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‘Ubaydullah, Son of Ziyad

Ziyad, the father of ‘Ubaydullah is commonly attributed with various fathers as his debauched mother was known to have committed adultery with many men; therefore, he is known by various names such as:

- Ziyad, son of his father;

- Ziyad, son of his mother;

- Ziyad, son of ‘Ubayd;

- Ziyad, son of Sumayyah.

His name has become linked to Mu‘awiyah for the same reason; indeed he is also known as the son of Abu Sufyan as it is believed his mother also slept with the latter. We can see from these and other examples that all the men who opposed the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his Shi‘ahs had immoral parents or grand-parents.

Four persons, in particular who became notorious for their opposition to Ali (a.s.) and his progeny, were illegitimate. The four, noted for their treachery, cunning and evil were Mu‘awiyah, ‘Amr bin Ziyad and al-Mughirah ibn Shu‘bah.

It was Ziyad who had the Shi‘ahs of Ali (a.s.) and other Muslim leaders captured and put them to death. Before killing them he would have his victims' arms and legs cut off and would blind them by thrusting a hot iron into their eyes. Ziyad, through hypocritical cunning, managed to worm his way into the Shi‘ah ranks and get to know the most important among them. After this despicable treachery he would order his men to take them prisoners and subject them to torture.

Ziyad was the first to employ bitter aloes (a plant used in small quantities for medicinal purposes) to poison the Shi `ahs of Ali (a.s.) and it was he who began the practice of burying his victims alive. It was Ziyad, too who encouraged the people to curse and slander Ali (a.s.).

‘Ubaydullah's mother (Marjanah) was notorious for her immorality.

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