

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

Treatment of the people of Basra

Some of the followers of Ali demanded that, having been defeated, the survivors should be distributed as slaves among the soldiers of the victorious army. Ali turned down the demand saying that as the Caliph of the Muslims he could not allow the Muslims to be enslaved by Muslims in a country which was "Dar-ul Islam". The soldiers of the army of Ali desired that if they were not to be allowed to enslave the people of Basra, they should be allowed to plunder their property. Ali turned down this demand as well with great force. He held that whatever arms and equipment had been brought to the battlefield on the occasion of the battle could be treated as 'Ghanima' (war booty) and captured, but whatever lay in the homes of the people belonged to them, and he could not permit his men to deprive the people of Basra of their rightful belongings. Whatever booty was collected from the battlefield was distributed among the soldiers according to the Islamic law, and they were asked to abstain from seizing any property of the people of Basra by force.

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