



IMAM KHADHIM [A.S]

امام الكاظم (ع)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

JUNIOR LEVEL

Imam al-Kāḍim(as)



After the martyrdom of our sixth Imam, his son Imam Mūsā al-Kāḍim(as) became the next and seventh Imam.

The Imam (as) was born in Medina in the year 129 AH. His mother was called Ḥamidah, and she was the daughter of a noble man. Our seventh Imam took up his position of Imam at the age of 19 after his father Imam breathed his last. His period of Imam at lasted for 35 years.

The time in which Imam al-Kāḍim (as) lived was one in which the Muslim world was ruled by vicious tyrants from the Abbasid family. The Imam lived through the rule of some of the most cruel leaders such as al-Manṣūr ad-Dawāniqī, al-Mahdī and Hārūn al-Rashīd. These were the leaders who used to bury innocent people alive in walls, and put them into horrible dark dungeons. The reason people were tortured and killed in such a cruel manner was because they were followers of the Ahlul Bayt (as). When the cruel Hārūn came into power, he arrested the Imam and threw him into the dungeons of a dark prison. This is where Imam (as) spent the last 19 years of his life – in a prison which was so small that the

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Be introduced to Imam al-Kāḍim (as) as our 7th Imam
- Learn some basic biographical facts about the Imam
- Be introduced to the Imam's attribute of forbearance and suppressing his anger
- Learn some strategies to control anger
- Discuss the benefits of controlling one's anger including

Imam could barely stand straight and his meal was a meagre two dry slices of bread and a cup of water. The Imam was finally poisoned by this ruthless ruler in the prison in the year 183 AH, and he is buried in Baghdad in Iraq. The suburb in which he is buried is named al-Kāḍimmiyah in honour of the Imam. He has a very large and beautiful shrine in his honour, one which is visited by millions upon millions of people every year.

THE IMAM'S CHARACTER

The Imam (as) was known for his forbearance and patience. It was because of these noble qualities that the Imam was given the title of al-Kāḍim (as), which means, 'one who suppresses his anger'. He was the symbol of virtue and generosity. He devoted his nights to the prayers of God and his days to fasting. He always forgave those who did wrong to him. His kind and generous attitude towards the people was such that he used to help the poor and needy people of Medina and provide them with money, food, clothes and other necessities without them knowing. These people receiving these gifts wondered who this gentle soul was but it was only after the Imam's death that they find out that it was he who helping them.

THE IMAM'S TIME IN PRISON



Our noble Imam was not only pious and generous, but he also treated everyone equally, even if it was the guards of the prison.

One of the prisons the Imam (as) was placed in was guarded by a many called Yaḥyā. During his stay in prison, the Imam was kind and always talked nicely to everyone, even the ruthless guard who kept him in prison. Soon this guard realised what a noble character the Imam had and felt guilty for keeping such a person in prison.

The king found out and decided to change the prison and so he took the Imam another prison. Again here the kindness and politeness of the Imam made the guard love the Imam (as).

In the end, the cruel Abbasid Caliph, Hārūn, poisoned the food of the Imam in the prison of Baghdad, and the Imam (as) was martyred.

SUPPRESSION OF ANGER

Our Imam shows us during his life that no matter how horrible someone is to us, we should always be nice to them and soon they will realise that what they have been doing is wrong.

There are several moments in our life when we get angry or upset, and if anyone happens to talk to us at that point, we may either ignore them or take the other extreme of screaming and yelling at them. Anger is an emotional state that can vary from being mild to very aggressive. Anger can be caused by both internal things such as pain or tiredness and external issues such as a person or colleague who is treating us badly.

Every individual deals with anger issues in their own way. Our noble Imam al-Kāḍim (as) shows us how to deal with anger, and that is through patience and being merciful even to the most ruthless of people. Yes, it is easier said than done, but we can try and practise at least a little bit of what our Imams tell us.

Some ways in which we can deal with our anger and try and suppress it are:

- Take three deep breaths, slowly through nose and out through mouth.
- Count to 10.
- Stretch.
- Remind yourself of what is going well instead of wrong.

- Share that you are feeling frustrated/scared/angry or whatever by speaking calmly to the person around you
- Think of happy memories
- Remind yourself that your anger will make things worse
- Before you do what your anger is urging you to do, think about the consequences of the angry action you are about to take

Lastly, remember how our Imam used to deal with the guards of the prison, and try to emulate him.

BENEFITS OF SUPPRESSING ANGER

A person who is always angry is usually not liked by people. We have to try to avoid getting angry whether it is at home; at school or even just while playing a simple game. Every time we feel angry and want to take it out on someone else, we should ask ourselves ‘would i like it if this person got angry at me for no reason?’ The obvious answer is ‘no!’, therefore we should behave with others how we would like them to behave with us. Let us look at some of the benefits of suppressing our anger.

- Often the result of anger is hurting others and then regretting it. Think about times when you have been angry with your mother only because she asked you to help her with some house work and you were “busy” playing the Wii, and so you angrily told her ‘No!’ And then one day you realise what you did was wrong. This very feeling of regret bites hard and sometimes it may be too late to apologise. Always remember, it may be very easy to hurt someone through our words and actions, but it can be very hard to mend that action.
- We may unconsciously or consciously cause damage and harm to ourselves and others. A good example of this can be seen in a game of soccer. A small argument can lead to a huge fight and this can result in someone getting seriously hurt or ending up in hospital. In order for us to avoid putting ourselves and others in trouble, we need to be strong and suppress any form of anger we may feel. Again we need to remind ourselves of how our dear Imam al-Kāḍim (as) would remain calm at all times.

- Another benefit of suppressing our anger is that we can have better communication with the other party. Often getting angry can lead to one saying things he or she does not mean and this can lead to misunderstandings. Suppression of anger can lead us to talk to one another politely and calmly coming up with solutions.
- A common problem we face in our community is swearing. Remember, swearing is ḥarām and is definitely not the practise of our Imam. Swearing comes as a result of being angry, hence controlling that anger will make one swear less too!

A TRULY STRONG PERSON

One day, the Prophet (saw) was walking and saw a group of boys trying to push a large rock from one part of the street to another. The Prophet (saw) asked them what they were doing. They said they were having a competition to see who was the strongest. The Prophet (saw) said to them: ‘the strongest is not the one who can push the rock the furthest. The strongest is the one who can control his anger the best!’.

If we want to show our real strength and toughness, we should show it by controlling our anger.

CLASS ACTIVITY

Each of you has a copy of the following questions. Answer them in the space below, and discuss the answers in groups with your teacher.

1. How do you know when you are angry?

2. What is the first sign of anger you notice? List your early warning signs that tell you when you are starting to become angry.

3. What makes you angry? List all the things you can think of... all the way from small annoyances to big problems.

4. How do you usually react when you feel angry?

5. Think about the last time you reacted in an unhealthy or negative way to anger. What happened right before you got angry?

6. How did you react?

7. How did you feel after you reacted?

8. What could you have done instead?

9. What would happen if you were to react in a more positive way?