

84304 - Ruling on calling one's son Mu'aawiyah and mention of some who bore this name

the question

My wife is a Muslim Saudi woman. She is originally from Persia. Some of her relatives do not feel very good towards the believers' uncle 'Mu'awiya Ben Abi Sufian', may Allah be pleased with him. She and I agreed to give the name "Mu'awiya" to our expected son in his defense. So that they may love our son, hence they may love the believers' uncle may Allah be pleased with him. Some of her relatives in the lands of Persia have some hateful Shiitic tendencies, so they slander Mu'awiya. As for her mother and father, they do not have an opinion. What is the ruling on giving the name Mu'awiya?.

Detailed answer

Firstly:

We appreciate the love that you and your wife have for the noble Sahaabi Mu'aawiyah ibn Abi Sufyaan (may Allaah be pleased with him) and we appreciate your efforts to convey this love to others who have been influenced by the Raafidi propaganda about him.

It was the way of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) to change bad names to good ones and Mu'aawiyah was one of the scribes who wrote down the Revelation. If his name has been bad, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would have changed it. Based on that, there is nothing wrong with calling your son Mu'aawiyah, especially since your intention is to make this Sahaabi beloved to some of your wife's relatives. Perhaps it is appropriate for you to learn about the life of this noble Sahaabi and to read what the ahl al-sunnah have written about his virtues and in defence of him, so that you will be able to confront the critics and spread news of the virtues of this noble Sahaabi.

The Raafidis – the Shi’ah – fabricate lies about sharee’ah, history and even the Arabic language. They make fun of the name of the noble Sahaabi Mu’aawiyah and take it as a joke, and they claim that what is meant by this name is “bitch”.

The response to that is as follows:

1.

Even if the meaning was “bitch”, the Arabs used to give people the names of animals based on their attributes, not because they were dumb beasts. So they used the names Jahsh (young donkey), Saqar (falcon), Dhi’b (wolf) and so on. The name Kalb (dog) was often given to their sons, tribes and settlements.

2.

They are lying when they claim that the name Mu’awiyah means “bitch”, because it is the word al-mu’awiyah with the definite article that means “bitch”. As for the word mu’aawiyah without the definite article, it means strength of the arm, and abu’l-mu’aawiyah means the lynx. This also invalidates their slander against his father Abu Sufyaan (may Allaah be pleased with him).

Ibn al-Manzoor (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

If the word ‘awaa (the root of mu’aawiyah) is used of a man, it means that he has reached his thirties and his arm has become strong and he is able to twist (‘awaa) the arm of another.

Lisaan al-‘Arab (15/107).

Al-Fayroozabaadi said:

Al-mu'aawiyah means bitch or fox cub. Without the definite article it is the name of the son of Abu Sufyaan the Sahaabi. Abu mu'aawiyah means a lynx.

Al-Qamoos al-Muheet (p. 1967).

Secondly:

With regard to giving him the name "maternal uncle of the believers" - as his sister Umm Habeebah was the Mother of the Believers - this is proven from some of the imams of Ahl al-Sunnah, chiefly Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allaah have mercy on him).

It was narrated from Abu Taalib that he asked Abu 'Abd-Allaah - Ahmad ibn Hanbal - about saying "Mu'aawiyah the maternal uncle of the believers" or "Ibn 'Umar the maternal uncle of the believers". He said: Yes, Mu'aawiyah was the brother of Umm Habeebah bint Abi Sufyaan, the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him and may Allaah have mercy on her), and Ibn 'Umar was the brother of Hafsah the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him and may Allaah have mercy on her). I said: Can I say Mu'aawiyah the maternal uncle of the believers? He said: Yes.

Al-Sunnah by al-Khallaal
(2/433), Dar al-Raayah edition.

It was narrated from Haroon ibn 'Abd-Allaah that he said to Abu 'Abd-Allaah -Ahmad ibn Hanbal - : A letter came to me from al-Raqqah saying that some people say: We do not say that Mu'aawiyah was the maternal uncle of the believers. He got angry and said: Why are they objecting to this matter? They should be shunned until they repent.

Al-Sunnah by al-Khallaal

(2/434).

It was narrated from Muhammad ibn Abi Haroon and Muhammad ibn Abi Ja'far that Abu'l-Haarith told them: We sent a note to Abu 'Abd-Allaah – Ahmad ibn Hanbal – saying: What do you say, may Allaah have mercy on you, about that who say: I will not say that Mu'aawiyah was the scribe of the revelation and I will not say that he was the maternal uncle of the believers, because he took the caliphate by the sword and by force? Abu 'Abd-Allaah said: These are bad words and these people should be avoided and shunned, and we should warn the people about them.

Al-Sunnah by al-Khallaal

(2/434)

It was narrated that Abu Bakr al-Marwadhi said: I said to Abu 'Abd-Allaah – Ahmad ibn Hanbal – Who is better, Mu'aawiyah or 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez? He said: Mu'aawiyah is better; we do not compare the companions of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) to anyone. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The best of mankind are my generation among whom I was sent."

Al-Sunnah by al-Khallaal

(2/434).

All the isnaads of these reports are saheeh as you will see in the examination of the book by Dr. 'Atiyah al-Zahraani.

Thirdly:

There follows a list of other Sahaabah who were called Mu'aawiyah from the book al-Isaabah fi Tamyeez al-Sahaabah, which indicates that this name was well known and commonly used.

Mu'aawiyah ibn Anas al-Sulami, Mu'aawiyah ibn Thawr ibn 'Ubaadah ibn al-Bakka' al-'Aamiri al-Bakkaa'i, Mu'aawiyah ibn Jaahimah ibn al-'Abbaas ibn Mardaas al-Sulami, Mu'aawiyah ibn al-Haarith ibn al-Muttalib ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, Mu'aawiyah ibn Hudayj, Mu'aawiyah ibn Hazn al-Qushayri, Mu'aawiyah ibn al-Hakam al-Sulami, Mu'aawiyah ibn Haydah ibn Mu'aawiyah ibn Qushayr ibn Ka'b ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Aamir ibn Sa'sa'ah al-Qushayri, Mu'aawiyah ibn Abi Rabee'ah al-Jarami, Mu'aawiyah ibn Sufyaan ibn 'Abd al-Asad, Mu'aawiyah ibn Suwayd ibn Muqrin al-Muzani, Mu'aawiyah ibn Sa'sa'ah al-Tameemi, Mu'aawiyah ibn 'Ubaadah ibn 'Aqeel, Mu'aawiyah ibn 'Abd-Allaah, Mu'aawiyah ibn 'Urwah al-Du'ali, Mu'aawiyah ibn 'Afeef al-Muzani, Mu'aawiyah ibn 'Amr, Mu'aawiyah ibn Qarmal, Mu'aawiyah ibn Muhsan ibn 'Alas, Mu'aawiyah ibn Mardaas ibn Abi 'Aamir, Mu'aawiyah ibn Mu'aawiyah al-Muzani, Mu'aawiyah ibn al-Mugheerah ibn Abi'l-'Aas ibn Umayyah al-Umawi, Mu'aawiyah ibn Muqrin al-Muzani, Mu'aawiyah ibn Nafee', Mu'aawiyah al-Thaqafi, Mu'aawiyah al-'Adhari, Mu'aawiyah al-Laythi and Mu'aawiyah al-Hudhali.

Al-Isaabah by al-Haafiz Ibn

Hajar (6/145-146).

In Siyar A'laam al-Nubala' there is a list of Taabi'een and others of the salaf who were also called Mu'aawiyah. See the index of al-Siyar (25/448).

And Allaah knows best.