

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Arbitration Agreement

Ash'as b Qais

Ash'as b Qais who accepted the proposal of Muawiyah was the chief of the Banu Kindi. He was converted to Islam during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. After the death of the Holy Prophet he apostatized. In the apostasy wars conducted during the caliphate of Abu Bakr Ashas was defeated. He came to Madina, repented and was reconverted to Islam. Abu Bakr married his sister Umm Farida to him. During the time of Umar he participated in the wars against the Persians. Umar, however, did not trust him with any important office. Othman made him the Governor of a province. Ali deposed him. He came to Kufa and offered allegiance to Ali. Ali made him a General of his army the marched with Ali to Siffin and played an important part in dislodging the Syrians from the source of water supply in the Siffin valley. To start with he showed a great deal of loyalty to Ali, but later he came to waver in his loyalty. Even before the Syrians displayed the leaves of the Holy Quran on their lances, Ashas addressed the contingent of the Banu Kinda under his command in the following terms: "O ye Muslims, you have witnessed what has transpired during the course of this war, and how many Muslims have been ruthlessly killed. I have become old, but I have never seen such dreadful carnage before. Whosoever hears me, it behooves him to pass on my message to others that we ought to resolve that we will not fight from henceforth, and would refrain from killing the Muslims. By God, I am not telling you these things because I am afraid of war or because cowardice has taken hold of me. I tell you these things because I pity the Muslim women and children who will suffer, and mourn the loss of those who are killed in the battle."

This was outright treachery. It appears treachery was in the very blood of Ashas. His daughter was married to Imam Hasan. She poisoned Imam Hasan at the instigation of Yazid, who promised to marry her in case she poisoned Imam Hasan, but refused to marry her when she had poisoned Imam Hasan on the ground that he could not trust a woman who could poison her husband.

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