

Mu'awiyah son of Abu Sufyan, Historical Stories For Children 6

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Mu'awiyah was the first king to rule at the beginning of the Islamic era. He was the founder of the reign of darkness and corruption. He is known for being an enemy to Imam Ali (as) and to Imam Hassan (as). He was a cunning and malicious man who used heinous stratagems in order to win.



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Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Our aim for the publication of these series is to introduce some aspects of biography from the history of Islam. These biographies include both types of individuals who either played a good and useful role or a bad and harmful role. We had always cherished the idea that we would be able to produce a short sketch of hard facts from the history of Islam in this field to be written exclusively to capture the interest of young children and teenagers.

We pray to the Almighty Allah to assist us in proving our present and future efforts to be accomplished facts — thus making a useful contribution to the learning of young children and teenagers and help us in this cause.

He is the Best Guide and the Best Helper.

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Mu'awiyah, son of Abu Sufyan

Mu'awiyah was the first king to rule at the beginning of the Islamic era. He was the founder of the reign of darkness and corruption. His mother was Hind who fought against the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). It was Hind who tore out the liver from Hamzah's body, and tried to eat it after sucking out the blood. Hamzah was the cousin of the holy Prophet who died fighting in the way of Allah (shahid) , in the battle of Uhud. As a result of her action she has become known as the 'liver-eating' Hind. Hind also cut off the ears and nose of Hamzah and hung them about her neck. The rest of the women who were with her did the same to the other men who had died fighting in the way of Allah.

Hind had four husbands, one of them being Abu Sufyan. Abu Sufyan, one of the enemies of the Prophet from the beginning, was probably the father of Mu'awiyah. He sided with and incited those who were against Islam and against the supporters of the Prophet. Abu Sufyan ordered his son Mu'awiyah to arrange for the harassment of the Prophet's people and cause the disbelievers (the kuffar, or those who cover up the truth) to take revenge on the Prophet himself for the death – of their followers. Thus it was that Mu'awiyah, who appeared to have accepted Islam continued the hostilities against the Prophet, Ali (a.s.), and his progeny, which his father had began.

Through the trickery and deceit of his father he was given a post as governor of the region of Syria (Sham, which in those days was a country, without well-defined borders, but corresponding roughly to present day Syria and parts of Lebanon and Jordan) in the latter period of the illegal caliphate of Abu Bakr. He remained governor during all three caliphates of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman.

When the usurper- caliph 'Uthman and members of worthy Muslims were killed at the hands of the people, Ali (a.s.) who was unhappy at the state of community was persuaded to accept leadership of the government. After a short time however Mu'awiyah, through guile and deceit was able to incite Imam Ali's followers to turn against their master. Mu'awiyah who was an inefficient governor then seized control of the government and the affairs of the Muslims. He was the first to oppose and change the purely Islamic nature of Imam Ali's government and to establish in its place himself as the first in the line of despotic dynastic rulers. He revived the royal customs, holding court while seated on an imposing throne. He was responsible for a reign of darkness and corruption, he drank wine, acted in a despicable way and used force to keep government of the Muslims in his hands.

Mu'awiyah's mother was one of the women who openly carried out vile and despicable acts against the Muslims. She used poisoned honey to kill the Muslims — fighting in the way of truth and the faithful supporters of Ali (a.s.) Malik al- Ashtar, the commander of the Egyptian army, appointed by Ali (a.s.), also died shahid (in the way of Allah) after eating some honey poisoned by Mu'awiyah's mother. Mu'awiyah engaged a number of thugs and ruffians to attack the houses of Ali's friends and anyone who was fighting in the way of truth.

Furthermore, he ordered them to seize the Muslims' wealth and to rape and harass the womenfolk. In the name of Islam he changed many divine commandments and many of the directives given to the Muslim community by the Prophet. During his government and imperial rule, corruption, debauchery, drinking, gambling and plundering of the Muslim's wealth became a way of life. The life and property of a Muslim was not safe from Mu'awiyah and his despicable behaviour. It was he who played a part in the plot to kill Ali (a.s.), and later had Imam Hasan killed.

During Mu'awiyah's rule, especially during the caliphate of 'Uthman, the military commanders, ministers of state and administrative officials plundered the baytu 'l--mal (the public treasury of the Muslim community) and used bribes and extortion to achieve their ends. Mu'awiyah outstripped all his contemporaries in matters of guile and treachery, deceit and trickery. His breast burned with revenge and hate for the Muslims who were seeking the truth and trying to establish justice. He held secret meetings in which he ordered his military officers and spies to make trouble for these most devoted to Allah and the cause of Islam, it was thus decided that Ali (a.s.) and his sons be subject to the greatest harassment.

Mu'awiyah in his usual treacherous way showed 'Uthman's robe and his wife Na'ilah's two fingers (which had been cut off during an attack on his own followers) to an assembly of people who had gathered in the mosques. By this action he hoped to instigate them against Ali (a.s.) and his supporters. He ordered many of the village people and even some of Ali's partisans who he had enticed away with bribes to shout Islamic slogans and to act in every way as if they supported the cause of Islam. He even commanded that the Qur'ans should be stuck on to the ends of spears and that should be made known that: "Judgement between me and Ali (a.s.) shall be made only on the basis of the Qur'an."

It was Mu'awiyah's apparent acceptance of Islam which caused so much hypo- crisy and internal division amongst the Muslim community. It was this deceiving fabricate which caused many of the divine commandments to be changed to fit in with the political situation. By means of his officials and cooperation of his close friends he gathered together a great number of blood-thirsty, mercenary thugs from every corner of the Hijaz.

He ordered them to attack all towns and villages which supported Ali (a.s.) killing or raping the inhabitants and plundering their goods. Mu'awiyah's aim was to ensure that anarchy and corruption spread to every part of the country. He commanded that the houses of the Shi'ahs in particular, should be destroyed or set on fire, and that these thugs should do everything possible to make life difficult for the Muslims in general.

At Mu'awiyah's word a great army of his infantry accompanied by several mounted divisions were dispatched to attack the Shi'ahs. Neither caravans, markets, nor houses belonging to the Muslims were spared by this attack. Mu'awiyah's mercenaries were trained to struck down and kill their victims just like hunting dogs lusting after their quarry. Mu'awiyah's friends and supporters were all corrupt and criminal, who recognized neither morals nor good behaviour; they stood opposite the faithful upright supporters of

(a.s.) and his sons.

The armies and partisans of the tyrant Mu‘awiyah were so bloodthirsty that they killed babies, youths and even old men without mercy.

The aim of Mu‘awiyah's vicious mercenaries was to prevent or discourage the people from supporting Ali (a.s.) and the cause of Islam, so that they might more easily plunder the country's wealth and live a life of ease and luxury.

Mu‘awiyah used such heinous stratagems that he managed to corrupt and bribe almost all those who had made a pledge of support for Imam Hasan (a.s.). He planted or infiltrated so many spies in the company and army of the Imam that the latter was obliged, because of the smallness of his army and the hypocrisy which grew around him to make peace with Mu‘awiyah. As a result of this treaty the way was open for Mu‘awiyah and his followers to increase their looting and plundering.

He was so cunning and malicious that he is looked to as an example by all tyrants and oppressors the world over. He is notorious for the way in which he succeeded in turning the Muslims themselves against 'Ali (a.s.) and his son Imam Hasan (a.s.).

These ignorant Muslims, who apparently accepted Islam, disobeyed the orders of the Imam when he prepared for war. It was these same Muslims who, after the peace treaty with Mu‘awiyah, rose up in condemnation of the Imam, clamouring for a reason why he had not gone to war. Such was the situation of strife and disorder which the Imam had to deal with.

Although Imam Hasan (a.s.), acting on the divine inspiration and with the shrewdness and perspicacity concordant with his position of Imam, made peace with this bloodthirsty man, the latter, whose only aim was power, did not leave off his hostilities against Islam and the family of the Prophet. By trick and stratagem he had this noble man poisoned to death at the hand of his wife.

He employed political compromise and a hypocritical appearance of Islam to have Ali (a.s.) and his son, who were the true divinely-appointed caliphs, confined to their houses. For forty years he held sway over the ignorant, unaware Muslims (who unfortunately are to be found in every community and in every age). What, after all, was to be expected from such a lying, dishonourable man who had seized control of the government by such violent means? What can one expect from a man who had seized power without a thought for God and without the acceptance of the people? There was no limit to the treachery of a man who eliminated rivals so that he might enjoy a monopoly of power.

What can one expect from a man who persuaded his mercenaries and pillaging thugs to attack the life and honour of the Muslims, in particular the Shi‘ahs of Ali (a.s.)? Because of the existence of such a blood-thirsty, evil man, the fear and terror in the hearts of those he oppressed or imprisoned increased daily, and the tyranny and darkness, corruption, killing and plundering became even more widespread.

Mu‘awiyah's government was like all tyrannical governments. When it triumphed over its enemy it subjected them to dreadful torture, giving full rein to their most evil desires and imagination.

What one may ask: was the reason for such criminal behaviour? The first reason, was the sinister nature of his being and his bad character. The second, his longing for power and desire to rule over the Muslims who were unaware of the true meaning of Islam. The third, his long-standing hatred for Muhammad (s.a.w.a.), Ali (a.s.) and their followers. The fourth, the pleasure he derived from torturing and molesting the followers of Ali (a.s.).

It was Mu‘awiyah, the so-called 'Muslim' ruler who instructed a number of his agents to kill babies in front of their mothers and to execute men and women who supported Ali (a.s.). His bloodthirsty friends and supporters, also, used to kill and seize the wealth of innocent, defenseless Muslims.

These thieves and professional murderers, because of their blind obedience of their evil, treacherous master knew no bounds to their criminal activity. When Mu‘awiyah openly showed his hatred and hostility for Ali (a.s.) and his family the bloodshed, killing, plundering and pillaging increased still further.

Mu‘awiyah was a merciless tyrant who betrayed Islam and the Muslims; from a raised platform in the mosque (minbar) he would order that Ali (a.s.), should be insulted and dishonoured. He told the assembled people that Ali' (a.s.) did not pray and that he was a thief and instigator of rebellions activity. In Mu‘awiyah and his friends' eyes Ali (a.s.) was a trouble-maker, a thief and a man who did not offer his prayers and they themselves were the protectors of the life and property of the Muslims and servants of humanity.

In order to win over the younger generation and to inspire love for himself and his wicked son Yazid, Mu‘awiyah ordered that sheep and goats be given away, and the boys and youths who received them be told they were a present from Mu‘awiyah. After several days when the boys had become attached to the animals he ordered his men to gather the sheep and goats together again under the cover of night and in the morning say that they had been stolen by Ali (a.s.). By means of this stratagem he was able to institute hatred for Ali (a.s.) into their hearts. This is just a further example of the trickery and treachery of Mu‘awiyah.

Mu‘awiyah, this despicable criminal tyrant, imagined that by inflicting such difficulties and by subjecting them to such torture he would be able to turn Ali (a.s.), and his followers away from their divine goal. He imagined that he would be able to keep hold of the political power for ever, through deception and treachery of the people.

But the name of Ali (a.s.), his sons, his friends and followers will live until the end of time, shining like stars in the book of history, and the name of Mu‘awiyah, his father and his son Yazid and all their followers will always be remembered and cursed as bloodthirsty tyrants.

Mu‘awiyah had imprisoned many of the Shi‘ah supporters of Ali (a.s.) who were opposed to him and were fighting against tyranny and corruption. He ordered his officials to torture them or to have them buried alive in deep wells. Thus many of those Muslims who had strong faith (imam) and who refused to abandon true Islam died buried in dark pits, their hands, feet, ears and noses severed from their bodies. When-ever the prisons became so full of prisoners that there was no more room for their other victims his officials knew it was time to dispose of them by burying alive.

Such was Mu‘awiyah's animal-like behaviour towards the supporters of Ali (a.s.). Such was the devoted care he lavished on his agents that they carried out his orders for torture and execution with the smallest attention to detail; as a reward Mu‘awiyah would increase their rank or position and ordered them to receive payment from the public treasury (baytu'l-mal) of the Muslims.

In this fashion all the godless, ambitious men of the world were attracted into his service. Whatever traces of conscience, humanity or Islam they still possessed they sold in the hope of worldly gain.

Mu‘awiyah planted his spies amongst the people with the result that nobody felt free to speak even in the safety of his own home and nobody dared to mention the name of Ali (a.s.) or praise his action.

Fear and terror of Mu‘awiyah filled the hearts of all the people, except for those with particularly strong faith (iman) who were the Shi‘ahs of Ali (a.s.) ; the latter in no way feared the violence and torture of the agents of Mu‘awiyah. They were willing to undergo the most terrible kinds of torture, rather than relinquish Ali (a.s.), or true Islam. May Allah greet and bless them!

Mu‘awiyah had decided to erase the name of Ali (a.s.), his sons, his partisans and all those who had adopted the Shi‘ah path from the pages of history by means of these mean, despicable acts. He decided, moreover, to invite the people to love and respect the wretched and cursed Banu Umayyah tribe, so that the way would be open for his son to take up the reins of power. In order to achieve this despicable aim the killing, plundering, torture, tyranny, oppression and injustice continued unabated.

All these abominable actions had the opposite effect as we all know: The names of the Banu Umayyah dynasty and its supporters have become synonymous with oppression, corruption, treachery and the plundering of the Muslims' wealth.

The name of Ali (a.s.), his sons and supporters will live forever as the champions of divine guidance, of Truth and as defenders of the oppressed. These two opposing forces demonstrate the clear distinction between truth and falsehood.

Now it is up to you, reader, to choose one of these two ways.

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