

Crimes committed in the Prophet's Holy Shrine and Mosque (Masjid al-Nabi)

It was natural that a group of Medinans took refuge out of despair in the Apostle of Allah (s)'s mosque (Masjid al-Nabi) and Holy mausoleum thinking it to be secured against the Syrian army's invasion. But did the newly converted Syrian Muslims and those trained and reared by the Umayyids show any respect for the Prophet (s) and his mosque? Or like their commander Yazīd, they would say in their intoxication of victory and arrogance: "Hāshim (Prophet's great grand father and leader of Bani Hashim) has played to acquire the rule (*hukūmat*); there has been no divine revelation (upon Prophet of God), nor any news descended from heaven!"

History has mournfully recorded that the Syrian troops didn't show any respect for the Holy Shrine, House and the Mosque of the Prophet (s). Even the refugees in the Mosque of the Prophet (s) were not secure against the invaders. The Syrian troops mercilessly killed those who took refuge in the mosque of the Prophet (s) and near the Holy grave of Prophet (s). The spilled blood of the innocent covered the mosque floor and reached the Holy grave of Prophet (s). Until the Syrian troops remained in Medina, nobody dared to enter the mosque of Prophet (s). The mosque was empty of people¹ and Yazīd's horsemen tied their horses to the pillars in the mosque. Only animals including dogs entered the mosque of Prophet (s) and urinated and defecated on the pulpit (*minber*) of the Prophet (s)!² This was the most heinous aspect of the Syrian invasion that no sane Muslim can accept and tolerate. It showed how Umayyids had hidden their enmity against Islam and the Prophet (s) and were planning for a long time to take their revenge from Prophet (s), Islam and the Muslims. Abū Sa'īd Khudrī, the famous companion of the Prophet (s) said: 'By God, for three days when Syrians were busy in plundering, we didn't hear any call for prayers (*azan*) in Medina, except from the grave of Prophet (s)!'³

One of the Meccan poets wrote an elegy about the tragedy of Harrah as follows:

Yazīd targeted us by Muslim b. 'Uqba, leaving none of our youth alive!

He dispatched a massive army, roaring like a torrential sea, to Medina.

They killed residents of Medina with uttermost wrath and violence; leaving the night behind while dead bodies lay scattered around.

*The Ansār bitterly wept for the hideous bloodshed in Medina, and the Ashja' tribe for Ma'qal b. Sanān.*⁴

'Abd al-Rahmān b. Sa'īd b. Zayd b. Nufayl, a talented poet of the time, put it as follows:

If you are determined to kill us on the day of Harrahtu Wāqim, we have no fear; for we are among the first to lose our life in the way of Islam.

*It was we who humiliated you in the battle of Badr and made you helpless and miserable.*⁵

The battle of Harrah and the occupation of Medina, the city of Prophet (s), and the slaughter and plunder of the people of Medina ended after three days, with Yazīd's army commanded by Muslim b. 'Uqba set out to Mecca to create another tragedy in the Land of Divine Revelation!

However, the painful impacts of the Harrah tragedy remained in the souls, minds, and lives of the inhabitants of Medina for a very long time.

The intensity of the massacre and crimes was to such an extent that from then on people called Muslim b. 'Uqba as Musrif (squanderer) b. 'Uqba for his going to extremes in killing the people. After that, the people wore black clothes and for a whole year their wailing and weeping was heard from their houses.⁶

The sanctity of religion and the mosque and the grave of the Prophet (s) was violated, the *Muhājirīn* and the *Ansār* and their families were humiliated. One of the unfortunate consequences of this horrific tragedy was that the people of Medina slowly moved away from religious values and indulged in moral corruption. Perhaps, in order to forget and subdue the tragic memories of the event of Harrah, the rich among them started drinking wine and used to invite singers and dancers. The views of the subsequent generations too about religion and its commandments were distorted, and dance and singing began to prevail among them.¹² The tragedy of Harrah was an event that had left its deleterious psychological and socio-cultural effects that prevailed over a very long time and outlasted generations.

1. Ibn Hajar Haytam, *Al-Saw'iq al-Muhriqa*, vol. 1, p. 215, p. 222

2. Ibn Shahrāshub, *Manāqib*, vol. 4, p. 143.

3. Ibn A'tham Kāfi, *Al-Futuh*, vol. 5, p. 183

4. *Ibid*, vol. 5, p. 183; Ibn Abd al-Birr Numar, *Al-Ist'āb*, vol. 1, p. 258; Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Al-Isāba*, vol. 3, p. 446; Ibn Hazm, *Jamharatu Ansāb al-'Arab*, p. 238.

5. Zubayr Mus'ab, *Nasab-i Quraysh*, p. 366; Samhūdī, *Wafī' al-Wafī'*, vol. 1, p. 137.

6. Ibn Qutayba, *Al-Imāma wa al-Siyāsa*, vol. 1, p. 220.

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