

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Judgements of Ali

The man who stole his coat of mail

An interesting story is on record in a case in which Ali was himself the plaintiff. After the Battle of Siffin, Ali lost his valuable coat of mail. After some time, Ali saw his coat of mail in the possession of a Christian. When asked to return the coat of mail, the man insisted that the coat belonged to him. Ali filed a suit in the court of the Qadi of Kufa. The Qadi asked Ali to produce witnesses in support of his claim. Ali could produce his son and his slave as witnesses. The Qadi held that he could not accept such evidence as it was interested. Under the circumstances the Qadi rejected the suit of Ali. Instead of being aggrieved against the decision, Ali appreciated the integrity of the Qadi. After the judgment the Christian came to Ali and offered him the coat of mail saying that it in fact belonged to him. The man was so much impressed with the administration of justice under Islam that he hastened to accept Islam at the hands of Ali. Ali presented him the coat of mail as well as a horse. The man fought on the side of Ali against the Kharijites in the Battle of Nahrawan and was martyred.

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