'Ali b. Abi Ṭālib was given allegiance\(^1\) as caliph in Medina in this year.

*An Account of the Allegiance—Who Gave It and When*

Earlier biographers give different accounts. According to some of them, the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh asked 'Ali whether he would accept investiture on their behalf and on behalf of the Muslims, but he declined. When they refused to accept his decision, however, and asked him again, he did accept.

Details of this account and its authorities.

According to Ja'far b. 'Abdallāh al-Muhāmmadi\(^2\)—'Amr b. Ḥammād\(^3\) and 'Alī b. Ḥusayn—Husayn—his father\(^4\)—'Abd al-

---

1. Done with a handclasp, as in any contractual agreement; see Lane, 285a–b; *EP*, s.v. Bay’a.
2. For this informant, see also I, 2983, 2986, 3004.
3. Ibn Tulbah, see I, 2986.
4. Ṭsā, see I, 2986.
Malik b. Abi Sulaymān al-Fazārī—Sālim b. Abi al-Ja’d al-Ashja’ī—Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyah: I was with my father when ‘Uthmān was killed. He got up and entered his house, and the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh came to him and said, “This man has been killed, and the people must have an imām. We know of no one at this time more suitable for this, of greater precedence in Islam, and of closer relationship to the Messenger of Allāh than yourself.” He said, “Don’t do this. It’s better that I be a wazīr than an amīr.” They replied, “No, by Allāh! We will go no farther until we have given allegiance to you.” He said, “It should be done in the mosque then. Allegiance must not be given secretly or without the approval of the Muslims.”

According to Sālim b. Abi al-Ja’d—Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās: I did not like the idea of ‘Ali’s going to the mosque because I was afraid there would be a commotion around him, but he insisted on going there. When he went in, the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār went in too and gave him allegiance, and everyone else followed suit.

According to Ja’far [b. ‘Ummār ābī al-Muḥammadi]—‘Amr and ‘Ali—Huṣayn—his father—Abū Maymūn—Abū Bashīr al-‘Abīdī: I was in Medina when ‘Uthmān was killed. The Muhājirūn and the Anṣār gathered, among them Ťālḥah and al-Zubayr, and they came to ‘Ali and said, “Abū Ḥasan, let us give you allegiance.” He said, “I have no need to be caliph; I am with you anyway and whomever you choose, I will be satisfied. So just make your choice.” They replied, “We’ll choose no one but you.” They came and saw him a number of times after the murder of ‘Uthmān, and on the last visit they said to him, “The people’s interests are not served except by a single authority, and things

9. In the Qur’ān these twice form a pair. The Muhājirūn were Meccans who had performed the ḥijrah, or emigration, to Medina, and the Anṣār were Medinan allies, or helpers.
12. EP, s.v.

© 1997 State University of New York Press, Albany
have taken too long.” He replied, “You have come to see me a number of times, and here you are again, so let me make a suggestion. If you accept it, I will agree to take command; but, if you don’t, I’ll be quit of it.” They replied, “Whatever you say we will accept, Allāh willing.” So he mounted the minbar [pulpit], and the people crowded around, and he said, “I was unwilling to take command of you, but you insisted that I should. You must be aware, however, that I ask for no authority from which you are excluded, other than to hold the keys to your treasury. Know also that I would never take a dirham from it without your permission. Is this acceptable?” They agreed. So he said, “O Allāh, bear witness against them!” and he accepted their allegiance on this condition. Abū Bashir added, “I was standing that very day by the Messenger of Allāh’s minbar, and I heard his words.”

According to ‘Umar b. Shabbah,14—Ali b. Muḥammad,15—Abū Bakr al-Hudhali—Abū al-Mulayh,16 On Saturday, 18 Dhu al-Hijjah (June 17), when ‘Uthmān was killed, ‘Ali went out to the market. A crowd followed him and hurried up to him,17 so he went into the courtyard of Banū ‘Amr b. Mādhūl18 and said to Abū ‘Amr b. ‘Amrah b. ‘Amr b. Miḥṣan,19 “Lock the door!” The crowd then came and knocked at the door, and Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr entered with them and said, “Stretch out your hand, ‘Ali!” and the two of them gave allegiance to him. Ḥabīb b. Dhu‘ayb20 was

13. Caetani, VIII, 372 n. 1, rejects these accounts of delay and says that ‘Ali allowed himself to be proclaimed on the very day of Ṭalḥah’s murder, as in ‘Umar b. Shabbah’s report, and al-Ṭabarī’s remark (p. 15, below) that people reckon ‘Ali’s caliphate from ‘Uthmān’s murder.
15. More usually called Abū al-Ḥasan al-Madā’ini, from Baṣrah, b. 135/752, d. 215–21/830–45; EP, s.v. al-Madā’ini. See also Petersen, 92–99, esp. 98.
16. Following ʿIbrāhīm’s vocalization.
18. A tribe of the Ṣaḥārah (Caskel and Strenzio, I, 186).
20. Al-Balādharī calls him Qabīṣah b. Dhu‘ayb al-Asadi but is probably confused. Qabīṣah b. Dhu‘ayb al-Khuṭzī was the well-known secretary to ‘Abd al-Malik (Caskel and Strenzio, II, 454; VIII, 329) but is not known to have had a brother Ḥabīb (Caskel, table 199).
looking at Ṭalḥah when he gave allegiance and said, “It is a withered hand that first gave allegiance. No good will come of this!”21 'Ali then went out to the mosque and ascended the minbar, his sandals in his hand, wearing a waist wrap and a cape22 and a silk turban, supporting himself on a bow. All those there gave him allegiance. Then they brought Sa’d23 and 'Ali said, “Give allegiance.” But he replied, “I won’t do so until the people have, but, believe me, you’ve nothing to fear from me.” 'Ali said, “Let him go.” Then they brought Ibn 'Umar,24 and 'Ali said, “Give allegiance.” And he replied, “I won’t do so until the people have.” “Bring me a guarantor,”25 'Ali said to him. “I don’t see why I should,”26 replied Ibn 'Umar. “Let me cut his head off,” said al-Ashtar,27 to which 'Ali replied, “No, leave him alone! I’ll be his guarantor. I knew it; you are as rude as a man as you were as a child.”


---

21. La yatimmu bādhā al-amr, as also p. 14, below. “This affair will not finish well”; [Caetani, VIII, 334].
22. Perhaps sleeved like a taylāsān, cf. Lane, 1894c, 1886c.
23. Ibn Abī Wāqṣās (cf. p. 9, below), the famous Meccan general and governor of Kūfah. He is said to have retired from politics at this time; hence, “you have nothing to fear from me” [EM, s.v.]. He was a member of the electoral council that elected 'Uthmān, see p. 10, below.
24. 'Abdallah, son of the caliph preceding 'Uthmān (and therefore especially esteemed). He was a nonvoting adviser to the electoral council and at the election of other caliphs is said to be concerned with the will of the majority, as here [EP, s.v.]. See also Caetani, IX, 22 n. 4.
25. Hamīl, glossed kāfīl in IA, 191, and in an editor's note in Ibrāhīm, 428 n. 3.
27. Malik b. al-Ḥārith al-Nakha'i, an early comor to Kūfah and one of the qurrā’ or paratahalical elements [Hinds, “Alignments,” 357ff., esp. 360], a persistent agitator against 'Uthmān and the ruling elite and a supporter of 'Alī. He is said to have been one of those who besieged 'Uthmān’s house [I, 2989–90] and regarded as one of his murderers [Hinds, “Murder,” 460]. For his threats against those reluctant to give 'Alī allegiance, see also pp. 12–14, below; al-Dinawarī, 152. See also EP, 1, 704. He died in 37/658.
28. I.e., Ibn 'Umar, cf. IA, 205, where 'Alī says it to him after trying to persuade him to join him against A’ishah. See Glossarium, ccxxxii, p. 34, below.
30. ‘Ubaydallāh b. Sa’d! [Wellhausen, 4]. See also Juynboll.
allegiance to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, so he sent for al-Zubayr and Ṭalḥah. He then invited them to give allegiance, but Ṭalḥah delayed.31 Unsheathing his sword Mālik al-Ashtar then said, “By Allah! You had better give allegiance, or else I will strike you through the forehead.” “There is no way out of this,” said Ṭalḥah, and he gave allegiance, followed by al-Zubayr and everyone else. Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr then asked 'Alī to give them the governorships of al-Kūfah and al-Baṣrah. “You are to stay with me. I need you to share the burden,” he replied. “I would be lost without you.”

According to al-Zuhri: There is another report according to which he said to them, “If you wish, give allegiance to me, or, if you wish, I’ll do so to you.” They replied, “We’ll give allegiance to you.” A little later they explained, “We only did it out of fear for our lives, since we knew that he would never give us allegiance.” Four months after 'Uthmān’s murder, they went down32 to Mecca.

According to 'Umar b. Shabbah—Abū al-Ḥasan [al-Madā‘īni]—Abū Mikhnaf53—‘Abd al-Malik b. Abī Sulaymān—Sālim b. Abī al-Ja‘d—Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafiyyah: The evening 'Uthmān was killed I was with my father ['Ali] until he withdrew to his house. A group of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh then came to him and said, “This man has been killed, and the people must have an imām.” “Maybe there should be an electoral council,” he replied. “You are our choice,” they replied, to which he said, “To the mosque then! For it must be all the people’s choice.” So 'Alī went to the mosque, where he was given allegiance. Apart from a very small number, all the Anṣār gave him allegiance. At this Ṭalḥah remarked, “A dog just licking its nose is all we’ll get from this!”34

---

31. Following the text’s and Ibrāhīm’s emendations, fa-talakkā, fa-talakka’. Caetani, VIII, 323, “sought an excuse to evade doing it.” Pointing the ms. fa
talakkaz, see Hava (Syrian dialect), would mean “scoffed.”
32. Reading either the ms. fa-‘amāra, or Prym’s and Ibrāhīm’s emendation faẓāharā (Lane, 1879b–c, 1926b–c). Caetani, VIII, 333, “they went to Mecca.” For the four months, see p. 43, below [a continuation of this report], and EP, 414.
33. The famous historian.
34. I.e., no position in the rule. The ms. has ka-nakbšah “A dog poking its nose [in the earth] is all we’ll get from this!” I.e., “we are only going to get hurt” for the text’s ka-
bitsah. For the latter, de Goeje suggests “As much as a dog’s nose smells, i.e., a very small thing” (Glossarium, cxxcit) but to judge by today’s sniffer dogs this is not an apt simile.
According to 'Umar [b. Shabbah]—Abū al-Ḥasan [al-Madāʾīni]—an elder from Banū Ḥāshim—Abdallāh b. al-Ḥasan: When 'Uthmān was killed the Ansār gave allegiance to 'Ali, apart from a very small number of them, among whom were Ḥassān b. Thābit,35 Ka'b b. Mālik,36 Maslamah b. Muḥallad,37 Abū Sa'id al-Khudri,38 Muhammad b. Maslamah,39 al-Nuʿmān b. Bakhtiyar,40 Zayd b. Thābit,41 Rāfiʿ b. Khadij,42 Faḍālah b. 'Ubayd,43 and Ka'b b. 'Ujurah.44 They were all of the 'Uthmāniyyah.45

According to 'Abdallāh b. Ḥasan: Someone then asked him, "How come these men of the 'Uthmāniyyah refused to give allegiance?" He replied, "As for Ḥassān, he was a poet who didn't care what he did. As for Zayd b. Thābit, 'Uthmān put him in charge of the diwān46 and the treasury,47 and, when 'Uthmān was besieged, he twice called out, 'Ansār! Be helpers48 of Allāh!' to which Abū Ayyūb49 replied, 'You're only supporting him because he gave you many date palms.'50 And, as for Ka'b b. Mālik, 'Uthmān had put him in charge of alms from Muzaynah and let him keep what he took from them.'51

[Again according to 'Abdallāh b. Ḥasan]—anonymous—al-

---

35. A Khazrajī poet from Medina [EP, s.v.], to whom poetry is ascribed in the Sīrah of Ibn Ḥishām. Cf. the slightly different list, p. 9, below.
36. Another Khazrajī poet to whom poetry is ascribed in the Sīrah of Ibn Ḥishām. After 'Uthmān's death he went to Mu'āwiyah [EP, s.v.].
38. Sa'd b. Mālik al-Khazrajī [Caskel and Strenziok, I, 188, II, 500].
40. A Khazrajī poet [Caskel and Strenziok, II, 451]. After 'Uthmān's death he went to Mu'āwiyah, who later gave him the governorship of Kūfah [EP, s.v.].
41. Khazrajī secretary to the Prophet [EP, s.v.]. The most prominent figure in the traditions about the collection of the Qurān, see Burton, index, s.v.
42. Companion of the Prophet and kinsman of Muḥammad b. Maslamah [Caskel and Strenziok, I, 180, II, 483], or perhaps al-Balī (339), kinsman of Ka'b b. 'Ujurah.
43. Died as qadi' of Damascus [Caskel and Strenziok, I, 177, II, 243].
44. Al-Balī, Companion of the Prophet [Caskel and Strenziok, I, 329, II, 366].
45. I.e., partisans of 'Uthmān.
46. The central register, said to have been instituted by 'Umar [EP, s.v.].
47. Bayt al-māl [EP, s.v.].
48. Ṡansār.
50. 'Iddān, IA, 194, has 'iḍḍān "slaves."
51. They should have been for the poor.

According to others, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr only gave allegiance to 'Ali unwillingly, and some said al-Zubayr did not give it at all.

Those who said this

According to ‘Abdallāh b. Ahmad al-Marwazi—his father—Sulaymān—'Abdallāh—Jarīr b. Ḥāzim—Hishām b. Abī Hishām, mawla of55 'Uthmān b. 'Affān—a Kūfān elder—another elder: 'Uthmān was besieged while 'Ali was in Khaybar,56 and, when he came back, 'Uthmān sent a message for him to come, so he set off quickly. So I said, “I'll set off with him and overhear their conversation.” When 'Ali came to him, 'Uthmān spoke with him, praised Allāh, and continued: “I have certain legal claims on you, the claim of Islam, the claim of brotherhood—as you know, the Messenger of Allāh made you and me brothers at the time he made the Companions brothers—and claims of blood and marriage, and the pacts and agreements you swore with me individually. By Allāh! Let's suppose none of these claims had any force and we behaved as if we were back in a jāhiliyyah. Then it would be thanks to the neglect of Banū ‘Abd Manāf57 if the Taymī58 usurped their power.” 'Ali praised Allāh and said, “All that you

---

52. Al-Qurashi; fought at Badr and was governor of Bahrayn under 'Uthmān (Cāskel and Strezeniok, I, 24, II, 470).
54. A Thaqafī from Ṭa‘if and governor of al-Baṣrah under ‘Umar [who was killed by his slave] and of al-Kūfah under Mu‘āwiyyah. During the caliphates of 'Uthmān and ‘Ali he retired from prominence [EP, s.v.].
55. Prym [followed by Caetani], VIII, 326] suggests inserting “the family of,” but it was customary to refer to people in this way long after the original client and patron were dead.
56. An oasis, said to have been largely Jewish at the time of the Prophet, c. 150 km/95 miles to the north of Medina [EP, s.v.].
57. The clan of 'Uthmān ['Abd Shams] and 'Ali [Hāshim].
58. Banū Taym was Ṭalḥah’s clan; i.e., “Ṭalḥah will become caliph.”
have mentioned about your claims on me is quite right, and your remark that, were we in such a jāhiliyyah, then it would be thanks to the neglect of Banû 'Abd Manâf if the Taymi usurped their power is also true. I’ll show you.” 59 So 'Ali then left and went to the mosque, where he saw Usâmah 60 sitting, so he called him and took hold of his arm and then set off for Talhah. I followed him, and we went into Talhah’s house, which was crowded with people. 'Ali went up to Talhah and said, “What’s this awful situation you’ve fallen into?” He replied, “Abû Hasan, you blame me after things have gotten so far out of control?” 62 'Ali said nothing in reply and came to the treasury and said, “Open this door!” When he could not get the keys he said, “Break it down!” So the door of the treasury was forced open, and he said, “Bring out the money!” He then began distributing the money to all the people. 63 When those who were in Talhah’s house heard what ‘Ali was doing, they began secretly slipping away to him until Talhah was left on his own. When 'Uthmân heard of this, he was pleased. Talhah then walked back to 'Uthmân’s house. I said to myself, “By Allâh! I’ll see what he says.” So I followed him. He asked 'Uthmân’s permission to enter, and when he went in he said, “Commander of the Faithful, Allâh have mercy on me, I repent to him. I wanted something, but Allâh prevented me from attaining it.” 'Uthmân replied, “By Allâh! You haven’t come repentant but defeated. Allâh will punish you, Talhah.”


59. I.e., “I won’t let Talhah take over.”
60. Ibn Zayd b. Hârithâh. Zayd was the Prophet’s adopted son and former slave (EP, s.v.). Usâmah was a protégé of the Prophet and later of 'Uthmân and is said not to have given 'Ali allegiance, see p. 9, below, and EP, s.v.
61. Reading diḥâs as in Ibrâhim, Addenda, DCXXI, and Glossarium, CCXXXVI. Ibn Manzûr (VII, 379 l. 14) cites the report about Talhah, in which his house was diḥâs, ay dâh diḥâs, wa-huwa al-intilâ' wa-al-zihâm. See also Hava, 198: dalâḥas “to fill [a house]; crowd.”
62. Lit., “after the girth has touched the two teats”; it should be much farther forward, see Freytag, I, 297.
63. To wrong-foot Talhah.
64. D. 207/823 [EP]. See also Petersen, 84 n. 5.
The Events of the Year 35 (cont’d) 9

Waqqāš—his father [Ismā’il]—Sa’d [b. Abī Waqqāš]. Ṭālḥah said, “I gave allegiance with a sword over my head.” I do not know whether the sword was over his head or not, but I do know he gave allegiance unwillingly. The people gave allegiance to ’Ali in Medina, but seven men were cautious and did not give it. They were Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāš, Ibn ’Umar, Ṣuhayl, Zayd b. Thābit, Muḥammad b. Maslamah, Salamah, Waqsh, and Usāmah b. Zayd. As far as we know, not one of the Anṣār refrained from giving allegiance.

According to al-Zubayr b. Bakkār—his father’s brother Muṣ‘ab b. ’Abdallāh—his father, ’Abdallāh b. Muṣ‘ab—Mūsā b. ’Uqbah—Abū Ḥabibah, mawla of al-Zubayr: When the people killed ’Uthmān and gave allegiance to ’Ali, the latter went to al-Zubayr and asked if he could come in. I informed al-Zubayr so he unsheathed his sword and put it under his bed and said, “Let him in!” So I let him in, and he greeted al-Zubayr, who was standing opposite him. He then left, and al-Zubayr said, “Something occurred to the man that made him leave quickly. Stand where he was, and see whether any part of the sword would have been visible.” I did so and could see the point of the sword, so I told him, and he said, “That’s what hurried the man up.” As he left, the people questioned ’Ali, and he answered, “I found the most dutiful and friendly nephew,” so they thought it had gone well. ’Ali said that al-Zubayr had given him allegiance.

65. The ms. (according to Prym, by dittography) has Abū Bakr b. Iṣmā’il b. Muḥammad b. ’Umar.
66. Al-Qurashi, leader at Qādisiyyah; d. Kūfah 50 or 55 (Caskel and Strenziok, I, 20, II, 491, EI).
68. As in the text and Ibrāhim. The ms. has Maṣlimah, apparently by dittography. IA has “Salamah b. Salāmah b. Waqsh [al-Anṣārī]”; cf. p. 7, above; Caskel and Strenziok, I, 179, II, 505.
70. See Tabarī, I, 2981.
71. Reading either bi-nahwihi, as in the text, or bi-nahrihi, as in Ibrāhim; Addenda, cccxxi, Glossarium, vni.
72. Awṣal refers to silat al-rāhim. Al-Zubayr was the son of Ṣafiyah, sister of Abū Taḥīb. He was also the son of the Prophet’s wife Khadijah’s brother and married Asmā’, daughter of Abū Bakr and sister of ’Ā’isha.
According to al-Sari [in writing]—Shu‘ayb—Sayf b. ‘Umar—Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallāh b. Sawād b. Nuwayrah, Taḥḥah b. al-A‘lām,74 Abū Ḥārithah, and Abū ‘Uthmān: Medina remained under the [interim] governorship of al-Ghāfiqī b. Ḥarb75 for five days after the murder of ‘Uthmān. During this time all the parties searched unsuccessfully for someone who would agree to take command. The Egyptians approached ‘Ali, but he hid from them and took refuge in the walled gardens of Medina. When they found him, he withdrew from them and repeatedly disowned them and their plan. The Kūfīs searched unsuccessfully for al-Zubayr, so they sent messengers to wherever he was. He also withdrew from them and disowned their plan. The Baṣrans searched for Taḥḥah, and when he encountered them he, too, withdrew from them and repeatedly disowned their plan. They were thus agreed about murdering ‘Uthmān, but at odds over whom they wanted next. On finding no one to assist or respond, they adopted the evil course of accepting the first person to respond and said, “We’ll appoint none of these three.” So they sent a message to Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ: “You were a member of the electoral council,76 and we are unanimous [that you should lead]. So come forward for us to give you allegiance.” He sent a message back: “Ibn ‘Umar77 and I are not candidates, so I do not want to be involved in any way,” and he quoted:

Never mix bad things with something good!

Disrobe yourself of them, and escape naked!

Then they came to Ibn ‘Umar ‘Abdallāh and said, “You are the son of ‘Umar, so take this leadership up!” “It involves vengeance,” he replied, “so I am not going to interfere with it. Look for someone else.” This left them at a loss, not knowing what to do, even though they were in control of the city.

73. Ibn Yahyā [Wellhausen, 5]. See F. Sezgin’s discussion of kitābah [241].
74. Al-Hanāfī [see p. 52, below]. A frequent authority of Sayf’s but about whom little is known; see Hinds, “Sayf b. ‘Umar’s Sources,” 8.
75. Al-‘Akki, participant in the Egyptian opposition to ‘Uthmān in Medina; see Hinds, “Murder,” 456.
76. Al-shīrā, which elected ‘Uthmān; see Smith, 142–63; Humphreys, 1990, 3 n. 5.
77. ‘Abdallāh; see note 24, above.
According to al-Sarî [in writing]—Shu’ayb—Sayf—Sahl b. Yusuf—al-Qâsim b. Muḥammad: When they found Ṭalḥah he refused and said,

“One of the surprises of fate and time is that I have remained alone, able neither to make bitter nor sweet.”

When they heard this they said, “You are threatening us!” So they stood up and left him. When they found al-Zubayr and said they wanted him, he also refused and said,

“When you saddle up to leave a house in Fayhān and its courtyard, the soldiers swear at you.”

When they heard this they said, “You are threatening us.” When they found ‘Alî and said they wanted him, he also refused and said,

“If the leaders of my people complied with me, I would give them a command that would subdue the enemies.”

When they heard this they said, “You are threatening us,” and they stood up and left him.

According to ‘Umar b. Shabbah—Abū al-Ḥasan al-Madâ‘inî—Maslamah b. Muḥārîb—Dāwûd b. Abî Hind—al-Sha‘bî: After ‘Uthmān was killed the people came to ‘Alî in the market in Medina and said to him, “Stretch out your hand so we can give you allegiance!” “Don’t be precipitate!” he replied. “‘Umar was a gifted man, yet he entrusted the matter to an electoral council, so wait until the people get together and consult.” At this the people

78. The regicides again.
79. I.e., without any control at all. Ṭalḥah had expected to rule.
80. The frustrated ambitions expressed in the verse made them feel they would not fare well if he were caliph.
81. A name with a pleasant sound in Arabic, in this case, Medina. Yâqūt, Mu’jam, IV, 282, has a Fayhān in Muzaynah territory. Al-Zubayr is referring to himself and implying that the Medinans have treated him badly.
82. Reading wa-bābatihā with Ibrāhim for the text’s wa-bā‘ātihā “and its merchants.”
83. The editor of IA [196 n. 3] suggests bi-dhabhī for yudikhā, i.e., “a command to slaughter,” but the latter reading is the famous one. This verse comes in two other Sayf reports in the text, pp. 19 (again from the mouth of ‘Alî) and 40, below (from the mouth of ‘A’ishah and with a different second hemistich).
turned away from ’Ali. Some of them then said, “If the men return to their garrisons with the news of the murder of ‘Uthmân, and no one taking on the command after him, we won’t be safe from schism and the disintegration of the community.” So they went back to ’Ali, and al-Ashtar took hold of ’Ali’s hand, but ’Ali took his hand away and closed it. Al-Ashtar then said, “Yet again! After three times!”84 By Allâh! If you reject the rule again, you will look at it with pain for a long time.”85 The crowd then gave him allegiance. The Kûfans say that the first to give allegiance was al-Ashtar.

According to al-Sârî [in writing]—Shu‘ayb—Sayf—Abû Ḥâri-thah and Abû ‘Uthman: Early on the Thursday, the fifth day86 after ‘Uthmân’s assassination, [the besiegers]87 gathered the Medinese together. They then realized that Sa’d and al-Zubayr had left town, and they found that Ṭahlh had gone off to a walled garden of his. They also found that the Umayyads had fled, all but those who were unable to do so. Al-Walid and Sa’îd had fled to Mecca among the first who had left, and Marwân had followed them. Others followed successively. When the Medinese assembled before the [besiegers], the Egyptians said to the Medinese, “You are the people of the electoral council. You decide on the imamate and your decision holds good for the community as a whole. So, look for a man to appoint to office, and we will go along with you.” At this most of them said, “’Ali b. Abî Ṭâlib! He is our choice.”

According to ’Ali b. Muslim—Ḥabbân88 b. Hilâl—Ja’far b. Sulaymân—’Awf: As for me, I swear that I heard Muḥammad b. Sîrîn89 say that ’Ali came and said to Ṭahlh, “Put out your hand, Ṭahlh, so that I can give you allegiance.” Ṭahlh had replied, “You have more right. You are Commander of the Faithful, so put

---

84. I.e., before allegiance was given to Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmân; see p. 51, below; Addenda, DCXXXI.
85. For the text’s ‘aynayka de Goede suggests ‘anyatakâ, see Glossarium, coxxv, Addenda, DCXXXI. The latter is obscure and might mean “you will certainly confine your trouble to it for a time,” i.e., “you will have trouble this time” (Lane, 3181ta), but the text’s reading is the famous one. 1A conveniently omits this report.
86. See note 13, above.
87. The Kûfans, Basrans, and Egyptians.
88. Ḥibbân, according to Caertani, VIII, 333.
89. The famous traditionist (EP s.v.).
out your hand." 'Ali put out his hand, and he gave him allegiance.

According to al-Sari [in writing]—Shu‘ayb—Sayf—Muḥammad and Ṭalḥah: The Egyptians then said, "It's up to you,\textsuperscript{90} people of Medina! We've given you two days and, by Allāh! if you don't sort it out,\textsuperscript{91} tomorrow we'll kill ‘Ali and Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr and many others beside." The people then came to ‘Ali and said, "We give you allegiance, for you see what has happened to Islam and how much we have suffered at the hands of relatives."\textsuperscript{92} "Leave me alone and look for someone else," ‘Ali replied. "We are confronted with a problem that has so many different aspects that no agreement can be reached on it."\textsuperscript{93} "We beg you by Allāh," they said. "Don't you see what we see? Don't you see Islam? Don't you see civil war? Don't you fear Allāh?" "I agree to your request on the basis of what I see," he replied, "but you must realize that I do so, provided that I may lead you the way I know. Should you leave me, then I am no different from any of you, except for the fact that I am the most ready of you to hear and obey the one you place in authority over you." On that understanding they dispersed to meet again the next day. The people then discussed it among themselves and said, "If Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr join in,\textsuperscript{94} then things will come right." So the Baṣrans sent one of their number, Ḥakīm b. Jabal al-'Abd,\textsuperscript{95} with a group of men to al-Zubayr and said, "Be careful! Be straight with him!"\textsuperscript{96} They brought him at sword point. To Ṭalḥah they sent a Kūfān, al-Ashtar, with a group

\textsuperscript{90} Dūnakum, or "Beware!"
\textsuperscript{91} Pointing the ms. tufrikhū, see Lane, 2362c. The text and Ibrāhim adopt IA’s tafraḡā, meaning the same.
\textsuperscript{92} Min dhawi al-qurba, a reference to 'Uthmān’s nepotism. IA has min bayn al-qurā, “the villages.”
\textsuperscript{93} Lit., “many aspects, which hearts will not stand up to and minds will be puzzled by.”
\textsuperscript{94} The allegiance.
\textsuperscript{95} Supporter of ‘Ali and leader of the Baṣran opposition to ‘Uthmān. He was killed with seventy of his fellow ‘Abdis defending al-Baṣrah before the Battle of the Camel, see p. 78, below. He was an outsider [Hinds, “Murder,” 460–63]. For the vocalization Ĥakīm, see Caskel and Stenzel, II, 295, Petersen, 81, Hinds, “Murder,” 460. The text, IA [e.g., 214], Wellhausen [130], and Caetani, IX, 45–46, 65–66, have Ḥukaym.
\textsuperscript{96} Ḥabā here means to show false respect in order to make someone approve of you, to say things you want people to hear [Lane, 507c, gives meanings like “treat gently”]. Ibrāhim and Wellhausen [159] emend the text’s and IA’s lā tuḥābīhi [here and with Ṭalḥah below] to lā tuḥdādīhi “Don’t stand up against him!” [cf. p. 58], but this does not fit. De Goeje also dismisses this emendation [Addenda, xcxxxi, Glossarium, clxxix].
of men and said, “Be careful! Be straight with him!” They brought him at sword point. The Kūfans and the Baṣrans were each well pleased at their captive’s ignominy, and the Egyptians were delighted at what the Medinese had agreed to,97 the Kūfans and the Baṣrans having been humiliated by being made subordinate to the Egyptians and a dependent group among them, and thus become even more enraged against Taḥhah and al-Zubayr. When Friday came and the people gathered in the mosque, ‘Ali arrived to ascend the minbar and said, “Men! By common consent and permission the matter is in your hands. Nobody has a right to it but him whom you appoint. We dispersed yesterday in agreement on a decision, so if you wish, I will take control. But if not, I will bear no anger against anyone.” “We hold to our opinion that we had when we left you yesterday,” they replied, and they brought Taḥhah and said, “Give allegiance!” He said, “I only do this unwillingly.” So it was a man with a withered hand who was the first to give allegiance. There was a man who was looking on disapprovingly98 from the back of the crowd, and when he saw that Taḥhah was the first to give allegiance he said, “We belong to Allāh and to him we return.99 The first hand to give allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful is a withered hand. No good will come of this!”100 Al-Zubayr was then brought, and he said similar words to Taḥhah and gave allegiance. However, there are different accounts about him. Then a group of men were brought who had held back, and they said, “We give allegiance on the understanding that the Book of Allāh is upheld toward both relative and stranger, rich man and poor.” He accepted this and then everyone else proceeded to give allegiance.

According to al-Sa‘ādī (in writing)—Shu‘ayb—Sayf—Abū Zuhayr al-Azdi—‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Jundab—his father: When ‘Uthmān was killed and the people agreed on ‘Ali, al-Ashtar went and brought Taḥhah [to the mosque], who said to him, “Let me see what the people will do.” But he did not let him and brought him,

97. I.e., ‘Ali. The Egyptian insurgents had always been pro-‘Ali, whereas those from al-Kūfah were pro-al-Zubayr and those from al-Baṣrah pro-Taḥhah.
98. Glossarium, cclxxiii.
99. Said on hearing of someone’s death (Qurʾān 2:156). On p. 3, above, the man was named as Ḥabib b. Dhu‘ayb.
100. See p. 4, above.
pushing him violently. So he ascended the minbar and gave allegiance.


According to al-Sari [in writing]—Shu‘ayb—Sayf—Muḥammad and Taḥāh: Everyone then gave allegiance.

According to Abū Ja‘far [al-Ṭabarī]: After these who had made stipulations,103 those who had been brought104 then complied as well. The authority of the Medinehs was thus acknowledged as it had been in the past—except that the outsiders and riffraff came to have a say in it105—and they returned to their homes.

The Settlement of the Affair by Giving of Allegiance to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib

According to Abū Ja‘far [al-Ṭabarī]: ‘Alī was given allegiance on Friday, 25 Dhū-l-Hijjah (June 24), but people reckon it from the day that ‘Uthmān was killed.106

According to al-Sari [in writing]—Shu‘ayb—Sayf—Sulaymān b.

---

101. I.e., Ḥakīm; see p. 13, above.
102. Al-lū‘. This was allegedly the name of al-Ashtar’s sword (al-Zabīdī, II, 93) rather than that of Ḥakīm.
103. The Medinehs, specifically those who had held back.
104. Forcibly like Taḥāh and al-Zubayr. Taḥārī’s Arabic is not clear.
105. Law là makānu al-nuzza‘ wa-al-gawgūf fihim. Generally al-nuzza‘/nuzza‘ al-qabā‘il/‘al-nuzza‘ min al-qabā‘il are strangers from certain tribes who live as neighbors to tribes other than theirs (ibn Manṣūr, s.v.), Hinds, “Murder,” 462, but in this section of al-Ṭabarī’s history the words always apply to some of ‘Uthmān’s killers, e.g., p. 55, below. In the text here there has been some misunderstanding of the phrase law là makānu al-nuzza‘ wa-al-gawgūf fihim. Following Caetani (VIII, 335, 404), Petersen (132) takes this to be a thinly veiled reference to the Saba‘iyah and translates here “[the discontent of as-Saba‘iyah] already [then] was instrumental in fostering discords and tumults among them.” However, this is to vocalize the ms. makānu al-nuzza‘, to take gawgūf to mean “clamor, confusion of noise,” and not to translate law là. The Saba‘iyah were the alleged followers of ‘Abdallāh b. Saba‘, accused by anti-Shī‘ī factions of being a Jew who introduced extreme ‘Alid doctrine (EP), s.v., al-Askari, passim; Husayn, I, 43, 98–100, 131; Petersen, 78 ff.; Wellhausen, 6). He was probably not a Jew (Lerli della Vida, 495).
106. The Saturday before, the 18th.
Abi\textsuperscript{107} al-Mughirah—‘Ali b. al-Ḥusayn: ‘Ali, in his first \textit{khuṭbah} (sermon) as caliph,\textsuperscript{108} praised and extolled Allāh and then said:

Almighty and Glorious Allāh has sent down a Book that guides. In it He has made clear what is good and what is evil, so take hold of the good and leave the evil. Perform the religious duties to Allāh, and He will lead you to Paradise. Allāh has made a number of inviolable ordinances, which are well known, and He has favored the inviolability of the Muslim over all others, strengthening the Muslims with the declaration and belief in one God. A Muslim is someone from whom\textsuperscript{109} people are safe, except when there is just cause; and it is not allowed to harm a Muslim, except when it is obligatory. Hasten to the common cause, because the particular cause of each individual is death. The people are in front of you and behind you, urging you on, remember,\textsuperscript{110} it is the Hour! Keep your load [of sins] light, and you will reach [Paradise quickly]. People are simply awaiting their Hereafter. Servants of Allāh! Fear Him in your dealings with His other servants and His places.\textsuperscript{111} You are responsible even for land and animals, so obey Almighty and Glorious Allāh! Don’t go against Him! So when you see good, follow it; when you see bad, leave it alone. “Remember when you were few in the land and considered weak.”\textsuperscript{112}

When ‘Ali had finished his sermon and was still on the \textit{minbar}, the Egyptians recited:

Take it, but beware, Abū Ḥasan!

We are settling the leadership the way we fix a nose rein.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{107} Prym suggests deleting “Abi”; Caetani, VIII, 335, does not.
\textsuperscript{108} Al-Ḥārizī, II, 50 ff., citing Abū ‘Ubaydah, and Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd (I, 272 ff.) have quite different versions of his first \textit{khuṭbah}. Cf. also al-Shaykh al-Mufid, 46.
\textsuperscript{109} Lit., “from whose tongue and hand.”
\textsuperscript{110} Reading \textit{wa-innamā}, as in the ms. This gives more emphasis than Prym’s \textit{wa-inna mā}, in which the \textit{mā} is presumably \textit{zā’idah} for the sake of rhetoric.
\textsuperscript{111} Rhetoric: \textit{Ittāqā Allāha ‘ibādahu fi ‘ibādihī wa-bilādihī}.
\textsuperscript{112} Qur‘ān 8:26. the implied remainder of the verse tells of Allāh’s support.
\textsuperscript{113} This line also comes on p. 139, below.
The line should read:114
Take it to you, but beware, Abū Ḥasan!

'Ali recited in reply:
I was unable to do something and have no excuse.
I will be shrewd after this and carry on.

According to al-Sari (in writing)—Shu‘ayb—Sayf—Muḥammad and Ṭalḥah: As 'Ali was about to leave for his house, the Saba‘iyah115 recited:

Take it to you, but beware, Abū Ḥasan!
We are settling the leadership the way we fix a nose-rein,
With an army's assault like barriers116 against ships,
with Mashhafiyyah swords like rivers of milk.117

And we stab the kingship with a flexible sword like a rope,
until it is trained not to resist.118

'Ali then recited some verses, mentioning how they had left the camp, expecting119 the fulfillment of a promise they had been given, at a time when some people criticized them, so they had returned to them, unable to desist until:120

I was unable to do something and have no excuse.
I will be shrewd after this and carry on.
I will lift from behind me what I have been dragging
and will join up what has been separated and scattered.

114. To make the meter more correct.
115. Al-Saba‘iyah in the text, here as always.
116. Asdād, “mounds [cataracts] that obstruct sailing,” with the strength of which the strength of a military marching column is being compared [Glossarium, cccxxviii].
117. i.e., very many of them.
118. i.e., until it has been completely subdued [Glossarium, cdxxxiv].
120. The ms. is corrupt; a line has been repeated by dittoography but deleted, leaving a space. De Goede translates this passage “and that they were holding the Medinans by promises that they had agreed with them, and motivated by which they had returned to them, whereas the Medinans were not able to resist” [Glossarium, cccxci].
If the speedy conqueror Death does not oppose me
or they desert me when weapons are hastily taken up.

Then, when 'Ali had gone inside [his house], Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr, along with a number of Companions, came to him in a group and said: "'Ali! We stipulated that Allah's punishments should be applied. These people participated in the death of this man and have thereby forfeited their lives." "My friends," he replied, "I am not unaware of what you know, but how can I deal with people who rule us, not we them? Your own slaves have rebelled with them, and your bedouin have joined them. They live with you, imposing on you what they want. So can you see a way of achieving any of what you want?" "No," they said. "No indeed," replied 'Ali. "I think there is only one thing to be said, and I expect you will agree. This is something that does not belong to Islam, and so these people will find that they have a persistent problem. This is that Satan has never made a religious law and those who follow his decree will disappear from the earth forever. If it is stirred up, Muslims will take up different positions with regard to this matter. One group will share your views, another will have views you do not share, and a third will disagree with both, until the people calm down and return to their senses and claims can be settled. So stop complaining to me, and see what will happen to you. Then return to me."'Ali was extremely restrictive with Quraysh and prevented them from leaving town under any circumstances. This reaction in him had been stirred up by the flight of the Umayyads. Then the people [who had assembled at his house] dispersed, some of them saying: "If this upheaval goes on, we won’t be able to overcome these corrupt men." Leaving

---

121. Iqāmat al-hadād (sing. hadd). This phrase, translated as “Allah’s punishments” or “restrictive ordinances,” occurs several times in the text [see index], e.g., on p. 39 below, where ‘A’shah claims Qur'anic justification for setting up a hadd over ‘Uthmān’s murder by stating that it was unjust (mazlūm), she is referring to Qur'an 17:33, which allows blood revenge in such cases: wa-lā taqṭulū al-nafsā allatī barrāma Allāh illā bi-al-haqq quṭila maqṭūna fī-ṣaḥīḥ fī-l-qād jā‘alna li-wâibi sūltānan fī-l-yurus rī the killers of ‘Uthmān.
this to what 'Ali said is better." Others were saying: "We will fulfill our duty and won't delay the matter. By Allāh! In his opinions and orders 'Ali pays no attention to us, and we definitely see him being more harsh than anyone against Quraysh."

When 'Ali was told this, he stood up, praised Allāh, and magnified Him. He then mentioned their excellence, his need for them, and his regard for them and that he was working for their defense. He pointed out that he wanted no more power over them than that and that his reward was with Almighty and Glorious Allāh. He then proclaimed, "The religious obligation to protect a slave who fails to return to his masters is null and void." The Saba'īyah then conspired with the bedouin to fight. "We'll get the same treatment tomorrow," they said, "and we won't have any argument against them."

According to al-Sari (in writing)—Shu'ayb—Sayf—Muhammad and Talhah: 'Ali went out to the people on the third day and said: "All you citizens, expel the bedouin from among you! And all you bedouin, go back to your own wells!" But the Saba'īyah refused, and the bedouin followed their lead. So 'Ali went into his house, followed by Talhah and al-Zubayr and a number of the Companions of the Prophet. And 'Ali said: "Your revenge is right in front of you! So kill!" They replied, "They won't understand that! But 'Ali replied: "By Allāh! Tomorrow they'll be yet more dim-witted and rebellious," and he recited:

If the majority of my people complied with me, I would give them a command that would subdue the enemies.

125. I.e., temporizing.
126. I.e., kill the killers.
127. 'Ali's position.
128. An attempt to split off the slave elements of the opposition. See also EP, s.v. ‘Abd; Dhimma; cf. Ayoub.
129. Fā‘alhāmarist. The fifth stem, "then angrily blamed each other over their loss," might be preferable; it is a bit early for talk of fighting.
130. 'Ali is mocking Talhah and al-Zubayr. They had advocated immediate revenge, but here they were retreating from the [alleged] regicides.
131. The Saba'īyah and the bedouin.
132. I.e., "It's no use trying to convince them that retaliation is right"; they are making excuses.
133. 'Ali is criticizing Talhah and al-Zubayr and their followers for not listening to his advice. Cf. p. 11, above, and p. 40, below.
Tallḥah then said, “Allow me to go to al-Baṣrah, and you’ll be shocked by how quickly I can rally a force.” ¹³⁴ “Let me think about it,” ’Ali replied. Al-Zubayr said, “Allow me to go to al-Kūfah, and you’ll be shocked by how quickly I can rally a force.” ’Ali replied, “Let me think about it.”

Al-Mughirah [b. Shu‘bah] heard about this meeting. He came to see ’Ali and said: “You have the right of obedience and sincere advice. What will happen tomorrow is protected by a good decision today and destroyed by failing to make one today. Confirm Mu‘āwiya in his governorship, confirm Ibn ’Amir¹³⁵ in his and the other governors over their provinces. Then, when you receive their obedience and the armies’ allegiance, you can replace or leave them.” “I will see,” he said. Al-Mughirah then left ’Ali, but he returned the following day and said: “I advised you to make a decision yesterday, but now a better one is that you dismiss them from office with haste. Then it will be known who obeys you and who does not, and your authority will be accepted.” As al-Mughirah was leaving, ’Abdallah b. ’Abbas met him on his way in. When he got to ’Ali he said: “I’ve just seen al-Mughirah leaving you. What did he come to you about?” “He came to me yesterday about such and such, and he came to me today about such and such.” “As for yesterday,” Ibn ’Abbas replied, “he advised you well, but, as for today, he misled you.” “What should be done then?” asked ’Ali. Ibn ’Abbas said:

What you should have done was to have left when the man was killed or even before that and gone to Mecca, entered your house, and locked the door behind you. Then, if the Arabs¹³⁶ should have amassed and become stirred up after your withdrawal, they would only have had you [to turn to]. But today there are among the Umay-

¹³⁴ Lit. “horses,” i.e., against the regicides, but there is an element of threat against ’Ali.
¹³⁶ Al-‘Arab, especially the settled ones, as opposed to al-‘Arāb, the bedouin. Here they are assembling without a leader; cf. pp. 22, 41, below.

© 1997 State University of New York Press, Albany
yads some\textsuperscript{137} who approve the search for revenge [for \textquoteleft}Uthmān\textquoteright, saying that you had a share in the affair. They will mislead the people and make demands similar to what the Medinese have made. You cannot fulfill what they\textsuperscript{138} want, but neither can they\textsuperscript{139}—even if matters should turn out in their favor\textsuperscript{140}—so they would be even more unable [than you] to fulfill their\textsuperscript{141} claims and more ineffective, except for the suspicions they have already managed to stir up [against you].

Al-Mughirah confessed, \textquotedblleft I gave him good advice, by Allāh! but when he didn't accept it, I misled him.	extquotedblright And he left to go to Mecca.

According to al-Ḥārith— Ibn Sa\textquoteleft d—al-Wāqidi—Ibn Abī Sabrah—\textquoteleft}Abd al-Majīd\textsuperscript{142} b. Suhayl—\textquoteleft}Ubaydallāh b. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUtbah— Ibn ʿAbbās: \textquoteleft}Uthmān called for me and appointed me over the Hajj. So I left for Mecca, organized the Hajj for the people, and read \textquoteleft}Uthmān's letter to them. I then came to Medina. \textquoteleft}Ali had already been given allegiance there, and when I came to him in his house I found al-Mughirah b. Shu'bah having a private interview with him. So he detained me until al-Mughirah had left him. Then I asked, \textquoteleft}What did this man say to you?	extquoteright \textquoteleft}Ali replied, \textquoteleft}He said to me on a previous occasion: \textquoteleft}Send ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAmīr and Mu\textquoteleft}awiyah and \textquoteleft}Uthmān's governors their contracts, confirming them in office and that they should get the people's allegiance to you, for they will bring peace to the land and will calm the people.	extquoteright But I\textsuperscript{143} rejected his suggestion that day and said: \textquoteleft}By Allāh! Even if I had had only one hour of one day, I would have made the decision not to appoint any one of these. Nor should any of their ilk be appointed!	extquoteright As he left me I realized he thought I was mistaken. So he came back to me again today and said: I made that first suggestion to you, but you disagreed with me. So

\textsuperscript{137} Nöldeke suggests reading qawm or rijāl “a group” (\textit{Addenda, dCXXI}).
\textsuperscript{138} The Medinese.
\textsuperscript{139} The Umayyads.
\textsuperscript{140} I.e., \textquoteleft}Should you let them stay in office," as al-Mughirah advised.
\textsuperscript{141} The Medinese.
\textsuperscript{142} As in Ibrāhīm; \textit{Addenda, dCXXXI}. The text has al-Ḥamīd.
\textsuperscript{143} I.e., \textquoteleft}Ali.

© 1997 State University of New York Press, Albany
I had another idea. That is that you do as you thought and dismiss them and look for assistance from those you trust. Allah's help will suffice; their fighting power is less than it was."

So I said to 'Ali, "The first time he gave you good advice, but the last time he deceived you." "Why do you say he gave me good advice?" asked 'Ali. "Because you know that Mu‘awiyyah and his allies are men of the world," replied Ibn 'Abbās, "and, should you confirm their posts, they wouldn't care who had the overall command. But should you remove them they would say, 'He has assumed overall command without an electoral assembly, and he killed our companion,' and they would stir up the Syrians and Iraqis to rebel against you. I’m also not at all sure that ‘Alīhah and al-Zubayr won’t turn against you." "Regarding what you said about confirming them, replied ‘Ali, “then, by Allah I’ve no doubt that it would be best for ḥilūl in this life. But I have obligations to the truth, and I know ‘Uthmān’s governors, so by Allah! I’ll never appoint a single one of them! If they come it’ll be best for them, for if they stay back I’ll be generous to them with the sword." "Then do as I say," Ibn ‘Abbās replied. “Enter your house and stay on your estate in Yanbū‘.147 Lock the gate after you, for the Arabs are stirred up and milling around en masse, and they won’t find anyone apart from you [to turn to]. But, by Allah! If you rise up with these men today, the people will make you responsible for the blood of ‘Uthmān tomorrow.”

But ‘Ali ignored this advice and said to Ibn ‘Abbās: “Go to Syria! I’ve appointed you its governor.” "This isn’t the right decision," replied Ibn ‘Abbās. “Mu‘awiyyah is a man of Banū Umayyah. He is the son of ‘Uthmān’s father’s brother and governor of Syria. I won’t be safe from his breaking my neck for ‘Uthmān. Or else the least he will do is throw me in jail and pass sentence on me.” "Why?" ‘Ali asked him. “Because you and I are related,” he said, “and because everything imputed to you is imputed to me also.

144. The Umayyads.
145. ‘Reconciliation, setting things right [EI, s.v.].
146. i.e., and give allegiance.
147. As in Ibrahim, IA. It is the port of Medina on the Red Sea [EI, s.v.].
149. The regicides.
150. i.e., he has a responsibility to retaliate.
No, you should write to Mu‘awiyyah, raise his hopes, and make him promises!” But ‘Ali refused and said, “By Allâh! This will never be.”

According to Muḥammad—Hishâm b. Sa‘d—Abû Hilâl—Ibn ’Abbâs: Five days after the murder of ‘Uthmân, I arrived in Medina from Mecca. I went to go and visit ‘Ali but was told that al-Mughirah b. Šu‘bâh was with him. So I sat at the entrance for an hour. When al-Mughirah came out, he greeted me and said, “How long ago did you get here?” “This past hour,” I replied. I then went into ‘Ali, and greeted him. He asked me, “Did you meet al-Zubayr and Ṭalḥah?” “I met them in al-Nawâṣif.”151 “Who was with them?” he asked. “Abu Sa‘îd b. al-‘Hârîth b. Hishâm with a Qurashi force,” I replied. ‘Ali then said: “I’m sure they’ll never refrain from coming out and saying, ‘We seek repayment for ‘Uthmân’s blood.’ By Allâh! We know that they are the ones who killed ‘Uthmân.’”

“Commander of the Faithful!” said Ibn ’Abbâs. “Tell me about the business with al-Mughirah and why he had a private audience with you.” He said: “He came to me two days after the murder of ‘Uthmân and said to me, ‘May I have a private word with you?’ I agreed, and he said: ‘Good advice costs nothing. You are the most excellent in the community, and I have some sincere advice for you. I advise you to return ‘Uthmân’s governors to office this year, so write to them confirming their governorships. When they have given you allegiance and things have settled down under your command, then you may remove or confirm whomever you wish.’ So I replied, ‘By Allâh! I don’t compromise my religion by cheating, nor do I give contemptible men [a say] in my command.’152 ‘If you insist on rejecting this suggestion,’ he replied, ‘then remove whomever you will, but leave Mu‘awiyyah. Mu‘awiyyah is daring, and the Syrians listen to him. Moreover, you have good reason to keep him in office, for ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭâb made him governor of the whole of Syria.’ ‘By Allâh! no,’ I replied. ‘I would never appoint Mu‘awiyyah as governor, even for two days!’ Al-Mughirah then left me without further suggestion. However, he came back again and said to me: ‘I gave you some advice, but you didn’t agree with me.”

151. Yâqût has a place of this name only in what he thinks is ‘Umân [V, 306].
152. Cf. I, 1545 l. 18, 1546 l. 3, where ‘Umar says something similar.
So I thought about it and realized that you were right. You should not assume your authority deceitfully. There should be no fraud in your rule.'"

"So I said 'Ali,'" said Ibn 'Abbās, "his first suggestion advised you well, his last deceived you. I advise you to confirm Mu'āwiyah. If he gives you allegiance, then I will undertake to topple him from his position." 'Ali replied, "By Allah! no. I will give him nothing but the sword." And he quoted the following verse:

Death, if I die without weakness, is no
disgrace when the soul meets its destruction.\(^{153}\)

"Commander of the Faithful!" I replied, "you're a courageous man, but you aren't a warmonger. Didn't you hear the Messenger of Allah say, 'War is deceptive'?\(^{154}\) "Indeed I did," said 'Ali. "By Allah! If you do as I say," replied Ibn 'Abbās, "I'll take them back to the desert after a watering,\(^{155}\) and I'll leave them staring at the backside of things whose front side they have no idea of, and you will incur neither loss nor guilt." "Ibn 'Abbās," said 'Ali, "I don't want anything to do with these mean schemes of yours or of Mu'āwiyah's. You give me advice, and I consider it. If I go against you, then you do as I say." "I will," I replied. "Obedience is my first and foremost obligation to you."

---

**The Expedition of Qustantin, King of Rūm, against the Muslims**

Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī said: According to Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Waqidī—Hishām b. al-Ghāz—'Ubadah b. Nusayy: In this year, that is, 35, Qustantin b. Hirqal\(^{156}\) set sail with a thousand ships for the territory of the Muslims. But Allah caused a windstorm\(^{157}\)

---

\(^{153}\) Ibn Manṣūr, XIV, 20.
\(^{154}\) Al-ḥarb kuḍ'ah; Wensinck, I, 443b. For slight variations in meaning, see Lane, 710a.
\(^{155}\) I.e., as above, "I'll topple them."
\(^{156}\) Rather than Constantine, son of Heraclius, who died in 641 (Bury, et al., 391), this was Constantine (popularly called Constans), the nephew of Heraclius, who became sole emperor in 641. See also Humphreys, 74 n. 128.
\(^{157}\) Cf. Qur'ān 17:69.
to overpower and drown them. Qusṭanṭin b. Hirkal, however, survived and got to Sicily.¹⁵⁸ But they prepared a bath for him there, and when he got in they killed him, saying, “You killed our leaders.”

¹⁵⁸. These events have been telescoped. Constantine went to Sicily in 663, some seven years later, and it was not until 668 that he was blinded by soap in the bath and killed by being hit on the head with a silver ewer [Bury et al., 394–95].