"The impact of Misunderstanding of Sharia Texts in spreading Terrorism"

Dr. Ardawan Mustafa Ismael

Doctorate in Revealed Knowledge and Heritage

International Islamic University Malaysia

Lecturer at Salahaddin University-Erbil

Abstract

This research has shown that terrorism, and extremism threaten the principles of civil peace in our contemporary life. Muslim communities and non- Muslims have been suffering from the effects of extremism , terrorism, bombings, and suicide bombings. In fact, this is a natural result that arise from ignorance of the Islamic sciences, Sharia objectives, and intellectual intolerance of groups and parties. It displays that Islamic scholars have a pivotal role in countering terrorism and building peace coexistence, so that, they ought to play their role by educating people on religious tolerance, encouraging them to follow the moderation approach, in their Friday sermons and conferences related to this issue.

Keywords: Terrorism, Misunderstanding, Sharia Texts.

Introduction

Terrorism, extremism and violence are the most dangerous thing that threaten the principles of civil peace in our contemporary life. Muslim societies and non- Muslims have been suffering from the impact of terrorism, violence, bombings, and suicide bombings. Indeed, this is a natural outcome that arise from ignorance of the Islamic sciences, Sharia objectives, and intellectual intolerance of groups and parties.

Hence, Islam forbids all forms of terrorist activities. In fact, there is no religion in the world which allows terrorism. Because religions aim at assuring peace, happiness and prosperity, terrorism is, defiantly incompatible with their basic tenets. Islam is a religion of peace and safety. Thus when the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) describes the Muslim he mentioned that the people are safe from his hand and tongue. If the *Qur'an* and the life of the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) are examined deeply, it will be seen that both offer a strong condemnation of terrorism, which is the most catastrophic calamity facing people nowadays. Consequently, Islamic teachings are based on a strong foundation of tolerance. Islam has no connection whatsoever with either terrorism or extremism. Islam is a peaceful, practical religion

whose teachings are based on love, peace, mercy, security of humankind and mediation at all levels.

As shown above, we should focus on Islamic Moderation Method, which is one of the advantages of Islamic law, and the pride of Islamic nation that Allah, the Almighty, described it as a (moderation nation) that involves justice in law, goodness in humanity, moderation in all affairs of life, and renounce all forms of terrorism, extremism, fanaticism, intolerance, and takfiri ideas that destroy human society and ruin the universality of Islam. More ever, that approach calls to gain benefits from human ties, consolidates the divine honoring of humans. It is the environment of Islam that educates Muslim on justice, wisdom, tolerance, creativity, loving human essence. It prevents Muslim from being terrorist. It is an effective mechanism that helps Muslim to remain vital, influential, and a contributor to human civilization. furthermore, when Muslims applied this approach, they could give humanity a comprehensive civilization for all science and knowledge. They also could excel in all human fields. However, when this approach is absent from Muslim's life that led to their backwardness in civilization, intellectual extremism, and terrorism.

Problem of statement

Terrorism is an international dilemma, crime of this century, and the mother of all crimes that commit against human being. It is the resource of destruction and destroying because it spreads fear among innocent people, killing them without discrimination among a kid, a man, a woman, a young, an old, a Muslim and non-Muslim. It should be noted that terrorism does not happen randomly, but there are a lot of reasons that lead to it. Specifically, the most magnificent factor is misunderstanding of Sharia texts and ignorance in Islamic sciences. Moreover, this is the biggest problem that contemporary Islamic thought faces nowadays. Hence, this paper effectively strives to discover this problem and showing the role of misunderstanding of Sharia Texts in spreading terrorism.

First: concept of terrorism

Linguistically, the word terrorism is derived from the verb (RAHABA) which means fear and scare[1].

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[1] Mujam Maqāīs al-Lughat, vol.2, p. 447.

Terminology, it has not been defined by our ancient scholars. However, the contemporary scholars in the field of Islamic thought have given a lot of definitions .However, It seems that the most inclusive definition is the one issued by the Islamic Fiqh Council of the MWL in its session dated 21-26/10/1422 H: "Terrorism is the unlawful aggression perpetrated by individuals, groups, states, in acts of transgression on man; his religion, his blood, his intellect, his money and his honor. This includes all forms of intimidation, abuse, threats and unjustified killing. It includes any type of banditry, any violent or threatening actions to conduct criminal schemes individually or collectively. These, aim at causing terror and intimidation; to harm people or put their lives, freedom, security and situations at risk. There are also additional forms of terrorism, such as harm to the environment, or any damage to public and private properties; exposing any national or natural resources to danger[1]".

Second: Terrorism in Islamic perspective

By looking deeply at the verses of the noble Quraan and the Sunnah of prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him), we can realize that Islam does not contain any kind of terrorism. It is absolutely the religion of peace, coexistence, kindness, etc. here are some prominent proofs that confirm this issue;

Allah, the Almighty, says:" {وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا} [سورة البقرة: ١٤٣].

This verse indicates that Allah makes the Islamic nation a moderation nation, which means there is no place for terrorist actions in Islam. Our beloved prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) has interpreted the word of (وسطا) in justice[2].

قوله (ص) :" إِنَّ الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ. وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلا غَلَبَهُ، فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا "[3].

This Hadith decides that Islam is a moderation religion, if someone tries to practice Islam in a terrorist way, definitely, he will never be successful in his or her life.

قال رسولُ الله (ص) : "هلك المتنطِّعون، قالها ثلاثًا"[4].

The prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) demonstrated that those who exaggerate in their words and deeds, they are the losers. To be specific, he condemned the terrorist approach. Notably, he calls Muslims to Moderation approach which leads to happiness, and stability.

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[1] http://en.themwl.org/final-communique-global-conference-islam-and-counter-terrorism, 9-3-2017.
[2] Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, no:4217, vol.4, p.١٦٣٢.
[3] Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, no: 39, vol.1, p.23.
[4] .Sahīh Muslim, no:2670, vol.4, p. 2055.

Third: Causes of Terrorism

There are various reasons that cause terrorism. Yet, I am going to talk about these reasons that make terrorist groups in Islam. The question is that Do they actually represent the true Islam as they claim? Determining those reasons is a powerful support to remedy this huge dilemma. here is the most prominent causes:

1.Ignorance in Islamic Sciences

Ignorance is a fatal disease, and a huge dilemma, which lead to the destruction of the essence of humanity, and backwardness of communities in a variety of life's fields. The dilemma will be bigger when ignorance spreads amongst those who claim that they are knowledgeable in Islamic Sciences, yet, in reality they are not. Additionally, those who give Fatwa without having necessary tools of issuing fatwa, so that, they are destroying countries and deviating people.

Anas ibn Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, *"There will be division and sectarianism in my nation and a people (the Kharijites) will come with beautiful words and evil deeds. They will recite the Quran but it will not pass beyond their throats. They will leave the religion as an arrow leaves its target and they will not return to it as the arrow does not return to its bow. They are the worst of the creation. Blessed are those who fight them and are killed by them. They call to the Book of Allah but they have nothing to do with it. Whoever fights them is better to Allah than them.*[1]*"*

Ibn Kathir, one of the greatest Islamic scholars, said, "If the Khawarij ever gained power, they would corrupt the entire earth, Iraq, and Syria. They would not leave alone a boy or a girl or a man or a woman, for in their view the people have become so corrupt that they cannot be reformed except by mass killing".[2]

Ibn Hajar wrote: "The Khawarij, what led them to judge those who opposed them to be disbelievers, making their blood lawful ... and engage in fighting and killing Muslims? All this is from the vestiges of those who worship upon ignorance; those whose hearts haven't been expanded by the light of knowledge, nor do they hold tightly to the firm rope of knowledge"[3].

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[1] Sunan abī Dāwūd, no: 4765, vol.4, p.243.

[2] Al-Bidāyah wal-Nihāyah, vol.10, pp. 584-585..

[3] Fath Al-baree, vol.12, p.301.

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Significantly, the movement of the Kharijites, which is the first and extremist movement in Islamic history, was issuing its laws without having necessary Islamic Sciences, so they kill Muslims and leaved infidels.

More ever, The most dangerous sect in Islam are the Kharijites (*al-khawārij*). They have existed since the very early period of Islam. Hence, their ideology is based upon the following vicious tenets:

1. Declaring Muslims to be disbelievers.
2. Refusing lawful obedience to the rulers.
3. Reducing the value of Islamic scholars.
4. They are heartless, emotionless.
5. Justifying violence against Muslims and innocent people.

Significantly, in true Islamic belief no Muslim can become a disbeliever due to his sins alone. In contrast, the Kharijites and terrorist groups accuse other Muslims with unbelief due to their sins in order to justify their criminal behavior towards them.

Ibn Taymiyyah writes:" The Kharijite sect was the first to declare Muslims to be unbelievers because of their sins. They charged as unbelievers whoever disagreed with their innovations and they made lawful the spilling of blood and the taking of wealth. This is the condition of the people of innovation, that they invent some religious innovation and then they excommunicate whoever disagrees with them concerning it. Rather, the people of the Sunnah and the community follow the Book and the Sunnah and they obey Allah and His Messenger and follow the truth. They have mercy upon the creation"[1].

Islam and true Muslims have mercy upon the creation as a whole, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. However, the Kharaijites and terrorist groups have no mercy for those outside their ideology.

Ali ibn Abu Talib –May Allah be pleased with him- reported: The Messenger of Allah peace and blessings be upon him- said:"*In the last days, there will be young people with foolish dreams. They will say the best of words in creation but they will pass through Islam just as an arrow passes through its game. Their faith will not go beyond their throats*"[2].

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[1] Majmū' al-Fatāwá, vol.1, p. 278.

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no: 5057, vol.6, p.197.

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Remarkably, this authentic hadith illustrates that the Kharijites and other terrorist groups are:

1. young in age and do not have wisdom or experiences in life,

   so they do not know how to address crucial issues.

2. Their dreams are foolish, superficial, unrealistic, shallow, and

   Hypocritical. For instance, they pretend that they call for an Islamic Utopia, a glorious jihad, a new Caliphate that will bring honor and strength back to the Muslims. They are weak in intellect.

Today, Muslims are suffering of those people who act as scholars without sound knowledge in Islamic sciences, and give fatwa. As a result, people become astray.

It should be noted that the prophet- peace and blessings be upon him- did not speak about a group in detail the way he spoke about the Kharijites, because they and terrorist groups carrying banners that confusing people, talking in the name of Allah and religion and think that they are more righteous, more religious than the religion itself.

Remarkably, our prophet- peace and blessings be upon him- promised that the Kharijite and those who follow their footsteps and practice their approach, they will be destroyed. He said:"*There will emerge from the east some people from my nation who recite the Quran but it will not go beyond their throats. Every time a faction of them emerges it will be cut off*"[1].

In a nutshell, We must be aware of the ideology and characteristics of terrorist groups in order to ward off ourselves from unwittingly supporting their devastating behavior.

2. Misunderstanding of Sharia Texts

This issue has led to serious problems, during the Islamic history, till now, and caused dissipation in Islamic nation. Our prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) has warned Muslims to be careful in lieu of this tough issue, and has denoted that it destroys Islamic nation.

In this regard, Ibn Al-Qayyim said" Misunderstanding of Allah and His Messenger is the origin of all heresy and misguidance that emerged in Islam. It is the source of all mistakes in Islamic principles and branches, particularly, if the bad intention has been added to it[2]"

As shown above, the Kharijites and terrorists in this era, both of them, are the same in ignorance and misunderstanding. Hence, terrorist groups and terrorist movements are relying on Sharia texts, in order to justify their heinous actions and to give a legitimization to their terrifying

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[1] Musnad Ahmed, no:6871, vol.11, p.456.
[2] Al-Ruh, p.63.

deeds. As a result, some of Islamic nation's youth have been deceived by them, and created the destruction in the world. For instance, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, a head of Islamic state in Iraq said:" we see that those who participated in political process as unbelievers and apostates"[1]. This statement confirms that ignorance and misunderstanding of Sharia texts has covered their minds.

Subsequently, Al-Bukhari reported: Ibn Umar- may Allah be pleased with him- considered the Kharijites to be the worst of Allah's creation and he said:"Verily, they take verses that were revealed about unbelievers and use them against the believers"[2].

A young terrorist confirmed that ignorance in Islamic sciences, particularly in Arabic language, led him to become terrorist, he said:" we have fallen into two things together: in (Ijtihad) in prison and those who released from prison reading books, some of us did not study Arabic language only in formal schools". Another added:" I find a prophetic hadith, then I find another one, but I do not know how to combine (jama) between them[3]".

Ibn Al-Qayyim said:" true understanding and good intention is the greatest blessings that Allah bestowed upon his servant"[4].

On the other hand, terrorists do not respect Islamic scholars nor except their opinions, and decries them as ignorant people. One of them, Mustafa shukri said:"the jurists are not more knowledgeable than us. their understanding is concerning him, not us"[5].

3.Intellectual Fanaticism

There is no doubt that intellectual fanaticism is a great reason of causing terrorist groups.

It has been defined that it denotes to The one who believes that what he or she sees is the correct belief, and exaggerates in denying those who are against his or her view, even he or she strongly tries to drive people to their opinion, prevents them to show what they believe. They claim perfection for themselves and imperfection for others who do not with them from the entire mankind[6].

Therefore, The leader of fanatic mind is the whim of himself and intellectual fanaticism is a vital narrow and a whim mind which makes the fanatic does not see only his idea, eliminate any other thought in existence.

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[1]Shubuhat aldaula al-Islammyyah, p.327.
[2] Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, vol.9, p.16.

[3] Al-takfeer, Nomaan Abdulrazzaq Al-samarraee,p,15.
[4]Ilam a muqqeen, vol 2, p164-165.
[5] Alghlu fi Alddin fi Hayat Almuslimin Almueasirat, Abdulrahman bin Maelaan allwyhq, p.371.
[6] Adwa a'la al-ta a'ssub, p.9.

Notably, intellectual fanaticism is a clear sign of modern terrorists. For instance, Adnani said in a speech: " we should not consulate other factions whom methods and projects are dissent us".

The Kharijites believe their opinions regarding leadership, government, politics and the Sharia are the only valid opinions in Islam and whoever disagrees with them becomes an infidel. However, the truth is that much of these matters are left open to interpretation and consultation among the Islamic scholars.

Significantly, Islam made a huge war on fanaticism and endeavors strongly to remove it from the heart of Muslims. Islam has realized the severity of intellectual fanaticism on community. As a result, it forbade it.

Shukri Mustafa said to his followers:" who told you that companions, successors and great scholars from the best centuries are more knowledgeable than me"[1].

Fourth: Solutions for solving misunderstanding of Sharia texts

Each problem has solutions, so that, misunderstanding of Sharia can be solved by the following points:

1.We cannot defeat terrorist thoughts except by the true Islamic thoughts, nor the terrorist ideologies except by the moderation approach.

2.Islamic scholars should communicate with those young people via Satellite channels, social media, the internet, and all other tools of communication.

3.Educate young people about the reality of concept of jihad, its objectives, its rules. Our scholars also should correct the misconceptions about jihad and illustrate that make people unbelievers is not allowed in Islam for anyone.

4.Islamic scholars ought to remedy the weakness in educational institutes in Islamic world with coordination with ministries of higher education. To be specific, the curriculum should involve the prevention of the extremist thoughts.

5. Islamic scholars should use the new media and its tools in spreading the awareness among the segments of society- particularly young people-. It must be known that dealing with those sites that promote extremism and engage in their ranks is a dangerous thing.

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[1]. Jamaeat Almuslimina, Muhammad suroor zayn aleabidin,p.71.

6. Working to spread the intellectual moderation, make it a way of life, the moderation should be a general culture, not a specialized culture. accepting the other side, respecting his opinion regardless of his approach, nationality and religion.

7.Dialogue is a tool of changing, the security is not the only way to deal with extremists. Notably, the punishment was not a tool of changing the convictions. The word should be responded by the word, thought by thought, argument by argument, proof by proof. Based on the above, the scholars should have scientific debates with extremists in close meetings.

Conclusion

Terrorism is a clear phenomenon nowadays, it leads to huge problems all over the world and it does not have any religion. However, there are some prominent factors that cause terrorism in Islamic perspective, namely: ignorance in Islamic sciences, misunderstanding in Sharia texts, intellectual fanaticism. Additionally, terrorism is an intellectual trouble, so that, it cannot be defeated except by Islamic scholars who have sufficient and necessary knowledge in Islamic sciences. Hence, they have a pivotal role in countering terrorist thoughts by informing people about the dangerous of terrorists and they are very far from Islamic teachings. Therefore, they can do that in their sermons on Friday days, and by publishing books, issuing booklets and newspapers, holding conferences and seminars.

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