

Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Expansion of Islam and Military Campaigns

Battle Of Burs

With the victory at Qadisiyya, the road to Ctesiphon (called Al-Madain by the Muslims) the capital of Persia lay open to the Muslims. Ctesiphon was on the Tigris, a few miles downstream of the present day Baghdad.

The battle of Qadisiyya shook the Persian rule in Iraq to its foundations, but that was not the end of the Persian rule in Iraq. As long as the Persians held their capital Ctesiphon, there was always the danger that at some suitable moment they would make an attempt to recover what they had lost, and drive away the Arabs from Iraq.

Umar accordingly sent instructions to Sa'ad that as a sequel to the battle of Qadisiyya, the Muslims should push forward to Ctesiphon and wrest it from the Persians.

Some time towards the end of November 636, Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas issued orders to the Muslim forces under his command to march to Ctesiphon. Sa'ad reorganised his army into five corps, and each corps was placed under the command of a veteran General. The commanders were:

- (1) Zuhra bin Al-Hawiyya;
- (2) Abdullah bin Muta'm;
- (3) Shurahbeel bin Al-Samt;
- (4) Hashim b. Utba; and
- (5) Khalid bin Urfula.

The entire army consisted of cavalry.

From Qadisiyya, the main stages on the route to Ctesiphon were Najaf; Burs; Babylon; Sura; Deir Kab; Kusa; Sabat; and Ctesiphon.

The corps of Zuhra b. Al-Hawiyya set off as the advance guard. It occupied Najaf and stayed there till the other corps reached Najaf. Then Zuhra with his corps crossed the Euphrates and proceeded on the road to Ctesiphon. He reacted Burs on the western bank of the Hilla branch of the Euphrates.

At Burs the advance of Zuhra was resisted by a Persian force under the command of Busbuhra the Mayor of Burs. The troops on both sides were deployed for action. Busbuhra stepped forward and gave the challenge for a personal duel. Zuhra accepted the challenge. Zuhra inflicted heavy wounds on Busbuhra. Profusely bleeding he retired. There was some fighting but the Persians were no match for the Muslims. The Persian army withdrew and crossing the Hilla branch proceeded to join the main Persian army at Babylon. At Babylon, Busbuhra died of the wounds.

After the withdrawal of the Persian force, the people of Burs approached Zuhra with the offer of peace, which was accepted. Zuhra stayed at Burs for some time to attend to administrative matters. In the meantime other Muslim corps also arrived at Burs.

Source : *Alim.org-Umar bin al-Khattab History*