually extremists and terrorists are notably recognized to be from the Middle East or East-Asia causing atrocities in the west, but the term 'homegrown terrorists' has emerged where Western grown young Muslims have been involved in such atrocities in the West (Beutel, 2007, p.3), or they have decided to migrate and join extremist organizations such as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

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Various opinions suggest causes of terrorism, such as economic deprivation, modernization strain, political transformation and identity clash (Krieger & Meierrieks 2014). But one thing is for sure that Islam is being manipulated, and the situation is specifically making some young Muslims become victims to doubts and reservations created by them (Tahir-ul-Qadri, 2010, p. 3), which then opens them to be radicalized, and to become extremists and terrorists. However, this is not the first time it to have happened in the history of Islam. When we look into the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the companions, it is very clear that not only this phenomenon of terrorism existed over 1400 years ago, but the Prophet himself predicted the re-emergence of this phenomenon number of times in the future.

The terrorists who emerged in the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and companions were given the name Kharijites. The definition given by the great scholar Ibn Nujaym (2013) is that Kharijites were a strong group revolting against the government due to their self-concocted interpretation of the religious text. They believed that the government is committing open disbelief and that it is necessary to fight it. They had declared the blood and wealth of Muslims lawful. The Prophet (PBUH) himself used this term when interpreting chapter 3 verse 7 “As for those who possess deviation in their hearts, they seek to follow what is unclear thereof” are no other than Kharijites (Ibn K. 2009).

The first indication is given by the Prophet (PBUH) regards to the emergence of Kharijites when he was distributing the war of booty, and a man oppose the Prophet’s way of distribution. He accused the Prophet of not being fair and told him to fear God. His attitude and behaviour towards the Prophet (PBUH) displayed his animosity towards his own Prophet. After responding to his accusation, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) informed the companions that this person would have followers who will pray so much that the companions will find their prayer little compared to theirs. They will fast so much that the companions will find their fasts little compared to theirs, but they will be out of the religion like an arrow is shot and comes out of the hunted animal (Bukhari, 1997). This man became the founder of Kharijite ideology, where his self-concocted interpretation of Islam took precedence over the decisions of the Prophet (PBUH).

In the reign of the Caliph Uthman (RA), followers of such ideology gained acceptance to such an extent that the group which conspired against Uthman (RA) and killed him, composed of people of Kharijites ideology. The prominent amongst them was Abdallah b. Saba. This became the very first time for a group that are an extremist terrorist group challenging the power of the Islamic state. In the reign of Ali (RA), the Kharijites became more organized and rebelled against Ali (RA). They incited people by using the verses of the Qur’an through their own interpretation and called them towards Jihad against Ali (RA). They labelled him as a disbeliever. A famous verse which they would use as a slogan and motto; ‘There is no judgement but for God’. Upon hearing this, Ali (RA) said: ‘A word of truth by which falsehood is intended’ (Muslim, 1973). Due to the mischief and armed rebellion caused by the Kharijites, Ali (RA) eventually formed an army of companions and carried out a successful military operation to entirely eradicate them and to re-establish peace and security.

When we look at the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), we can see that he foretold the Ummah regards the Kharijites and what their traits will be. There are narrations in which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) foretold that Kharijites would emerge continuously until the last group of them will appear with Anti-Christ (Dajjal) (Ibn Hanbal, 2012). When we look at present-day terrorists, the foretold news by the Prophet (PBUH) appears to be exactly as he informed.

Since the atrocities of September 11 2001, so-called Muslims have emerged who chant the name of Islam and the God of Islam and commit inhumane actions against innocent people. Recognizing that these types of doings have nothing to do with Islam, Muslim organisations in the west recognized the need for open condemnation in regards to extremism and terrorism, and also the need for promoting Islam as a religion of peace, mutual respect and harmony. This was clearly evident when the London bombings occurred in 2005. There were a large number of Muslim organizations who immediately gave a reaction to it. Statements were issued by these organizations within an hour of the atrocity condemning it (European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2006, p. 19). Explanation of Islam as a religion of peace, mutual respect and harmony have been given by many religious scholars in the form of lectures, written articles and books, but nothing authoritative came into the limelight which can globally be accepted and recognized until 2010.

2. Who are the Kharijites?

2.1 Definition

Kharijites are considered an integral part of Muslim history as the Prophetic Traditions are filled with information regards to them, as well as their atrocities caused during their emergence in the era of the honourable companions.

As a result of this, great scholars have always made an effort to shed light about them in their great masterpiece, which the Muslims rely on. They have made attempts to define Kharijite with a comprehensive definition. I have selected a few of the definitions from Muslim scholars who are considered as an authority from different parts of the Muslim world.

Imam al-Nawawi is a renowned Muslim Scholar and Haidth expert from the 13th Century. He is well known for his commentary on Sahih Muslim, which is one of the most authentic books of Prophetic Traditions. He defines Kharijite by saying that they are a cult of blamable innovators that have the doctrine that if a person carries out a major sin, he has ended up committing disbelief and will go to hell for eternity. As a result of this, they defame the leaders and rulers, and they also do not participate in prayers that take place in a congregation with them (Nawawī, 2017).

A'lamah Ibn Taymiyya is another well-known Muslim scholar, and in particular, the Gulf countries have high regard for him. He is well known for his voluminous book called Fatawa Ibn Taymiyya. He has also taken the opportunity to define Kharijite. He says that as they were armed and were inclined towards fighting, their opposition to the Jama'ah (majority) was apparent when they started killing the people. He further states that their passing their religion is actually leaving it because of them declaring blood and wealth of Muslims as lawful (Ibn T. 1999).

Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani is another world-renowned and prominent scholar and an authority in Prophetic Traditions. He is well known for his commentary on the most authentic book of Hadith called Fath al-Bari, which is a commentary of Sahih al-Bukhari. He states that Kharijites are a cult of blameworthy rebels as they leave the religion and rebel against the best of the Muslims (Ibn H. 2003)

2.2 The Atrocities and Tribulation of Kharijite Indicated in the Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an has very strongly condemned the killing of people in various places. In Chapter 5 Verse No. 32, Almighty Allah mentions killing a person unjustly. In this Qur'anic verse, He states killing of an innocent person who is deserved to be killed is as if the person has killed the whole of humanity, and if someone has saved a person's life, it is as if he has saved the whole of humanity. This is an explicit ideology and concept provided by Almighty Allah in regards to the sanctity of life.

There are verses indicating certain characteristics, and when looked into the commentaries, it is understood that the Qur'anic Verse is referring to the Kharijites. Chapter 3 Verse 7 states, "He is the One Who has revealed to you the book comprising some firm and solid Verses, they are the foundation of (the commandments) of the Book. And other Verses are figurative". The Qur'anic Verse further talks about the people following the figurative verses for the purpose of causing disruption, that their hearts have deviated. Imam Ibn Abi Hatim, who is a great scholar and a Qur'anic exegesis expert, mentions a Prophetic Tradition in his commentary of the Qur'an under this Qur'anic verse. He mentions the report from Abu Umamah, and he says that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "they are the Kharijites". Furthermore, when we look at one of the well-known experts of Qur'an exegesis, 'Tafsir Ibn Kathir', after quoting the section of the verse about deviation, he writes that they are none else but the Kharijites (Ibn K. 2009).

2.3 Emergence of Kharijites during the Era of the Prophet (PBUH)

When we look into the Prophetic Narrations, we can see that the Kharijite ideology started from a particular person's conduct, who was known as Dhu al-Khuwaysira. A Hadith reported in Sahih al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (RA) mentions that the Prophet (PBUH) was distributing the war of booty. During this, Dhu al-Khuwaysira, who was from the Banu Tamim tribe, said, "O Messenger of Allah, be just". In response to this, the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Woe to you! who will be just if I am not just?" (Bukhari, 1997). From this narration, we can see that this person from Bani Tamim has no understanding of the reverence and respect that is due to the Prophet (PBUH). Furthermore, to consider that the Messenger of Allah cannot be just, indicates that he has an issue in his ideology about the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). It is considered by the authorities of Islam that this act of disrespect committed by Dhu al-Khuwaysira laid the cornerstone for one of the word atrocities faced by the Muslims. Later on when rebels and militants who revolted against the leadership of Uthman and Ali were actually a continuation of the evil concept set by Dhu al-Khuwaysira. This notion has been supported by the statement of Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, who is considered to be an authority, and his works are relied upon the Muslim Ummah even today. He states, "Dhu al-Khuwaysira al-Tamimi's real name was Hurqus b. Zuhayr and he was the founder of the Kharijite" (Ibn H. 2003).

2.4 The Development of Kharijites Ideology during the Reign of Uthman B. Affan (RA)

After the Holy demise of the Prophet (PBUH), a lot of turmoil, disruption and chaos appeared in different forms. This included Musaylma al-Kazzab claiming to be a Prophet, people leaving Islam, people denying to pay Zakah and rejection of other fundamental teachings of Islam. The Kharijites took the opportunity of this turmoil and propagated their distorted understanding of Islam. They organized themselves to the extent that those who ended up being part of the conspiracies against Uthman towards the final days of Uthman's rule, and those who ended up killing him consisted of those who had extreme views of the Kharijites (Tahir ulQadri 2010).

2.5 The Kharijites during the Reign of Ali b. Abi Talib (RA)

When the history of Kharijites is critically looked at, it comes to light that it was a violent movement which was against having peaceful dialogue to settle disputes. The fourth caliph, Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) adopted this manner of settling things during the battle of Siffin. However, his army had people who held extreme views; they were always up for bloodshed. This became apparent when Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) adopted the path of arbitration before the battle of Siffin to avoid bloodshed. When he adopted this path, the people who had Kharijite elements within them, they rejected the decision of Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) and abandoned his troops. They called him a disbeliever, and it was from here where they organized themselves into a group as a terrorist and rose against him and the Muslim Ummah under the covering of Jihad (Tahir ulQadri 2010).

Their slogan was a portion of Qur'anic Verse in Chapter 12 Verse No.40 "There is no judgment but for Allah". When Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) heard their slogan, he said, "A word of truth by which falsehood is intended" (Muslim 1973). Ibn al-Athir, in his history book, has quoted a report of Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) in regards to the Kharijites, he said, "if they are quiet we will overwhelm them, and if they speak we will talk to them with logic, and if they rebel against us we will fight them" (Ibn A. 2017). Ibn al-Athir quotes a sermon of a Kharijite leader in his history book in which he provokes his movement to fight against Ali b. Abi Talib (RA). He states, "All praise is for God alone. We cannot give it up. O, God! We seek refuge from any weakness or fawning flattery in matters of the religion because that brings humiliation, which will lead to God's wrath. O Ali, Would you have us fear death? Beware! By God, I hope that we will kill you with the edge of the sword. Then, you will come to know who amongst us deserves torment the most" (Ibn A. 2017). This sermon gives us an explicit understanding of to what extent the Kharijites had become organized and developed to the extent they have plans to wage war against the caliph Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) and the Muslim Ummah.

A letter written by the Kharijites as a response to the letter of Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) has also been recorded by Ibn al-Athir. It is stated in the letter addressing Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) "Indeed, you were not angry for the sake of your Lord; you were angry for the sake of your ego. Now, if you confess that you fell into disbelief and repent, we will look into the matter that is between you and us; otherwise, we reject you, and indeed, God does not love the deceitful" (Ibn A. 2017). It is important to highlight that they are talking about Ali b. Abi Talib (RA), who is the cousin of the Prophet (PBUH), who has been alongside the Prophet (PBUH) in the Makkan period as well as the Medinan period, was married to the beloved daughter of the Prophet (PBUH), Fatimah al-Zahra (RA), he fought alongside the Prophet (PBUH) in all of the battles of Islam, and he is the fourth caliph of Islam. By looking at the sermon and letter of the Kharijites, it is visible they have no respect and reverence for Ali b. Abi Talib (RA), and is the same ideology which was instilled by Dhu al-Khuwaysira from the time of the Prophet (PBUH).

This letter and the sermon by the Kharijites show that they considered themselves to be an embodiment of piety, righteousness and someone who is on the true path, and they considered Ali b. Abi Talib (RA) to be someone who has committed disbelief and blameworthy innovation. As a result of this notion, they deserted Ali's city and announced it to be an abode of disbelief. They went towards the mountains and wastelands, and they would ambush travellers and get hold of their opponents and torture them till they died. In response to this terroristic behavior, Ali (RA) formed an army of honourable companions to launch military activities against them so that they may be eliminated, and peace, security and authority of the government may be restored back (Tahir ulQadri 2010).

2.6 The Kharjite Ideology

Many Islamic authorities have discussed the ideology and beliefs of the Kharijites. Imam al-Sharastani has mentioned in his book *al-MilalWa al-Nihal* that Kharijites believe that it is an obligation to revolt against the government if it goes against the Sunnah.

This then materialized when the Kharijites rebelled against Ali (RA), who was one of the rightly guided caliphs (Sahrastānī, 1971). Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani quotes al-Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-Arabi that Kharijites are of two types. One type are those who had the ideology that Uthman (RA), Ali (RA) and all those who were content with the arbitration were disbelievers, and the second type is, those who believe that if anyone commits a grave sin, has left the ambit of Islam and is a disbeliever, and he will be in Hell eternally (Ibn H. 2003). Ibn Taymiyyah also talked about the ideology of the Kharijites. He describes the ideology of the Kharijite by quoting the statement of the Prophet (SAW) that the Kharijite would kill the people of Islam and leave the idolaters. Ibn Taymiyyah then mentions the beliefs which they had about Uthman (RA), Ali (RA) and those who allied with them, that they are disbelievers. He further says that they killed Ali b. Abi Talib (RA). He added that they were grossly ignorant of religious logic and wisdom and abandoned Sunnah. Further on, he said that they considered those who do not perform every single obligation and abstain from every kind of prohibition are disbelievers (Ibn T. 1999)

Imam Ibn al-Athir writes in regards to the activities of the Kharijites that Abdullah b. Wahb al-Rasibi addressed people who joined forces and gathered at his house and told them to stay away from worldly love, command what is good and forbid what is evil. In his address, he said to the people to leave with him and abandon the city of oppressors and head for the mountains or some other cities. Ibn al-Athir says that they then gathered in the house of Shurayb b. Awfa al-Abasi and Ibn Wahb addressed and said, “let us come together and head for a land where we will carry out the law of God, for you are the people of the truth”. Shurayh confirmed that they would go to the different towns, enter into them and expel their inhabitants (Ibn A. 2017). A disturbing event is recorded by Ibn al-Athir that when Abdullah b. Khabbab and his wife refused to declare Uthman (RA) and Ali (RA) as disbelievers. The Kharijites put him on the ground and slaughtered him, causing his blood to flow into the water. Then they approached his wife, and she said, “I am a woman! Do you not fear God?” Then they sliced open her stomach (Ibn A. 2017). When Ali (RA) heard about this incident, he sent out al-Harith b. Murra al-Abdi to the Kharijites to investigate the incident. So when he reached and inquired about the murder, the Kharijites also killed him.

All of the above-mentioned incidents indicate that the Kharijite ideology was so extreme to the extent that they would consider Muslims, those who were weak in practising Islam, the rightly guided caliphs of Islam and those who supported him as non-Muslims. Their distorted ideology led them to commit brutal acts such as the slaughtering of Abdullah b. Khabbab. Another thing which has been highlighted as part of their ideology is that they believe they are on the path of Allah and that shedding blood is lawful. The base of this ideology is ignorance and not knowing the true concept of the Deen, which have already been highlighted above.

2.7 Kharijites Rousing Religious Sentiments

To motivate people and to recruit them as part of their group, the Kharajies would base their invitation on the Qur’an. They would use Jihad to arouse extremist sentiments within ignorant Muslims to incite them to assist in committing mass murder. They would quote the rewards given in Paradise to psychologically prepare them.

The famous exegesis scholar, Imam Ibn Kathir quotes a sermon delivered to the Kharijites by Zayd b. Hisn at his house. In his address, he asks them to enjoin the good and forbid the evil. Further on in his address, he recited out portions of Qur’anic verses such as ‘...and do not follow vain desires, lest they lead you astray from the path of God’, ‘and whoever does not judge by what God has revealed, then they are disbelievers’, further on, he recited verses such as ‘they are oppressors’ and ‘they are corrupt’. After that, he said, ‘I call the people of our call and qibla to bear witness that they [Ali and the community] have followed vain desires and cast the ruling of the Book [Qur’an] aside and acted unjustly in their words and deeds. And I call you to bear witness that it is incumbent upon the believers to wage jihad against them’. After this address, a man amongst the people started to weep (Ibn K. 2009). It is obvious from this sermon that the Kharijites used Qur’anic Verses to arouse the sentiments of innocent and ignorant Muslims, to the extent that they would come into tears after listening to their address.

2.8 The Prophetic Traditions about the Kharijites

After reading what has passed previously, it is quite clear that the appearance of the Kharijite movement has caused a lot of atrocities and mayhem in the early history of Islam. As they emerged within the Muslims and have backed their ideology using Qur’an and Sunnah, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) blessed the Muslims Ummah with the awareness of the emergence of the Kharijite movement. He prophesized every minute detail about them so that the Muslims could be aware of the trial and tribulation they would cause to the Ummah. This section has been specifically categorized according to different aspects of the Kharijite, which have directly been mentioned by the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

2.8.1 The Kharijites Extreme Behavior in Religiosity

The Prophet (PBUH) highlighted the apparent religious practices of the Kharijites. A Hadith reported in Sahih al-Bukhari in which after Dhu al-Khuwaysira said to the Prophet (PBUH) to be just, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said in regards to his offspring, that a group would come from him who will recite so much Qur'an, but the Qur'an will not go past their throats, meaning that it will not benefit their hearts. He further described their loss of faith by saying that as an arrow, when it is shot into a hunted animal and it passes through it, in the same way, these people will pass through the religion (Bukhari, 1997). In another narration in Sahih al-Bukhari, reported on the authority of Sa'id al-Khudri (RA), he said that Prophet (PBUH) said that he has followers, and the companions would consider their prayers and their fasting less than theirs (Bukhari, 1997).

Through the Prophetic Traditions mentioned above, one can see that the Prophet (PBUH) prophesized about the Kharijites and indicated that Dhu al-Khuwaysira would have followers of his ideology who would come later and they will adhere to religious practices very strongly, to the extent that honourable companions will find their prayers and fasts little compared to theirs. It also mentioned them reciting the Holy Quran abundantly. A lesson that one needs to take from these narrations is to not fall for the religiosity of people when one is to consider whether they are right or wrong in what they claim, as this could be deceiving, as the case with the Kharijites..

2.8.2 The Appealing Slogans of the Kharijites

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has also informed his followers about the appealing slogans which the Kharijites will use to attract people towards their call. In a Prophetic Narration recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari and reported by Ali (RA), the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said about the Kharijites "they will speak the words of the best of people [just to mislead people]" (Bukhari 2019). In the commentary of this narration, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani stated that these words indicate that the Kharijites will quote the Quran to prove their point, and the first Quranic phrase which they used was "There is no judgment but for God" [Chapter 12 Verse No.40] which they interpreted it incorrectly (Ibn H. 2003).

In another narration, in Sunan Nisaai, Tari b. Zayd (RA) said that when they went out with Ali (RA) to fight against the Kharijites, and when he killed them, he said, "observe what the Prophet of Allah said, 'There shall appear a fold who speak the truth, but it will not pass their throats'" (An-Nasa'i 2000). This narration proves that the Kharijites would use slogans to fulfil their extremist objectives, and behind these objectives are brutal and immoral.

2.8.3 Kharijites used Young People for their Terroristic Activities through Brainwashing

The Kharijites movement was particularly known for having young members. This was prophesized by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) stated in a narration of Sahih Bukhari that towards the end of time, there shall appear a group who are 'young in age and foolish'. The narration continues to describe them by saying "they will speak the words of the best of people, but their faith will not pass their throats" (Bukhari 1997). The two words used in the Hadith, 'young in age' and 'foolish', proves that the Kharijites will be young in age, and they will use young people for their brutal, terroristic activities. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani states that the Prophet's statement 'ahdath' means someone who is young in age, and the statement of the Prophet (PBUH) 'Sufaha al-ahlam' means that those who are engaged in those terroristic activities lack in their intellect (Ibn H.2003). Therefore, the narration and its commentary indicate that the Kharijites or whomever they recruit are young and foolish who are easily brainwashed by using Quranic verses and by abusing their sentiments.

2.8.4 The Place Where They Will Appear From

The Prophet (PBUH) also prophesizes the area from which the Kharijites will appear. In a narration reported in Sahih al-Bukhari and reported on the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (RA), the Prophet (PBUH) said, "a group of people will emerge from the east who will recite the Quran, but it will not pass through their throats" (Bukhari 1997). In another narration, the Prophet (PBUH) even pointed towards the east and said, "there shall appear a folk who will recite the Quran with their tongues, but it will not pass their throats. They shall pass through the religion just as an arrow passes through a hunted game" (Muslim 1973). In another narration in Sahih Bukhari, Abdullah b. Umar (RA) said 'I once heard the Messenger of God say while standing on the pulpit, "beware, the tribulation shall appear from here [he pointed to the east]; from there the horn [generation] of Satan shall appear" (Bukhari 1997).

There is also a famous narration in Sahih Bukhari where the Prophet (PBUH) raised his hands and supplicated for the blessings of certain areas. When he (PBUH) supplicated for Syria and Yemen, some people said, “O Messenger of Allah, and our Najd”; the Prophet (PBUH) repeated his supplication again and left out Najd. The people again said to him to supplicate for Najd, in response the Prophet (PBUH) said, “there [in Najd] shall occur the earthquakes and tribulations, and there shall rise the horn [i.e., generation] of Satan” (Bukhari 1997).

These narrations of the Prophet (PBUH) explicitly indicate that the Kharijites would appear from the east, and more specifically, from the area of Najd. These narrations then materialized when the era of Ali (RA) appeared, and the first group of Kharijites emerged as they emerged from Najd and an area called Harura, which were east towards the Sacred area of Madinah and Makkah (Tahir ulQadri 2010).

2.8.5 The Kharijites will have nothing to do with Islam

Regardless of Kharijites outwardly behaved like Muslims by praying, fasting and reciting the Holy Quran, and moreover claiming to be the only ones who are on the correct path, they have nothing to do with Islam and the Prophet of Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) explicitly stated that “they shall pass through the religion just an arrow passes through a hunted game” (Bukhari 1997). In another narration, instead of using the word religion, the Prophet (PBUH) used the word ‘Islam’. This report is in SunanTirmidhi reported from Abdullah b. Mas’ud, the Prophet (PBUH) said, “they shall pass through Islam just as an arrow passes through a hunted game” (Tirmidhi 2001).

2.8.6 The Status of Kharijites in the Hereafter Declared by the Prophet (PBUH)

Due to the evil, brutal and terroristic acts of the Kharijites against the Muslims, the Prophet (PBUH) declared them to be the dogs of Hell. In a narration recorded in SunanTirmidhi and reported on the authority of Abu Ghalib (RA), he said that Abu Umama (RA) said about the Kharijites ‘they are the dogs of Hell. They are the vilest of those slain under the heavens, and the best of those killed are those killed at their hands’. After reciting a Quranic verse, Abu Ghalib (RA) asked Abu Umama (RA) “did you hear that from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)?” He responded by saying if he had not heard it from the Messenger of Allah (SAW), he would not have narrated it to him (Tirmidhi 2001).

2.8.7 The External Religious Appearance of the Kharijites

As mentioned early, the Kharijites would strictly observe religious practices, such as praying, fasting and recitation of the Quran. In a narration quoted early, we say that they would speak about worldly abstinence and the fear of God. In a narration which is recorded by Ibn Majah and reported on the authority of Abu Salama (RA). He asked Abu Sa’id al-Khudri (RA) if he had heard the Messenger of Allah mentioning anything about the Haruriyya [Kharijites]. He said that he heard him saying that “a folk who engage in much worship, you will belittle your prayers and fasting in comparisons to theirs” (Ibn M. 2018).

The honourable companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) were quite struck by the piety of the Kharijites. It is mentioned in a narration recorded by Imam An-Nasa’i on the authority of Ibn Abbas (RA) that he went to see the Kharijites as he represented Ali (RA). The Kharijites were gathered in their homes. Ibn Abbas (RA) greeted them with salutations of peace, but they did not respond back with peace. Instead, they said, “welcome O son of Abbas’. Ibn Abbas (RA) says that he has not seen anyone more devout [outwardly] than them”. He further said, “due to their prolonged nights of sleeplessness [in the night vigil prayer], their faces bore marks of [prostration] and their hands and knees were stiff” (An-Nasa’i 2000). The Kharijites displayed so much piety that the honourable companions would start to have mixed feelings about them. It is reported in Tabrani on the authority of Jundub b. Abdullah. He relates the story about the Kharijites, when they separated from Ali (RA), and when they went in pursuit of them, they heard Quranic recitation. They saw the Kharijites in loin clothes and mantles. When Jundub b. Abdullah said that he had mixed feelings about fighting against them. The outward piety of the Kharijites was so strong that even the Muslims who were part of the troops of Ali (RA) became confused as to the legitimacy of the war against the Kharijites.

2.8.8 The Kharijites are Declared as the Worst of Creation

The evil and brutal acts of the Kharijites have made the Kharijites the worst creation. In the chapter heading of Sahih Bukhari under the exegesis of Surah 9 Verse 115, Imam Bukhari mentions a narration of Ibn Umar (RA) in regards to the Kharijites. It states that Ibn Umar (RA) believed the Kharijites were the worst of God’s creation. He said that they would take verses of the Quran revealed about the disbelievers and apply them to the disbelievers.

In a narration of al-Bazzar on the authority of Aisha (RA), she said the Messenger of Allah mentioned the Kharijites and said, “they are the worst of my Ummah and shall be killed by the best of my Ummah” (Ibn H. 2003).

2.9 The Elimination of the Kharijites

There is no doubt about the Kharijites that they are cruel, brutal and dangerous to mankind. Their extremist ideology and their influential behaviour is no less than cancer within a society. We have already seen that Ali (RA) tried to call them to have peaceful dialogues, but they committed brutal murder of the ambassadors sent to them. In such circumstances where one is not ready to listen and have a dialogue, but rather is bloodthirsty and wants to take the law into their own, then there is no other way but to eliminate them. In a Prophetic narration in Sahih al-Bukhari reported on the authority of Ali (RA), the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “...kill them wherever you find them [during was], for the one who kills them will be rewarded on the Day of Resurrection” (Bukhari 1997). In another narration of Bukhari on the authority of Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “there shall emerge from the offspring of this man [DhulKhuwaysira al-Tamimi] a fold... if I were to encounter them, I would slay them like the people of Thamud” (Bukhari 1997).

2.10 Will the Kharijites Reappear?

Although all of the discussion which we have carried out was all confined to the Kharijites which started from the time of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and then they formally became a movement in the time of Uthman (RA) and Ali (RA), it does not mean that the Prophet (PBUH) only prophesized this for that era only. The Prophet (PBUH) prophesized their continuous emergence until the appearance of the Anti-Christ.

It is recorded in Musnad Ahmad b. Hanbal and reported from Sharik b. Shihab. He had a yearning to meet one of the honourable companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) so that he may ask about the Kharijites. He said that he finally met Abu Burza (RA) during the day of Eid. He asked him whether he ever heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) talk about the Kharijites. He replied yes he has heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) with his own ears and saw him with his own eyes. He then described an event in which wealth was brought to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the Messenger (PBUH) distributed it. He (PBUH) gave to those who were on the right and to those who were on the left, but not to those who were behind him. So a man stood up behind him and said, “O Muhammad, you have not acted justly in your distribution”. Abu Burza (RA) described him, saying that he had a dark complexion with a large head of hair, wearing two white garments. Upon the statement of this person, the Prophet (PBUH) said, “By Allah, you will not find any after me who is more just than I”. The Prophet (PBUH) then said, “At the end of time, there will appear a folk and this one was from them. They shall recite the Quran, but it will not pass their throats. They shall pass through the religion just as an arrow passes through a hunted game”. Abu Barza (RA) continued and said the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, “they shall continue to appear until the last of them appears with the Anti-Christ [al-Dajjal], so you should kill them when you encounter them [in the battlefield]. They are the evilest of the creation (Imam A. 2006)

In another narration of Musnad Ahmad b. Hanbal, Abdullah b. Amr (RA) reports that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said about the Kharijites, “every time a generation of them appears, it will be cut down, every time a generation of them appears it will be cut down until the Anti-Christ appears from the last remnants” (Imam A. 2006). In another narration of Ibn Majah on the authority of Abdullah b. Umar (RA), he said the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “every time a generation of them appears, it will be cut down, this will occur over 20 times, until the Anti-Christ appears in their last remnant” (Ibn M. 2008).

It is quite clear from these narrations that the Kharijites were not the first and last group which appeared in during the reign of Uthman (RA) and Ali (RA), but they will continue to appear again and again up to 20 times until the Anti-Christ will appear from them. In the light of the above narrations and discussions, it would not be wrong to say that the present-day terrorists, such as ISIS and Taliban etc., are the Kharijites of our time. They have all the traits which have been discussed through the Prophetic traditions.

I made an attempt to present literature highlighting the history of terrorism, especially the history of terrorism in Islam. Through the Prophetic narrations, statements of the companions and the great authorities of Islam, I have shown that terrorism in the Islamic world started from a man called Dhu al-Khuwaysira al-Tamimi who had no reverence and veneration for the Prophet (PBUH), he accused the Prophet of Islam of being unjust. As prophesized by the Prophet (PBUH), this person had followers who started to cause dissemination in the Ummah of the Prophet (PBUH) by being involved in the assassination of Uthman (RA) and by revolting against Ali (RA). This group then formalized themselves and started to carry out brutality and bloodshed. I clarified their methodology of brainwashing young people, which was to use Quranic verses out of their context and play with the religious sentiments of the people.

After clarifying their position in Islam in the light of statements of the Prophet (PBUH), I showed that the Kharijites are not only those who emerged in that time, but they will continue to emerge until the emergence of Anti-Christ, and in the light of this statement, it has become visible that the present-day terrorists who claim to be Muslims are actually the Kharijites which the Prophet (PBUH) prophesized.

3. So-Called Muslim Terrorists of the Present Time

When we look at the history of ISIS, we know that it was founded in 1999 by a person known as Abu Mus'ab Zarqawi. ISIS is known by many other names, such as ISIL, which stands for the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant, ISIS which stands for the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and is also known by the name of Daesh. Although ISIS was found in 1999, it picked up global awareness in 2014 when it forced the Iraqi government out of certain cities and when it captured Mosul and also after carrying out the Sinjar massacre. ISIS self-proclaimed itself to be an Islamic State since then and have been inviting people to join it from all over the world ("Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant", 2021).

Around 30,000 people have joined ISIS from abroad to become fighters, and they have come from around 85 countries. The majority of these fighters come from Middle Eastern countries, but there is a large number of people who have come from western countries too, such as the European Union, Australia, Canada, and the USA. There have also been a large number of people who have joined from Indonesia and Russia (Benmelech et al., 2016). Barrett & Soufan Group (2014) have provided data in which they have ranked countries based on the number of its citizens who have joined ISIS and have become ISIS fighters. The data shows that people from Tunisia has the highest number of people who have joined ISIS to fight, which is an estimate of 6000. Then it displays around 2500 people from Saudi Arabia have joined ISIS to fight. Then around 2400 people from Russia have joined, around 2100 people from Turkey, around 2000 people from Jordan, and from the western countries, there are around 1700 people from France, around 760 from Germany, and around 470 people from Belgium.

James Comey, who is a FBI director, stated a reason why people go and join ISIS He states that to gain experience in the battlefield and to also have an increase to elements of violent extremist, foreign fighters set off to Syria and Iraq so that they can make use of these skills to carry out an attack on their homeland, such as the United States (United States 2014).

It is unfortunate that this is the reality where thousands of young Muslims are brainwashed and are being recruited. Even the household members are not aware of what their family members are up to. There have been so many incidents that reflect this. Barrett & Soufan Group (2014) asserts that a family only finds out that their member of the family has gone to Syria when someone dies, either through a phone call made by a friend of the fighter or through news which has been published on social media (p. 12)

A young girl known as Shamima Begum who was only 15 years old when she left the UK and fled to Syria to join ISIS. She was born in the UK, and her parents were Bangladeshi. She grew up in London, where she received her secondary education at the Bethnal Green Academy. She left the UK in February 2015 along with her friends Amira Abase and Khadiza Sultana. When she reached Syria, she got married to a Dutch-born man called Yago Riedijk, who was a convert to Islam. She gave birth to three children, but all three children died young. Begum appeared before the media in February 2019, where she expressed to come back to the UK for the birth of her child. The UK government were looking into stripping Mrs Begum from her UK citizenship, but there has been a debate around the matter in terms of the legality of doing so ("Shamima Begum", 2021).

Another person called Mohammed Emwazi but famously known as 'Jihadi John' was a British Citizen and moved to the UK when he was six years old in 2006, he attended the University of Westminster studying Business management. He travelled to Syria in 2013 to join ISIS, and at that time, he was 25 years old. Mohammed Emwazi was believed to be in many videos in which showed the beheading of a number of captives in 2014 and 2015. It is said that he read out statements before beheading the captives demanding to cease the 2014 American-led intervention in Iraq. Mohammed Emwazi was killed on 12th of November 2015 through a drone attack ("Jihadi John", 2021).

A young girl at the age of 20 called Aqsa Mahmood from Glasgow also went to Syria to join ISIS in 2013. She was known for her social media and blogs, where she praised Tunisia and France attacks. She frequently called out for young British women to travel to Syria to join ISIS. She was given a leading role in enforcing the ISIS interpretation of Shariah Law. Enforcement included arresting and beating women for going out without a male guardian and lashes for not wearing modest clothes.

Another young girl called Grace Dare, who was 24 years old and a British national, also fled for Syria in 2012. She was originally Christian and then later accepted Islam in her teens. She became quite active on social media, where she celebrated the beheading of James Foley and vowed to be the first UK women to kill a UK or US terrorist (Dearden 2014).

A group of sisters who were British nationals living in Bradford also joined ISIS in 2015. The three sisters were known as Khadijah, Zohra and Sugra. Their ages were 30, 33 and 34. They went to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage along with their nine children, and on their way back, they boarded a flight to Istanbul and crossed Syria instead of coming back to the UK. The sister had a brother called Ahmed Dawood, who was already in Syria working for ISIS. The children were five girls and four boys aged between 3 and 15 when they left. Two men who are the husband of the two sisters have pleaded them to come back, but nothing has been heard from them (Dearden 2019).

The above are some of the examples from hundreds of British young people who have fled the UK and joined ISIS in Syria. It is unfortunate to see young people being influenced and brainwashed into joining a cause which is alleged to be Islamic but in reality, has nothing to with Islam.

4. The Present Day Terrorists are Kharijites of our time

It is clear that the Prophet (PBUH) already prophesized that Kharijites will reemerge over 20 times and they will reemerge until the arrival of Anti-Christ, which is a sign they will continue to come up until the time which is closer to the Day of Judgment. After viewing the section of Kharijite and revisiting the narrations of the reemergence of the Kharijites, this paper would now discuss the traits of the Kharijites derived from the Prophetic Narrations and compare them to the traits of the member of ISIS.

A detailed description and their signs have already been derived by the author of ICPC in his edict, which he launched in March 2010 called 'Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings'. Few of those descriptions will be discussed, and an analogy will be carried out with the present-day terrorists who claim to be Muslims, such as ISIS.

The first sign mentioned by the Prophet (PBUH) is that they will be young in age. In the detailed discussion which we have already carried, we saw that nearly all of the suicide bombers or ISIS fighters are young in age. When we discussed the atrocity of 11th September 2001, all 19 members were from the age of 19 to 33. Out of the 19, 14 of them were the age 25 or below. When we look at the atrocity committed in London in July 2015, there were four members with the age of 18, 19, 21 and 30. When we looked at the ISIS fighters who left the UK, it was noted that all of them were, for example, Shamima Begum was 15 when she joined ISIS, Mohammed Emwazi was 25 when he joined ISIS, and Aqsa Mahmood was 20 when she joined ISIS. This notion of being young in age is also mentioned in the narration quoted in the next paragraph.

Another sign derived from the Prophet Narration is that the Kharijites will be brainwashed. In a narration of Sahih Bukhari that towards the end of time, there shall appear a group who are "young in age and foolish" (Bukhari 1997). The two words used in the Hadith 'young in age' and 'foolish', proves that the Kharijites will be young in age and they will use young people for their brutal, terroristic activities. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani states that the Prophet's statement 'ahdath' means someone who is young in age, and the statement of the Prophet (PBUH) 'Sufaha al-ahlam' means that those who are engaged in those terroristic activities lack in their intellect (Ibn H.2003). Therefore, the narration and its commentary indicate that the Kharijites or whomever they recruit are young and foolish who are easily brainwashed by using Quranic verses and by abusing their sentiments. When one looks at the perpetrators of the terrorist acts, and especially those who have left UK and other well-developed countries to join ISIS, it bothers them that how can someone who has a life of ease in a country like the UK and Europe, would leave all of that go and join ISIS. Surely one would have to be immature and easily brainwashed to go and join such extremist groups.

When we look at the description of the Kharijites that were in the time of the Prophet (PBUH), especially the founder of Kharijite ideology, Abdullah b. Dhi al-Khuwaysira al-Tamimi, he had a thick rough beard (Bukhari 1997). To have a beard is a sign of religiosity, which means they will appear to be religious in their outlooks. When we look at members of Al-Qaeda, members of ISIS who have appeared in numerous videos that have been released online, they generally have thick rough beards.

Another sign which the Prophet (PBUH) prophesized was their emergence from the east. In a narration reported in Sahih al-Bukhari and reported on the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (RA), the Prophet (PBUH) said, "a group of people will emerge from the east who will recite the Quran, but it will not pass through their throats" (Bukhari 1997).

In another narration, the Prophet (PBUH) even pointed towards the east and said, “there shall appear a folk who will recite the Quran with their tongues, but it will not pass their throats. They shall pass through the religion just as an arrow passes through a hunted game” (Muslim 1973). In another narration in Sahih Bukhari, Abdullah b. Umar (RA) said ‘I once heard the Messenger of God say while standing on the pulpit, “beware, the tribulation shall appear from here [he pointed to the east]; from there the horn [generation] of Satan shall appear” (Bukhari 1997). There is also a famous narration in Sahih Bukhari where the Prophet (PBUH) raised his hands and supplicated for the blessings of certain areas. When he (PBUH) supplicated for Syria and Yemen, some people said, “O Messenger of Allah, and our Najd”; the Prophet (PBUH) repeated his supplication again and left out Najd. The people again said to him to supplicate for Najd, in response the Prophet (PBUH) said, “there [in Najd] shall occur the earthquakes and tribulations, and there shall rise the horn [i.e., generation] of Satan” (Bukhari 1997). The narrations indicate that Kharijites will come from the East, and even though there is a debate on the countries that are geographically included as part of Najd, one thing is for sure that the Prophet (PBUH) whilst in the Sacred Sanctuary of Madina, he pointed towards east, which can include Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is said the term ‘east’ which has been used in the narrations, are used in the general sense (Tahir-ul-Qadri, M. 2010, p. 317). Therefore, both terrorist groups, Al-Qaeda and ISIS are indicated in the Prophetic Narrations when the Prophet (PBUH) indicated that the Kharijites would emerge from the east.

Another sign derived from the Prophetic Traditions is that they will be extreme in their religious matters. The Prophetic Narration about Dhu al-Khawaysira al-Tamimi is explicit on this where he came and disrespected the Prophet (PBUH). The Prophet (PBUH) said to the companions that they would find their prayers, their fasts very little compared to theirs, but they will be out of the Din like an arrow goes through and comes out of the hunted thing (Bukhari 1997). When we look at the terrorist groups, whether Al-Qaeda or ISIS, it is quite apparent that they are very extreme in their worship. This has also been indicated in the information written about the young girl, called Aqsa Mahmood, who left Glasgow and joined ISIS in 2013. She was known for her leading role in enforcing the ISIS interpretation of Shariah Law, and the enforcement included arresting and carrying out lashes for those women not wearing modest clothes.

It is also apparent from the Prophetic Traditions that the Kharijites will invite people towards the Din, towards the Quran, but they will have nothing to do with it due to their inhumane actions. The Prophet (PBUH) said about the Kharijites “they will speak the words of the best of people [just to mislead people] (Bukhari 1997). In a narration from Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri (RA), the Prophet (PBUH) said, “My nation shall soon fall prey to dissension and disunity. There shall be a folk whose words are good but whose actions are bad... They are the evilist of the creation... They will invite to God’s Book, but they have nothing to do with it” (Ibn M. 2018). After looking at these narrations and looking at the invitation of Al-Qaeda and ISIS, there is a commonality, that they invite people to join them for the sake of Islam. The videos which have been released by Al-Qaeda and ISIS have always had Quranic Verses recited, or the testifying statement recited, the words such as ‘Allah u Akbar’ chanted. All of these are words which are good, but their actions are bad, as mentioned by the Prophet (PBUH).

Another major characteristic of the Kahrajites mentioned by the Prophet (PBUH) is that they will be extremely oppressive and bloodthirsty. This paper has already mentioned the incident of Abdullah b. Khabbab and his wife when they refused to declare Uthman (RA) and Ali (RA) as disbelievers. The Kharijites put him on the ground and slaughtered him, causing his blood to flow into the water. Then they approached his wife and she said, “I am a woman! Do you not fear God?” Then they sliced open her stomach. When Ali (RA) heard about this incident, he sent out al-Harith b. Murra al-Abdi to the Kharijites to investigate the incident. So when he reached and inquired about the murder, the Kharijites also killed him (Ibn A. 2017).

Conclusion

After looking at all of these characteristics of Kharijites and comparing it to the characteristics of the present day terrorists such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS, one can be absolute clear that the present day terrorists are the Kharijites of our time, as this was prophesized as mentioned earlier that the Kharijites will continue to appear more than 20 times until the arrival of Anti-Christ.

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