

## A Great Disaster

The battle of Harrah that is rightly called to be one the great catastrophies of history and rated as one of the most cruel events perpetrated by the Umayyids has been so frustrating and unbearable that some historians have tried to alleviate the lasting painful memories of the Umayyid's reign by mentioning its marginal aspects and covering up the inhumane dimensions of this event.

However, this human catastrophe has been so extensive in its emotional and ethical dimensions that it has pained the hearts of the fair-minded and justice loving and prompted the unprejudiced pens to bitterly lament and complain.

Abū 'Alī Miskawayh puts it as follows:

“The battle of Harrah is one of the most formidable and harshest events.”<sup>18</sup>

Another historian wrote:

“The battle of Harrah has had a terrifying impact on the Muslim world; it sounded as if the Umayyids had decided to pay off their debt to faith!

When the Prophet (s) forgave them upon the Conquest of Mecca and treated them with compassion, in response to this magnanimity of the Prophet (s), the Umayyids massacred the best of Medinan young men.”<sup>2</sup>

The battle of Harrah was one of the outcomes of Umayyid's reign, especially the imposed monarchy of Mu'awiyah b. Abū Sufyān's heir apparent which according to a hadīth, the Holy Prophet (s) expressed strong dislike in and called it the government of children: “O Allah, would it be that I would not witness the year 60 A.H. and the rule of the children!”<sup>310</sup>

The year 60 A.H. (679 C.E.) was the year when caliphate was formally and openly recognized as royal hereditary monarchy and Yazīd, the son of Mu'awiyah, a hedonist and characterless young man, rose to the throne by the contrivance of his father. In his four years of rulership, i.e., from 60 A.H. to 64 A.H. (683 C.E.), Yazīd perpetrated numerous tragedies, the most formidable of which was the Taff (Karbala) event – martyrdom of Husayn b. 'Alī ('a) – then, the battle of Harrah in which the sanctity of the mosque

of Prophet (s) in Medina was violated and after that his invasion of Mecca and desecrating the House of God (Holy Ka'aba).

In the holy month of Muharram of the year 61 A.H. (680 C.E.), Yazīd martyred the members of the household of the Holy Prophet (s) in Karbalā in the cruelest and the most tyrannical way possible and enslaved his household. In Dhī'l Hajja 63 A.H. (August 683 C.E.), he masterminded the second grand tragedy of his rulership by allowing the Syrian army to transgress over the lives and properties of the people of Medina and the female members of their families.

[1.](#) Ibn Miskawayh, Tajrīb al-Umam, vol. 2, p. 79.

[2.](#) Qurayshī, Hayāt al-Imām Mūsā b. Ja'far, vol. 1, p. 291, as quoted in Amīr 'Alī, Mukhtasar Ta'rīkh al-'Arab, p. 75.

[3.](#) Samhūdī, Wafī' al-Wafī', vol. 1, p. 124

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