

The Journey of Imām ‘Alī as-Sajjād (a.s.): Reforming Hearts

Grade 7 Islamic Studies Class Lecture

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Describe the difficult situation faced by Imām ‘Alī as-Sajjād (a.s.) after Karbalā’.
 - Explain how the Imām guided people through **prayer, knowledge, good character, and service to others**.
 - Understand the importance of **Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah as-Sajjādiyyah** and **Risālat al-Ḥuqūq**.
 - Identify lessons that we can apply in our own lives.
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1. Introduction: A New Responsibility

we are going to learn about the fourth Imām of the Ahlul Bayt, **Imām ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn (a.s.)**, who is also known as **Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.)**.

The title **as-Sajjād** means *the one who performs many (prostrations)*.

After the tragedy of Karbalā’ and the martyrdom of his father, Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.), Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) became the Imām and guide of the Muslim community.

However, his time was very different from the time of his father.

The Muslim community was living under political pressure, fear, and confusion. Many people were afraid to openly support the Ahlul Bayt.

So, Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) had an important question to answer:

How can we guide people and reform society when speaking openly may put people in danger?

The Imām chose a powerful path: **he began reforming people's hearts.**

2. A Difficult Time After Karbalā’

After Karbalā’, Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) returned to Medina.

This was a very difficult period. The rulers were suspicious of the Ahlul Bayt, and many people were afraid to openly show their support.

The Imām could not simply gather large crowds and openly challenge the rulers.

Instead, he focused on something deeper.

He worked to:

- strengthen people's relationship with Allah,
- teach Islamic morals,
- remind people of the true teachings of Islam,
- preserve the message of Karbalā’,
- and train people through knowledge and good character.

Think About It

Question: If you are not allowed to speak openly on an important issue, what other ways could you use to bring positive change?

Let students discuss ideas such as:

- education,
 - patience,
 - good character,
 - speaking wisely,
 - helping others,
 - and leading by example.
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3. The Powerful Weapon of Du‘ā’

Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) used a weapon that no ruler could easily take away from him:

Du‘ā’ — Prayer and Supplication

The Imām taught people through his beautiful prayers.

These were not only personal prayers. Through his du‘ās, he taught people about:

- Allah,
- forgiveness,
- gratitude,
- patience,
- justice,
- good character,
- helping others,
- and our responsibilities towards society.

His prayers helped educate people spiritually and morally.

Important Lesson

The strongest way to change the world is to work on spirituality.

4. Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah as-Sajjādiyyah: A School for the Heart

One of the greatest treasures left by Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) is:

Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah as-Sajjādiyyah

It is a famous collection of supplications attributed to Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.).

But this book is much more than simply a collection of prayers.

It teaches us about:

- worshipping Allah,
- thanking Allah,
- asking for forgiveness,
- treating parents with kindness,
- caring for neighbours,
- helping others,
- dealing with difficulties,
- and improving our character.

Class Question

Why do you think Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) taught people through du‘ā’?

Possible answer:

Because du‘ā’ teaches us about Allah, but it can also teach us how to become better human beings.

5. Never Forgetting Karbalā’

Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) kept the memory and message of Karbalā’ alive.

He reminded people of the suffering and sacrifice of his father, Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.), and the companions of Karbalā’.

Historical reports describe how the Imām would become deeply emotional when reminded of the thirst and suffering experienced by his father and family.

These reminders were important because Karbalā’ was not only about a battle.

Karbalā’ teaches us about:

- standing for truth,
- refusing to support injustice,
- courage,
- sacrifice,
- loyalty,
- and obedience to Allah.

Remember

Remembering Karbalā’ means remembering its lessons.

It should inspire us to ask:

Am I standing for what is right?

6. Mercy and Forgiveness

One of the most beautiful qualities of Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) was his excellent **akhlāq**, or Islamic character.

He was known for:

- kindness,
- generosity,
- patience,
- forgiveness,
- and helping those in need.

Even when dealing with people who had been unfriendly or unjust towards him and his family, the Imām demonstrated dignity and mercy.

This teaches us an important lesson.

Being powerful does not mean taking revenge.

Sometimes, true strength means:

- controlling your anger,
- forgiving others,
- helping someone who needs help,
- and responding to bad behaviour with wisdom and good character.

Class Discussion

Imagine that someone has treated you badly.

What are two possible responses?

1. React with anger and revenge.
2. Respond with patience and wisdom.

Which response would Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) encourage us to choose?

7. Risālat al-Ḥuqūq: The Treatise of Rights

Another important work associated with Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) is:

Risālat al-Ḥuqūq — The Treatise of Rights

This work teaches us that we have responsibilities and rights in many areas of life.

For example, we have responsibilities towards:

- Allah,
- ourselves,
- our parents,
- our family,
- our teachers,
- our neighbours,
- and other people in society.

Activity

Ask students to choose one of the following:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Friends
- Neighbours
- Brothers and sisters

Then answer:

What are three rights or responsibilities that I should remember?

8. The Legacy of Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.)

Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) lived during a very difficult period.

He did not lead his mission through armies or political power.

Instead, he built a strong foundation through:

- **du‘ā’**,
- **knowledge**,
- **good character**,
- **patience**,
- **service to others**,
- **and preserving the message of Karbalā’**.

His efforts helped preserve and strengthen the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt.

The Imāms who came after him, including **Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (a.s.)** and **Imām Ja‘far aṣ-Ṣādiq (a.s.)**, were able to further spread Islamic knowledge and teach many students.

What Can We Learn from Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.)?

Lesson 1: Stay Connected to Allah

When life becomes difficult, do not give up.

Turn towards Allah through:

- prayer,
- du‘ā’,
- patience,
- and trust in Him.

Lesson 2: Good Character Is Powerful

You do not always need to argue or fight to influence others.

Your good behaviour can sometimes teach people more than your words.

Lesson 3: Remember the Lessons of Karbalā’

Karbalā’ teaches us to stand for truth and justice.

Lesson 4: Forgiveness Shows Strength

Being able to control anger and forgive others requires great strength.

Lesson 5: Everyone Has Rights

We must respect and fulfil our responsibilities towards our:

- parents,
- teachers,
- friends,
- neighbours,
- and society.

Key Words

Word	Meaning
Imām	A divinely appointed guide and leader
as-Sajjād	The one who performs many prostrations

Word	Meaning
Du‘ā’	Supplication or prayer to Allah
Munājāt	A private and intimate conversation with Allah
Akhlāq	Islamic morals and good character
Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah as-Sajjādiyyah	A famous collection of supplications attributed to Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.)
Risālat al-Ḥuqūq	The Treatise of Rights
Karbalā’	The place where Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.) was martyred

Class Review Questions

1. Who was Imām ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn (a.s.)?
 2. Why was guiding the Muslim community difficult after Karbalā’?
 3. What was one important method Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) used to educate people?
 4. What is **Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah as-Sajjādiyyah**?
 5. What does **akhlāq** mean?
 6. What are some lessons we learn from the tragedy of Karbalā’?
 7. What does **Risālat al-Ḥuqūq** teach us about?
 8. How can we follow the example of Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) in our daily lives?
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Final Message

Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) showed us that even when society is surrounded by darkness, one person can bring light through faith, knowledge, patience, prayer, and good character.

The Imām reformed society by first helping people **reform their hearts**.

The question for us today is:

What can I do to improve my own heart, character, and relationship with Allah?

Homework

Write **one paragraph** answering:

Which quality of Imām as-Sajjād (a.s.) inspires you the most, and how can you practise that quality in your daily life?