

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Letters of Ali Addressed to Muawiyah

Delivery of the murderers of Othman

Muawiyah demanded that the murderers of Othman should be handed over to him. In reply, Ali wrote as follows:

Our community resolved to assassinate the Holy Prophet. They decided to uproot the descendants of the Holy Prophet. They made many plans to destroy us. They withheld water supply from us. They subjected us to great trials and tribulations. God, however, came to our help, and saved his religion. During this period the believers advocated the cause, but the infidels were moved by considerations of loyalty to the tribe. The practice of the Holy Prophet was that when any war was at its height, he would make his relatives face the brunt of the battle. In the Battle of Badr, Ubaida b Harith was martyred. Hamza met his martyrdom in the Battle of Uhud. Jafar my elder brother was martyred in the Battle of Mutah. I did not lag behind in these wars but martyrdom was withheld from me. It is a vicissitude of times that I have to deal with a man who cannot take even two steps with me, and who cannot claim priority over me. If any one raises a false claim, may God take care of. As regards the demand that the murderers of Othman should be delivered to you, I cannot accept the demand for you have rebelled against my authority and I have to deal with you as a rebel."

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