

KARBALA

كربلاء

Objectives >>>

Students should understand:

- Discuss the differences between Imam Ḥusayn (as) and Yazīd including
- Be introduced to a brief outline of Imam Ḥusayn (as) journey from Medina to Karbala
- Be able to recall part of the family tree of the Imam (as):
- Discuss the story of ‘Abdullāh and how he died in Karbala

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 2

Karbalā’

On the tenth day of Muḥarram in the year 61 AH, a cruel man and an enemy of Islam brutally killed our third Imam and his pure family. Who remembers the name of our 3rd Imam?

So, why did Yazīd kill Imam Ḥusayn (as)?

This is because Ḥusayn (as) refused to give his hand in allegiance to Yazīd. This means that Imam Ḥusayn (as) did not accept Yazīd as his leader or the leader of the Muslims.

Do you know why?

Because Yazīd was a very bad, sinful man who couldn't be trusted to lead people in the right Islamic manner. Therefore, Ḥusayn (as), to save Islam, was ready to sacrifice (give up) his life and the lives of his family for the sake of Islam.

If it wasn't for Ḥusayn (as) then we wouldn't know Islam as we know it today.

IMAM ḤUSAYN (AS) VS. YAZID

So why wouldn't Imam Ḥusayn (as) accept Yazīd as a leader?

Let us see what kind of a person Yazid was and compare it to the life & personality of Imam Ḥusayn (as). After reading the table below, you can discuss with your teacher who you think would be better to be a leader for Islam:

Imam Ḥusayn (as)	Yazīd (God’s curse be upon him)
When Yazid’s men stopped Imam Ḥusayn (as) in a desert known as Karbala, Imam Ḥusayn (as) made sure that all the enemies and their horses had a drink of water.	On the other hand, Yazīd and his army stopped all water from reaching Imam Ḥusayn (as) camp for 3 whole days! For three days, Imam Ḥusayn (as), his women and his children including a young baby stayed thirsty.
Imam Ḥusayn (as) had a very pure lifestyle. He would stay up during the night to pray & would feed the poor.	Yazīd, however, led a very sinful lifestyle. He would drink alcohol and take poor people’s money to use it on things like his palace.

So after looking at the table— do you think Yazīd could be a leader of Islam?

Of course not! Imam Ḥusayn (as) knew this and therefore he sacrificed *everything* he had to save our religion.

Class Discussion

How can we make sure what Imam Ḥusayn (as) did does not go to waste? Discuss with your teacher ways that we can thank our Imam for saving our religion. For example, one way is to follow what he taught us in this world; for example, through his actions he taught us that we must help people in need however we can.

HOW DID IMAM HUSAYN (AS) GET TO KARBALA?

Imam Ḥusayn (as) left his hometown of Medina with the intention to go to Mecca. When he was in Mecca, he heard that some of the enemies and the friends of Yazīd wanted to kill him. Imam Ḥusayn (as) did not want any blood to be shed in the Holy city of Mecca where the Ka’bah is, so he left before they could attack him.

Where did Imam Husayn (as) plan to go from there?



Imam Ḥusayn (as) planned that he would go to Kūfah where people were asking him to come and save them from Yazīd. Look at the map which shows the Imam’s journey.

On his way there, a man named Ḥurr stopped Imam Ḥusayn (as). Ḥurr was from the army of Yazīd and he stopped Imam Ḥusayn (as) at a desert called ‘Karbala’. He told Imam Ḥusayn (as) that they all must stay here and that they cannot go to Kūfah and nor can they go back to Medina.

It was in this deserted land, by the name of Karbala, that Imam Ḥusayn (as) and his pure family were slaughtered (killed) by the men of Yazīd. In our next lesson we will discuss what happened in Karbala.

Class Activity: Find-a-Word

- KARBALA**
- MUHARRAM**
- HUSAYN**
- ISLAM**
- KUFA**
- MECCA**
- MADINA**

I S L A M A G H G P
 M O H M F S Q U G P
 P N U U K X W S Q H
 H F K H N P T A K U
 Q D M A D I N Y A S
 Y Z R R Q W K N R A
 K Z V R I Q A F B I
 U V Y A Z I D S A N
 F M Q M E C C A L D
 A S B J B N J K A G

Review Questions

Q1. Why did Imam Ḥusayn (as) refuse to hand over leadership to Yazīd?

- Because Imam Ḥusayn (as) wanted it all to himself
- Because Yazīd was not a good Muslim and so he can never be trusted to lead the Muslims
- None of the above

Q2. Imam Ḥusayn (as) left Mecca

- Because he wanted to go to Karbala
- Because he wanted to go to Kūfah
- Because he wanted to go back to Medina

Lesson 2: Imam Ḥusayn & His Family

We know, Imam Ḥusayn (as) was the youngest member of the Ahlul Bayt and the only one of them that was still alive when the event of Karbala happened.

So, who from Imam Ḥusayn’s (as) family was present in Karbala?

ZAYNAB AND ‘ABBAS

ZAYNAB (AS)

Zaynab (as) was the sister of Imam Ḥusayn (as). She was the brave woman who took care of all the women and children of Imam Ḥusayn’s (as) family after his martyrdom (death). Her shrine is in Shām. She passed on the message of the Imam after he was killed.

‘ABBAS (AS)

‘Abbas was the half-brother of Imam Ḥusayn (as); this means that they had the same father (Imam ‘Ali) but different mothers. ‘Abbas was very loyal to his Imam and brother and was always helping him and supporting him. On the day of ‘Ashurā’, ‘Abbas did all he could to protect the Imam and his family, and ended up giving his life for the sake of his Imam and his religion.

He is buried in Karbala and he has a beautiful shrine which is visited by many people around the world.

IMAM ḤUSAYN’S THREE SONS

Imam Ḥusayn had three sons who were present in Karbala:

‘ALI AL-AKBAR

Ali-Akbar was the oldest son of Imam Ḥusayn (as); his mother’s name was Layla. Ali al-Akbar looked exactly like the Prophet Muḥammad (saw). He fought bravely in Karbala and sacrificed his life. He is buried in Karbala next to his father, Imam Ḥusayn (as).



IMAM AL-SAJJAD

Imam al-Sajjad (as) is our fourth Imam and also the son of Imam Ḥusayn (as). He was present in Karbala but he could not fight because he was very ill. He could not even walk out of bed. Despite his illness, the enemy tortured him and took him as a prisoner.

ALI AL-ASGHAR

Ali al-Asghar was the youngest child and the baby of Imam Ḥusayn (as). His mother's name was Rabāb. He was the youngest martyr of Karbala and is buried next to his father, Imam Ḥusayn (as), in Karbala.

IMAM ḤUSAYN'S DAUGHTER

RUQAYYAH

Imam Ḥusayn (as) also had a daughter present in Karbala. Her name was Ruqayyah. We are not too sure of her age but we know she was very young. With all the other women & children, Ruqayyah was taken prisoner and treated badly. She died in Shām because of how badly she was treated.

IMAM HUSAYN'S NEPHEW

QĀSIM

Qāsim was the son of Imam Ḥasan (as) and the nephew of Imam Ḥusayn (as). He was present in Karbala and ready to fight for Imam Ḥusayn (as). Although very young, Qāsim was not afraid to die. When Imam Ḥusayn (as) asked him his understanding of death; Qāsim replied:

“Death is sweeter than honey”

He is also buried in Karbala along with the other martyrs of Karbala.



THE STORY OF ALI AL-ASGHAR

The army of Yazād had stopped all water supplies from going to Imam Ḥusayn (as) and his family. Unfortunately, they had no mercy or pity and didn't even give any water to the young baby of the Imam.

So Imam Ḥusayn (as) took baby Ali to the enemy's camp and lifted him up high. He told the army of Yazīd that this was an innocent baby who could not harm them and was not their enemy. He asked why they would not give him water.

Some of the soldiers started to cry as they felt pity. However, the leader of the army asked an evil man by the name of Ḥarmala to kill this young baby. Ḥarmala shot an arrow into the neck of baby Ali. Ali began to bleed from his neck.

Imam Ḥusayn (as) put his hand on his baby's neck, collected the blood and threw it up to the heavens, saying:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

“Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return” [2:156]

THE DAY OF 'ASHURĀ'

On the 10th day of Muḥarram, the first month of the Islamic calendar, Imam Ḥusayn (as) and the family members we have talked about, faced an enemy of 30,000 people. The Imam had only 72 soldiers with him to face this huge enemy. By the end of the day, the enemy killed the Imam (as) as well as all of his soldiers.

We remember what happened on this day every year, because it reminds us about how important our religion is.

Class Activity

Using the letters; find the names of the members of Imam Ḥusayn's family:

His Grandfather (Mother's Father):

M A M U M H D A

His Father:

L A I

His Mother:

A F T M I A

His Brother:

A H S N A

Review Questions

Q1. How many sons of Imam Husayn (as) were present in Karbala?

- a. Four
- b. Six
- c. Three
- d. Only one

Q2. Who was the youngest martyr of Karbala?

- a. Imam Ḥusayn (as)
- b. Ali-Akbar
- c. Ali-Asghar