

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Ali's Occupation of Basra

Burial of the dead

When after the battle, Ali inspected the battlefield, he found it piled up with dead bodies and littered with severed limbs. The plain outside Basra was virtually soaked with blood. Among the dead on both the sides there were many faces familiar to Ali, and he was much grieved over their death. These included some eminent companions. Ali felt that if as a result of the battle, men of such eminence were to die, he would not have resorted to war. It was a deplorable sight that Muslims had cut the throats of Muslims, and at this tragedy no body could grieve more than Ali. As long as the battle waged, there was enmity between the two sides. After the battle there was no enmity between the dead. Ali arranged for the funeral prayers, and the burial of the dead from both the sides. Many vultures invaded the battlefield, and carried away the limbs. A vulture carried a limb to Madina, and it was found to be a severed hand containing a ring bearing the name of Abdur Rahman b Atab, an eminent companion. Ali did not celebrate the victory as an occasion of joy. He ordered the observance of mourning for three days in the memory of the dead. These three days were spent in the burial of the dead.

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