

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Arbitration Agreement

Causes of the helplessness of Ali

The accounts of what happened at Siffin which have come down to us give no clue as to what was the cause of rebellion against Ali when victory was almost in sight. It is not plausible that this sudden development took place at the display of the leaves of the Holy Quran on their lances by the Syrians. Obviously it was the culmination of some deep set conspiracy. The exact extent of such conspiracy remains a mystery, but it appears that the treachery of most of the army chiefs of Ali was because of the bribery by Muawiyah. The army that Ali had brought to Siffin was more a motley crowd than a disciplined force, and this lack of discipline was its greatest weakness. It also appears that there was a good deal of jealousy among the Generals of the army of Ali. When Ali appointed Ashas as a General his appointment was opposed by Malik Ashtar who was the Commander-in-Chief of the forces of Ali, and these differences between the two Generals persisted during the course of the war. Ali believed in the truth of his cause to such an extent that he did not sponsor any propaganda to support such cause. On the other hand Muawiyah was a past master in making propaganda, and in this respect he outwitted Ali.

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