

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Judgements of Ali

The Cow and the Ass

Once, a complaint was lodged in the court of Ali by a man that the cow of another person had killed his ass. Ali summoned the owner of the cow and asked him to offer his defense if any. He said that as a matter of fact the ass had attacked the cow first and the cow had killed the ass in retaliation. Ali asked the owner of the cow, "Where were you when the ass attacked the cow?" He said that he was driving the cow. Then he asked the owner of the ass, "Where was the ass at the time?" He said that it was tied. Addressing the owner of the cow Ali said that as the ass was tied, and the cow was untied. His plea that the ass had first attacked the cow was untenable. He accordingly decreed that the owner of the cow should compensate the owner of the ass.

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