

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Revolt of Khurrit Bin Rashid

Flight of Khurrit

Khurrit b Rashid, however, did not keep up his word, and before the next day dawned, Khurrit b Rashid and his three hundred followers escaped from Kufa. In the way they came across two men, and asked them who they were. One of them said that he was a Jew. He was let off being a Dhimmi. The other man said that he was a Muslim. He was asked what he thought of Ali. He said that he had high opinion about Ali, and regarded him as the Commander of the Faithful. Thereupon the Muslim was hacked to pieces by the men of Khurrit b Rashid.

When Ali came to know of the flight of Khurrit b Rashid, he sent a detachment of about three hundred persons under the command of Ziyad b Khasfa in pursuit of the fugitives. Ziyad overtook Khurrit at Mazar. Ziyad asked Khurrit to surrender. Khurrit said that he would first like to have a talk with Ziyad. Ziyad allowed him to have his say. Khurrit accused Ali of the breach of trust. He said that after the decision of the umpires, Ali should have stepped aside from the caliphate, and allowed the community to elect the Caliph. Ziyad pointed out that the umpires' decision about the reference of the issue to the community had not been accepted by the umpire of Muawiyah. Sovereignty was declared to belong to Muawiyah as a farce, and by no criteria Muawiyah could claim preference over Ali in the matter of the caliphate. Khurrit said that whatever the case he refused to acknowledge Ali as the Caliph. Ziyad said that in that case he would be forced to take punitive action against him as a rebel. Khurrit said that he was not prepared to submit, and the use of any force would be met with force. The two sides thereafter took to the sword. The battle waged for the whole of the day. Two men were killed from the troops of Ziyad, while five men were killed from the side of Khurrit. The battle proved indecisive, and the troops retired to their respective camps at nightfall. Although the casualties were not large, the number of persons who were wounded from either side was sufficiently large. When the next day dawned, it was found that Khurrit and his men had escaped during the night. Ziyad and his men thereafter proceeded to Basra. Here the scouts brought the intelligence that Khurrit and his men had proceeded to Ahwaz. Ziyad and his men halted at Basra, and sought for further instructions from Ali.

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