

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - The Siege of Taif

Conversion of the people of Taif to Islam

With the conversion to the tribes around Taif to Islam, the position of the people of Taif became precarious when Ali advised them to accept Islam, they agreed to send a deputation to Makkah to wait on the Holy Prophet. The deputation agreed to accept Islam, but they wanted that a respite should be allowed to them to continue to worship their idols for some time. They begged for a respite for one year, and reduced the period of grace to six months, three months, and one month. The Holy Prophet rejected the demand outright on the ground that he who had accepted Islam could no longer worship the idols. The deputation next asked for exemption from prayers. This demand was rejected on the ground that there could be no faith without prayers. Thereupon the deputation urged, "then at least give us exemption from the payment of Zakat". The Holy Prophet rejected the demand on the ground that Zakat was a compulsory levy. The Holy Prophet made the deputation bear in mind that Islam was a matter of faith; if one had faith in Islam he had to accept all that Islam had enjoined. There could be no compromise in the matter of the injunctions of Islam. The Holy Prophet made them realize that it was open to them not to be converted to Islam, but once they accepted Islam, they had to strictly follow all the commandments of Islam. The deputation understood the position, and accepted Islam for themselves and for the people of Taif whom they represented.

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