

A Critique of ISIS's Brutal Thought



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One of the factors prohibiting the spread of divine teachings is the conceptual distortion of religious teachings, namely their misinterpretations. For example, as we see in Surah "The Women" (Al-Nisaa): 46 "those who displace the words and phrases, from their points of articulation", the Quran already warns of this peril. In Islamic traditions likewise, regarding the contemporary Kharijites' conceptual falsification of the statement, "There is no command and judgement except the one which belongs to God" (لا حكم الا لله), Ali ibn Abi-Talib (pbuh & hp *) declared that: "It is a right word by which a wrong conception is meant." (Nahj Al-Balaghah, Fayz Al-Islam, sermon40)

As we move further it is noticed that it was in the time of Mohammad ibn Abdul Wahhab that killing of other Muslims, based on accusations of disbelief, hypocrisy and polytheism, became prevalent. Today all Takfiri groups such as ISIS trace their intellectual origins back to Mohammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, following his doctrines they wantonly and notoriously kill innocent Muslims; in fact they regard killing of Muslims as a permissible (Halal) act. With the intensive propaganda and by hindering the true understandings and interpretations of verses of Quran and traditions, Takfiri groups such as ISIS, encourage oblivious groups of Sunnis, who are not aware of the Takfiris' dull nature, to kill other Muslims as well.

One of the doubtful issues which have fomented the killing of Sunnis and Shiites, is the claim of prioritizing War (Jihad) against "near enemy" (al-aduww-al-qarib, عدو القريب).

* Peace be upon him and his progeny

Takfiris take Surah "The Repentance" (Al-Tawbah):123 as the ground for their claim.

This wrong inference (conceptual distortion) of the current Quranic verse of "The Repentance" (Al-Tawbah):123 has been extensively been accepted by some naive Sunni youth, so that they vie in joining Takfiri groups in order to slaughter other innocent Muslims.

In this essay we'll argue that Takfiris' and specifically ISIS's thought and belief in coldheartedly murdering other Muslims (both Sunnis and Shiites), has no religious (Islamic) roots. In fact, regarding one who kills Muslims, we read in Surah "The Women" (Al-Nisaa):93 "Whoever willfully kills a believer, his recompense is hell, he will abide therein forever, God's wrath he has incurred, and He will lay his curse upon him, and prepare for him a torment most severe".

◆ **The Claim of the Priority of War Against Near Enemy**

Takfiri groups such as ISIS claim that unbelievers are divided into two groups; according to Surah Al-Tawbah: 123 "Believers, fight those unbelievers who, have come too close to you, and let them find you firm and stern, and know that Allah is with the god-fearing who have been restrained":

1. Non-Muslims living in geographical regions far away from Islamic states;
2. Unbelievers who pretend to be Muslims and live in Islamic lands. The latter, Takfiris believe, are more dangerous than the former; because the latter have pagan opinions [!]. The mentioned verse, according to Takfiri interpretations corresponds to war against these near enemies, who are imposters and are not true Muslims. They prioritize war with these Muslims to waging war against other unbelievers living in far areas; therefore, they postpone war with others they perceive as unbelievers to a later time, being hostile to them too.

◆ **Delusive Understandings of the Verse**

Even if such interpretations could be considered at all, according to narratives about war and battle, the unbelievers mentioned in verse 123 of Surah Al-Tawbah denoted the Jews living around Medina such as Bani-Qurayza, Bani-Nazir who willingly allied themselves with the pagans of Mecca. Ibn Abbas considers these Jews who were allied with the pagans as the near enemy of which the verse conferred.

◆ **Contradicting the Prophet's way of Life (The Sirah)**

During the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh & hp) a great number of hypocrites were living, so that the Surah the Hypocrites (Al-Munaafiqun) was revealed about them. In this Surah Al-Munaafiqun were reproached due to their improper conduct.

However, the Prophet never initiated a war against hypocrites, and didn't order killing them; he rather always tried to verbally guide them, even if their conspiracies were disclosed through the revelation of Quranic verses the prophet still tolerated them. Thus, considering other Muslims (Sunnis and Shiites) as pagans and murdering them, based on their opposition to Wahhabi beliefs is totally opposed to the Prophet's way of life and hence is not allowed and legitimate.





◆ **Quran's and Narratives' Prohibition from Excommunicating of the One Who Declares Being Muslim**

The cause of revelation of verse 94 of Surah Al-Nisaa: "Believers, when you go to fight for, the cause of God, be most discerning. And to a man who does offer you peace do not say: "You're not a Muslim"", is the encounter of Usama bin Zayd, on his way to battle with Bani-Zamrah as he was sent by the Prophet, with Mardas bin Nahik. As Mardas saw Usama, he was so frightened that he took refuge in a cave. Usama traced him. Mardas greeted Usama and then he pronounced the testimonial words. Nevertheless, Usama killed him and seized his properties. As Usama came back, the Prophet rebuked him since he had killed a man while the man had pronounced testimonial words. Usama answered that Mardas had testified only for the sake of his life and hence he couldn't be called a true Muslim. Then Prophet addressed him saying: "Had you ripped open his heart to discern whether he is truthful or a liar?" (It means that Usama wasn't allowed to kill Mardas, since the inside feelings of people was none of his business, he had to accept Mardas's testimonial words.)

On this occasion the above mentioned verse (Al-Nisaa: 94) was revealed thereafter Usama swore the he would never fight with the one who pronounces testimonial words and would never kill him.

◆ **Excommunication of Muslims Standing Against Takfiris**

As it has been quoted from Prophet, belief in God consists of testimony (Shahadah) to Oneness of God (Tawhid), testimony to the prophecy of Muhammad (Nubuwwah), praying (Salat), fasting in month Ramadan (Sawm), and paying Islamic taxes (Zakat and Khums). According to narratives in Hadith collections such as Sahih Muslim and Sahih Bukhari, the Prophet forbade any fight against Muslims and told that he had been assigned by God to fight against pagans until they pronounce the testimonial words, pray and pay taxes. Having done so, their life and properties would be secured and their deeds and intentions would be judged by God. In another narrative in Sahih Bukhari, again it has been quoted from the prophet that the one who prays like us (Muslims), stands towards Qiblah, and eats our (Muslim) Kosher meat (Zabihah) is Muslim and can live under the protection of God and his Prophet.

It is evident that Muslims (Sunnis and Shiites) who oppose Wahhabi opinions, believe in these principles and adhere to them; actually they differ (with each other) on some juristic (Fiqhi) issues. However, the accusation of disbelief and polytheism is absolutely a baseless one.

Based on the following canonical law, on which all jurists of different Islamic schools have consensus, "for the jurist (Faqih, Mujtahid) Whose decree (Fatwa) corresponds the reality, there are two rewards and for the jurist whose decree is in contrast with reality there is one reward" challenging issues among different

Islamic schools should by no means be considered as an allowance for excommunication and killing of followers of various Islamic Schools. Rather, respecting each other, they should discuss with scientific method and solve their differences through discourse.

◆ **Takfiris' Negligence to the Distinction of Belligerent and Civilian Unbelievers**

Based on Islamic laws, even unbelievers can live in safety and it is not permitted to fight against them, so long as they have not initiated a war against Muslims and have not deported the Prophet and Muslims from their own lands. The general context of Surah Al-Tawbah, in which the order of war has been declared, is from the very beginning of the Surah about belligerent unbelievers and speaks of fight against this kind of unbelievers.

In fact, the Surah doesn't deal with those unbelievers who treat Muslims peacefully. Actually there are specific rights and entitlements for these groups of unbelievers, who are loyal to their covenant with Muslims. In verse 4 of Surah Al-Tawbah we see that God doesn't allow fighting against these unbelievers: "Except for those idolaters with whom you made agreements". Elsewhere in Surah The Cow (Al-Baqarah): 19 it has been stated that Muslims should only fight against belligerent unbelievers and not against all groups of unbelievers: "Fight in the cause of God with those who fight against you, but do not commit transgression, for God dislikes who transgresses." Among the Takfiris' and ISIS's great wrongdoings is that they don't distinguish between these two kinds of unbelievers and suppose that Quran permits fighting against anyone whom they assume to be unbeliever and pagan.

◆ Takfiris' Disdain to the Conditions of War, Even Against Militant Unbelievers

In battles, the Prophet fought only against the warriors and he never hurt unarmed and civil peoples. Whenever he sent a group (of soldiers) for a war against unbelievers he advised them to behave kindly and commanded them that:

- Fight in the name of God and for the cause of God against those who don't believe in God
- Do not betray in the war
- Avoid perfidy
- Do not mutilate your enemies and do not kill their children.
- Invite your enemies to three compromises and if they affirm these offers, accept their affirmation and cease hostilities with them.
- Invite these unbelievers to Islam or ask them to cease hostilities or expel the belligerents from their lands to avoid further transgression and sedition.

Therefore, the brutal inhuman acts of ISIS and Takfiris in coldblooded murder of civilians (including children, women, elderly, etc.) is totally incompatible with recommendations of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh & hp) and by no means a reasonable or religious justification could be found for what ISIS does.



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