

## **Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - The Battle of the Camel**

### ***The Regicides***

The armies on the two sides heaved a sigh of relief on coming to know that peace was to be made the following day. At nightfall the men of the two armies retired to rest with easy hearts. The case with the regicides, the persons who had participated in the assassination of Othman was however different. In the army of Ali there were two to three thousand men of Kufa, who were involved in the revolt against Othman. When the confederates had occupied Basra they had executed all such men of Basra who were involved in the assassination of Othman as "Qasas" for the blood of Othman. The regicides of Kufa apprehended that in case peace was made between Ali and the confederates the terms of the agreement of peace were likely to be that the confederates would acknowledge the caliphate of Ali, and Ali would in turn order the execution of the regicides of Kufa like the execution of the regicides belonging to Basra. The leaders of the regicides of Kufa met in conference secretly to decide what course of action they should take to save their skins. It was proposed that Ali, Talha and Zubair should be killed. This proposal was turned down on the ground that such action on their part was likely to reunite the confederates and the followers of Ali, and they would together fight not only for the "Qasas" of Othman, but for the "Qasas" of Ali, Talha and Zubair as well. Many other proposals were considered. It was ultimately decided that they should take steps to insure that the two sides were locked in battle before the peace agreement was executed. In pursuance of this plan before the daybreak the regicides attacked the army of the confederates. When this attack came to the notice of Talha and Zubair they ordered their forces to meet the attack. They said that they knew before hand that Ali did not really mean to execute an agreement of peace. When the army of the confederates made a counter attack the regicides made Ali believe that the confederates had made a surprise attack. Ali asked his forces to take up arms and beat back the attack. Ali said that he already knew that Talha and Zubair were not serious in their peace proposals.

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