

Chapter Eight: Martyrdom

One of the most striking features of present day Iranian education is the tremendous emphasis on the issue of martyrdom, to the extent that one can metaphorically say that Iranian school students are brought up in a bloody atmosphere. Martyrdom is dealt with in the Iranian school textbooks in two main contexts:

1. *The traditional context of the martyred Shiite Imams.*
2. *The national context of the Islamic revolution and the eight-year war with Iraq (1980-88).*

A. Martyrdom in General

Martyrdom is presented to the school students as an Islamic ideal to be followed by the believers.

Exalted God orders the Believers in many verses in the Holy Koran to fight the Jihad in the cause of God and kill the oppressors. He gives the glad tidings of forgiveness and eternal Paradise to anyone who becomes a martyr in the cause of God. He considers martyrdom a great victory.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) p. 72

Suggestion

This suggestion is intended to show the influence which the Divine insight regarding Paradise has on the creation of a martyrdom-seeking spirit and spiritual courage. It would be good for the teacher to stress the [necessity of] complying with this suggestion, encourage the students to [do] so, and to set up in class the assembled collection [of martyrs' wills, etc.].

Religion and Life – Teacher's Guide, Grade 10, Part 1 (2004) p. 162

...O Martyrs, your cry echoes in the ear of time...

Iranian National Anthem, **Art Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) back cover**

I and Hasan took a magazine from the shelf and busied ourselves in browsing [through it]. In one of the magazine's pages we encountered a martyr's will... At the top of the page there was a [Persian] translation of a Koranic verse:

"Never think that those who were slain in the cause of God are dead. They are alive, and well provided for by their Lord." [Al Imran, 169] Part of the martyr's will read: "How delightful is martyrdom in the cause of God. I will fight the enemy in this land to such a degree that victory and success become my share, or I attain the high degree of martyrdom. If I am found worthy of becoming a martyr for Islam and [for the] Koran, congratulate my mother, because I have gone to God's party. Truly, how good and desired is a death in the cause of God... It is the beginning of eternal life..."

Hasan asked: "Dear uncle, how does a martyr go to God's party? What is the meaning of martyrdom?" Uncle said: "We will talk about this issue after breakfast, God willing."

What is meant by martyrdom?

Maryam asked: "Dear uncle, what is meant by martyrdom?"

Uncle said: "Martyrdom means that 'we fight the infidels and the oppressors in the cause of God and by order of a providential leader until we are killed.' The martyr creates pride, glory and honor in this world, and also attains the highest ranks in the Hereafter, and is seated with the prophets and the pious and the good ones. He enjoys God's special favors, and the people of Paradise envy his rank."

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) pp. 14-16

Questions

- What is meant by martyrdom?
- Explain the martyr's rank in this world and in the Hereafter.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) p. 18

Martyrdom-Seeking

Another important effect left on man's life by the acceptance of the Divine viewpoint regarding death is: welcoming death in God's cause, or martyrdom-seeking. For those who believe in the Eternal World, life in this world has no value in itself. Its [real] value is dependent on the eternal life. Therefore, if a day arrives, on which the preservation of this life is nothing but disgrace, they return this Divine trust with utmost enthusiasm, and perform their duty before God. Imam Ali used to say to his companions and followers:

"Hasten towards the battlefields, welcome death, and embrace it, because the martyrs in God's cause have a high position near God."

Islamic Viewpoint, Grade 11 (2004) p. 47

Of course, it should be known that the pleasure of the memory of death, or the welcoming of martyrdom, never means that the Believers do not value their own lives...

Islamic Viewpoint, Grade 11 (2004) p. 48

Lesson Four: Transition to the Other World

...The martyr Ahmad Reza Khadem, may his memory be honorable and his place be in eternal Paradise, wrote in a part of his esteemed will:

"A man is born into the world one day, and goes out of the world one day, and only his deeds remain. So, death is our fate, and it is better that a man be killed in the cause of his goal. Do not be sad at my death, because I live with exalted God and take my sustenance [from Him]. Only my body has remained amongst you. Do not be sad at my death, and do not wear black for me. Dear mother, I know that you will be sad at my death, but know that the people who are killed in the cause of God live and have joy near God. I hope that God will put me among His martyr servants."

This esteemed martyr, like all our martyrs, grasped the truth, and was completely right. Death is not the end of life, but, rather, a crossing [point] for the metamorphosis of man's life. A man does not disappear with death. Rather, he goes from this world to the other world. Death is a natural phenomenon and one should not fear it.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) p. 19

Imam Hussein said to his loyal companions, who were sitting awaiting martyrdom on the day of Ashura:

"O my loyal companions, O dignified ones, stand firm in the Jihad against the enemy, and in defense of religion, and know that death is like a bridge which delivers you from difficulties and hardships and transfers you to the eternal world. Is there a person to be found who will not wish to be transferred from a painful prison to a flourishing place and a beautiful garden? But for your enemies, death is like a bridge which transfers them from a beautiful palace to a difficult and a painful prison."

Describing death, Imam Sajjad has said:

"For the good-doing Believer, death is like taking off filthy and tormenting clothes, breaking fetters and chains off one's hands and legs, putting on, instead, nice and perfumed clothes, riding the best beasts, and going to the best houses. But for the infidel and the evil-doing person, it is like taking off comfortable and nice clothes, leaving beautiful and comfortable houses, putting on, instead, the filthiest and ugliest clothes, and moving into the most frightening and most painful houses."

In the light of the words of Imam Hussein and Imam Sajjad about death, who is the good-doing Believer who would fear death and martyrdom and accept disgrace and humiliation?

Questions

- Why is it that Muslims do not fear death and martyrdom, and never accept disgrace and humiliation?

Note: Bring to class, and read, the wills of some of the honored martyrs, and talk with each other about their content. In order to better understand the message and the wills of the martyrs, you can meet with their families.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) pp. 20-22

On the Day of Ashura', in the midst of the battle, the narrower the field became for the Lord of the Martyrs [Hussein] and some of his close companions, the more ablaze their faces would become and enthusiasm would be revealed in their hearts. He spoke to his companions [saying]:

"Be patient. Death is nothing but a bridge which lets you pass from the bank of difficulties to the bank of happiness, greatness, eternal Paradise and eternal affluence. Who among you would hate to move from prison to palace? My father [Ali] quoted the great Messenger [Muhammad, who said] that 'this world is the Believer's prison and the infidel's Paradise. Death is for the Believers a bridge for reaching Paradise and for the infidels it is a bridge to reach Hell and torment.'"

Islamic Viewpoint, Grade 11 (2004) pp. 47-48

Don't you see how sweetly and how peacefully a martyr dies?

Persian Literature, Grade 10 (2004) p. 174

The following pieces reflect the traditional Islamic ideal of the martyrs' elevated position.

The Imam [Ali] said: "Those are the sons of the best people. They are the sons of people who became martyrs in God's cause and for the support of God's Messenger."

Listen and Say

1. Who are the best people on earth in Ali's opinion?

Right, Wrong

2. The martyrs are the best people.

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) p. 92

The war was over. The battle-weary soldiers gathered with their commander in a corner of the battlefield. They were asking one another who had become a martyr. The commander of the Muslim army ordered one of the soldiers to search the battlefield and report on the martyred Jihad fighters. That soldier said: "... The martyrs were lying on the ground with their faces stained with blood. I involuntarily stood by each martyr I encountered, and saw in his pure face the magnificence and greatness of a real man... I was sitting next to the martyrs and saw the magnificence and greatness of altruism. The stars too came to watch one by one."

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) pp. 95-97

Bell of Composition [Class]

It was composition class

And thus the teacher said to us:

"Children, listen

My opinion is this:

The martyrs are [like] the sun"

Morteza said: "The martyr

Is like a red poppy"

A student said:

"He is like a lamp that burns in our house"

And another person said:

"He is [like] a tree that grows in the gardens"

Another one said: "The martyr

Is [like] a story full of events and beauty"

Mostafa said: "The martyr,

Like the number twenty,³⁵

Stays inside your heart's notebook and mine"

Persian, Grade 7 (2004) p. 21

I say [that] the martyr was a star

[That] appeared, whirled, and disappeared in blood

Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 153

The contents of the poems, writings and stories which have been influenced by Revolutionary culture... are as follows:

1. Praise of freedom and liberation, Jihad... martyrdom...

Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 105

³⁵ *Twenty is the highest mark in the Iranian school system, equivalent to A+ or 100% in Western ones.*

The contents existing in the works of the poets and writers of this period [of the Islamic Revolution] are as follows:

- A call to struggle and Jihad against the enemies and the oppressors.
- Glorification of the martyr and martyrdom.

Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 134

In the following lines, which were composed by some of the poets of the Revolution, there are concepts such as love, martyr, and martyrdom – which are among the Revolution's most central concepts.

...The martyr's coffin above the high wave of hands
Was colorful of blood, flowers and blossoming

Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 152

The following quotations deal with early Muslim martyrs, before the appearance of Shiism.

As a result of these tortures [by the pagans of Mecca], Yasser, Ammar's father, attained the high rank of martyrdom, and gave the Muslims the lesson of fortitude and piety with his patience and perseverance.

The infidels asked Sumayyah, who was watching her spouse's martyrdom, to talk abusively about Muhammad [and when she refused, they killed her]. ...She fell on the ground, and, while saying "God is greatest" and "there is no god except Allah", she surrendered her soul to the Creator of Souls and attained the high rank of martyrdom.

Sumayyah was the first brave lady who attained the grace of martyrdom in the cause of Islam.

Ammar's father and mother became martyrs. Ammar too was hurt and tortured in the cause of Islam... After the Prophet's death, Ammar was one of the loyal companions of the Commander of the Faithful [i.e., Ali], and took part in wars with him, until he attained his old wish and became a martyr in the battle of Siffin.

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 7 (2004) pp. 41-42

Yasser and Sumayyah were the first Muslim martyrs.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 101

In this battle [Uhud, 625 CE between the Muslims and the Meccan polytheists], 70 Muslims became martyrs. One of them was Hamzah bin Abd al-Muttalib, Lord of the Martyrs of the Uhud battle.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 108

B. The Martyrdom of the Shiite Imams and their Followers

The material of this section is available on the website.

Ali, the first Imam

After the Kharijites' defeat in the battle of Nahrawan, one of them was charged with the [mission of] killing of Ali. This man, whose name was Ibn Muljam, hit Ali's head with his poisoned sword in the mosque of [the city of] Kufa at dawn on the 19 of [the Muslim month of] Ramadan in the year 40 AH [661 CE], when Ali was busy performing the dawn prayer. Two days later, on the twenty-first of Ramadan, Ali attained martyrdom.

Social Studies, Grade 5 (2004) p. 92

On the 19th day of Ramadan in the year 40 AH, he [Ali] was injured in the mosque by one of the Kharijites by the name Ibn Muljam Muradi, and, two days later (21 of Ramadan), attained martyrdom.

History, Grade 7 (2004) p. 8

On the 19th day of Ramadan in the year 40 AH, one of the Kharijites called Ibn Muljam injured the Imam with a poisoned sword. This injury caused his martyrdom on the 21st of Ramadan.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 124

Ali attained martyrdom in the year 40 AH at the hands of Ibn Muljam Muradi

Persian – Teacher's Guide, Grade 7 (2003) p. 71

One of the enemies of God's religion made the Commander of the Faithful [Ali] a martyr in the mosque during prayer [time].

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 2 (2004) p. 39

He [Ali] fought all his life for the sake of truth, and, eventually, became a martyr in the cause of truth as well.

Persian, Grade 7 (2004) p. 9

One of Mu'awiyah's ugly policies, which his successors continued as well, was the policy of slandering Imam Ali... He martyred in a terrible manner some of the Shiites who protested [against this practice], including Hajar bin Udayy.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 127

Hasan, the second Imam

After a while, Imam Hasan was poisoned at Mu'awiyah's instigation, and attained martyrdom.

Social Studies, Grade 5 (2004) p. 94

...Having used instigation and false promises, he [Mu'awiyah] got Imam Hasan's wife to poison the Imam and make him a martyr.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 127

Like his father [Ali], Imam Hasan used to fight those who were unjust, and [also] the oppressors. For that, he eventually attained martyrdom.

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 2 (2004) p. 41

After a while, Mu'awiyah, who had always regarded Imam Hasan as a barrier on the road to realizing his own goals, poisoned him and made him a martyr.

History, Grade 7 (2004) p. 11

Hussein, the third Imam

In the end, on the tenth day of [the Muslim month of] Muharram (Ashura), in the lunar year 61 AH [10.10.681 CE], the Imam [Hussein] stood in the field of Karbala with his few but faithful companions against the numberless enemy army. The battle started in the morning and lasted until the afternoon. On that day, Imam Hussein and his companions fought bravely to their last breath, and became martyrs to the last one.

Social Studies, Grade 5 (2004) p. 95

Imam Hussein and his companions fought bravely, but, in the end they attained martyrdom at the hands of ignorant and oppressive people.

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 3 (2004) p. 45

Imam Hussein was kind to children, and helped the poor and the needy. But he was always fighting the oppressors. In the end, he became a martyr at the hands of oppressive people.

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 2 (2004) p. 44

In the end, all of Imam Hussein's companions, who fought bravely for keeping the religion of Islam alive, attained martyrdom. Abbas, Imam Hussein's brother, and Ali Akbar, his son, attained martyrdom in the battle of Karbala'. [Caliph] Yazid's soldiers did not even have mercy on Ali Asghar, his suckling child. Then Imam Hussein, who had lost all his companions, attacked the enemy army alone. Yazid's soldiers, who became afraid of his courage and self sacrifice, ran away. Only after the death of many of them did they manage to make him a martyr. Imam Hussein is the manifestation of courage and self sacrifice, and is the lord of martyrs in Islam.

History, Grade 7 (2004) pp. 12-13

On the day of Ashura' [Muharram 10] 61 AH, at bloody midday, Imam [Hussein] and his seventy-two loyal and faithful companions attained martyrdom. Hurr bin Yazid Riyahi, who had left Yazid's army and joined Imam Hussein before the battle, attained martyrdom [as well]. Yazid's soldiers galloped with their horses over the martyrs' bodies and impaled their pure heads on spears.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 129

Abu al-Fadl: Abbas bin Ali... He became a martyr in the day of Ashura'... in the battle of Karbala'. His mausoleum is in Karbala'.

Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) p. 185

Chief of the Martyrs [Imam Hussein]

Persian, Grade 7 (2004) p. 30

Lord of the Martyrs [Imam Hussein]
Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) p. 25

Through culture you understand that, in a place called Karbala', the Prophet's family members and the companions of Imam Hussein – although they were few in number – stood fighting with [Caliph] Yazid's soldiers, and became martyrs.

Sociology [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 21

Ta'ziyeh... which is considered a kind of religious art and religious show, is an example of dramatic literature in the Iranian style, which has long been performed in lamentation of the martyrs of Karbala' [i.e., Hussein and his companions]...

Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) p. 24

Following are excerpts from such a Ta'ziyeh traditional show which exalt martyrdom.

...O brother, the time has come for us two to be immersed in blood
To make the journey to eternal Paradise from this desert and plain
By the sharp and blood-shedding sword of the Jews³⁶ and the infidels' faction
To roll in dust and blood without hand and head, by the enemies oppression

...

It has become late for the time of sacrifice
I have no patience; it has become late for martyrdom

...

Martyrdom was my forefathers' inheritance...

Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) pp. 27, 29, 31

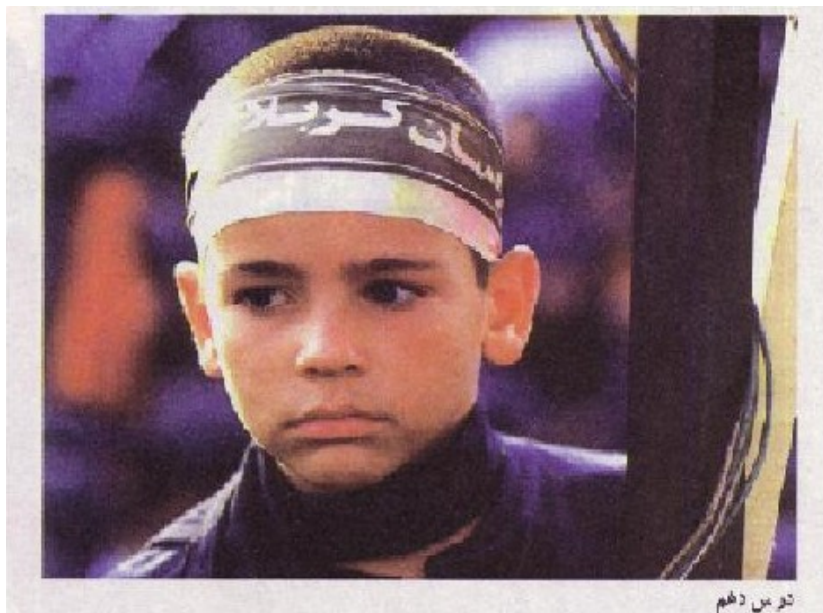
Excerpts from a poem by Armand Renault, a French poet of the nineteenth century, in praise of Hussein' martyrdom:

Hussein, after his father [Ali] and brother [Hasan]
Who both had become martyrs in the cause of God as well
Under the boot of tyranny,
Gave his soul
His companions were seventy-two in number
And his enemies – ten thousands
His wife and children
He had hidden behind a hill
Fire was raining from Heaven and the land was burning
The men were thirsty for glory
And the children [were] thirsty for water ...
Finally, Hussein, who had lost all his companions and children,
Himself as well fell to the ground, with a fissured and bloody body
From then on, every evening the skies have wept blood
And the mountain and desert beasts have groaned
But I do not cry; on the contrary, of those brave people who

³⁶ *No historical account ever mentions the participation of Jews in that battle. It seems that the term 'Jews', as well as the following term 'infidel', has been inserted in the text as derogatory terms for the caliph's forces.*

That day, on the field of Karbala
In an endless love for God
Gave away their own lives and existence,
I am jealous...

Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) pp. 182-183



[The Day of] Ashura [the Tenth of the Muslim month of Muharram – the martyrdom day of Imam Hussein in 681 CE] is the model for all days, and the martyrs of this great day are the leaders and a lesson to be taught to all noble martyrs. Wahab is one of the young and self-sacrificing guards who sacrificed his own life in the cause of the Koran and of his Imam on that day, and has taught the lesson of martyrdom and self sacrifice to all free youths...

Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) p. 35

Questions

2. What lesson did Wahab teach the free youths?

Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) p. 38

Ali Zein al-Abedin, or Sajjad, the fourth Imam

He was born in Medina thirty-eight years after the emigration of God's Prophet [Muhammad] to this city [from his native city of Mecca in 622 CE]. After fifty-seven years of fighting God's enemies he attained martyrdom. His name is Ali [fourth Shiite Imam]. He is the son of Imam Hussein...

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 3 (2004) p. 51

After a while, the Umayyad [caliphs] martyred Imam Sajjad [Ali, fourth Shiite Imam] as well.

History, Grade 7 (2004) p. 13

Finally, the Imam [Sajjad]... was poisoned upon the order of [the Umayyad caliph] Walid bin Abd al-Malik and attained martyrdom.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 132

In the period of the Umayyad rule, numerous revolts took place against them. One of these revolts was that of Zayd bin Ali bin al-Hussein [Zayd is the son of the fourth Shiite Imam and is followed as fifth Imam by the Zaydi Shiite sect of Yemen]... After Zayd's martyrdom, his son Yahya went to Khorasan in order to continue [his] father's revolt... In that battle Yahya bin Zayd attained martyrdom.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) pp. 152-153

Ja'far al-Sadeq, the sixth Imam

The Abbasid [caliphs], who regarded his [the sixth Shiite Imam – Ja'far al-Sadeq's] existence as an obstacle to their rule, made him a martyr.

History, Grade 7 (2004) pp. 16-17

His [the Shiites' sixth Imam Ja'far al-Sadeq's] contemporary [Abbasid] caliphs (Hadi and Harun al-Rashid) imprisoned the Imam. Eventually, the Imam attained martyrdom in the black pit of the Baghdad prison.

History of Iran and the World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 140

Musa Kazem, the seventh Imam

[The seventh Shiite] Imam Musa Kazem was a benevolent and a kind man. But, because of [his] opposition to the oppressors and the unjust ones, he was a prisoner for many years in the dreadful prisons of the Abbasid rulers. In the end he attained martyrdom, also in prison.

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 4 (2004) p. 31

At that time [Abbasid Caliph] Harun al-Rashid... imprisoned Imam Musa Kazem and later made him a martyr.

History, Grade 7 (2004) p. 17

How did the seventh Imam spend most of his Imamate period, and how did he eventually attain martyrdom?

Islamic Culture and religious Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) p. 97

Ridha [Reza in Persian pronunciation], the eighth Imam

In this manner [the Abbasid] Ma'mun became caliph [813 CE]. In order to obtain supporters, and having taken into consideration [the fact] that the Iranians were attached to the Shiite Imams, he compelled Imam Reza to come from Medina to [the Iranian province of] Khorasan, and made him his crown prince. Ma'mun's other aims in this action were: keeping an eye on Imam Reza, and preventing the revolts of the Shiites. But he did not attain either goal. For this reason he made the Imam a martyr. The three subsequent Imams, namely, Imam Jawad, Imam Hadi and Imam Hasan Askari, also continued to oppose the dishonest policies of the Abbasids. The Abbasid caliphs, on their part, imprisoned them and made them martyrs.

History, Grade 7 (2004) pp. 18-19

[The eighth Shiite] Imam Reza was not involved in [the Abbasid Caliph] Ma'mun's oppressive government and proceeded to guide the people only. He became an object of the people's regard and affection to such a degree that Ma'mun perceived [his] danger and made him a martyr.

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 4 (2004) p. 40

[The city of] Mash'had: It is the headquarters of the Province of Khorasan. Imam Reza was buried in this city after his martyrdom, and, for this reason, this city is called Reza's martyrdom place [*mash'had-e Reza*] or [just] Mash'had.

Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) p. 194

Muhammad Taqi, or Jawad, the ninth Imam

The oppressive Abbasid Caliph Mu'tasem knew that the [religious] commentaries of this knowledgeable Imam [the ninth Shiite Imam – Muhammad Taqi (also known by the name Jawad)] would lead to the annihilation of his own power... For this reason he summoned Jawad from the city of Medina to Baghdad, his own capital, and after several months made him a martyr. Imam Jawad was not more than twenty five years at the time of [his] martyrdom.

Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) p. 50

The people loved Imam Muhammad Taqi and used to learn from him the religious precepts. They used to name him Imam Jawad ['generous'] because he was very merciful and generous. The Abbasid oppressive ruler, who was afraid of the people's awakening and understanding, sent Imam Jawad by force from Medina to Baghdad. After several months, at the age of twenty-five, he made him a martyr.

Gifts of Heaven, Grade 4 (2004) p. 46

Hadi, the tenth Imam

Imam Hadi [tenth Shiite Imam] lived 42 years in this world. During that period, he always confronted the Abbasid oppressive caliphs and fought their oppression. In the end, he became a martyr in Samarra [the caliph's capital at that time] on the third day of [the Muslim month of] Rajab in 254 AH.

Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) p. 53

Hasan al-Askari, the eleventh Imam

Imam Hasan Askari [eleventh Shiite Imam] attained at the age of 28 the high position of martyrdom, at the end of the road of fighting the Abbasid bloodthirsty rulers. The martyrdom of this honorable Imam took place on the eighth day of [the Muslim month of] Rabi' al-Awwal, 260 AH, in the city of Samarra.

Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) p. 57

C. Martyrdom in Modern Context

I. Martyrdom for the Sake of Iran and the Revolution is an Ideal Taught in Class

"Being immersed in the culture of martyrdom and martyrs" (Defense Readiness 1, 2 – Teacher's Guide, High School Grades (2002) p. 2) is the motto of class discussion on this issue.

Chapter 1: Islam and the Islamic Revolution

General and educational goals of this chapter:

It is expected from the students that:

- ...
- They give a description of the life and thoughts of Mohammad Ali Rajayi and of Mohammad Javad Tondguyan, two of the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution.
- They give a description of the importance of the rank of martyrs, prisoners-of-war and freed [prisoners] of the eight-year Holy Defense [against Iraq, 1980-88].
- They present in class examples of memories [written] by martyrs and freed [prisoners-of-war] they heard of or read.
- ...

Persian – Teacher's Guide, Grade 7 (2003) p. 67

Lesson 3: Son of the Nation

Educational Goals:

At the end of this lesson the students should:

- ...
- Be acquainted with the life and moral characteristics of the martyr Mohammad Ali Rajayi.

Persian – Teacher's Guide, Grade 7 (2003) p. 74

Lesson 4: Example of Resistance and Altruism

Educational Goals:

At the end of this lesson the students should:

- ...
- Be acquainted with the personality of the martyr Mohammad Javad Tondguyan.

Persian – Teacher's Guide, Grade 7 (2003) p. 75

The following piece in a fourth-grade textbook advocating martyrdom for the sake of the homeland:

If Iran were in danger one day, what value will my life have, as compared to that? At that time, I shall defend my homeland like the Jihad fighters [*mojahedan*]. The enemy will be defeated and I will ward him off [and render him] unsuccessful. In order to preserve my country's power and independence, I will go to meet martyrdom, and will eagerly give my life.

Because I believe that honorable death is better than humiliating life.

If we are all to be killed

It is still better than giving our country to the enemy...

Persian, Grade 4 (2004) p. 143

O dear Iran, you have seen men, women, and even children, who have sacrificed their lives and attained martyrdom in the cause of your independence and liberty.

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) pp. 102-103

Altruism and Self Sacrifice

...Altruism means not being concerned for oneself and attaching more importance to others than to oneself. Altruism has various meanings... The one who gives his own life in the cause of God and for the reform of society also practices altruism. Giving [one's] life, or martyrdom, is the highest degree of altruism.

You have read in history lessons that in the uprising of [the Iranian month of] Khordad 15 (1342) [June 5, 1963], and in the Islamic revolution (1357) [1978], the people rose to fight the Shah's oppressive government. In this cause, some of them gave their lives and became martyrs.

You can also find examples of the people's altruism and self sacrifice in the war with Iraq which was imposed [on us]... Many among the brave and faithful youths and boys of our country have become martyrs in this cause. In fact, our Muslim homeland has stood its ground thanks to the people's altruism and self sacrifice.

Discussion in Class

There are many films and books about the Islamic Revolution and the Imposed War, in which the people's altruism and self sacrifice have been shown.

- Repeat in front of the class examples of altruism and self sacrifice you saw in films or read in books.
- What would have been the war's result, in your opinion, without the altruism and self sacrifice of the popular forces?
- Do you know the name of these popular forces?



The pupils' *Basij*

The *Basij* ['Mobilization'] was first formed in 1358 [1980] by order of Imam Khomeini. Many [people] from [all] circles of the population, such as students, schoolchildren, physicians, workers, engineers, administrative employees, are members of the *Basij*.

Throughout the eight years of Holy Defense, school students practiced altruism and self sacrifice, whether at the front or in supportive and preparatory tasks.

Social Studies, Grade 5 (2004) pp. 156-158

Are the martyrs forgotten?

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) p. 76

The martyr is the heart of history.

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) p. 118

[It is necessary] to glorify and honor the courageous men and women, who lovingly and generously brought their property, life and sons to the battlefield of Jihad, and offered them to the Loved One [i.e., God]. A nation which does not appreciate its great people will not be great. Being immersed in the culture of martyrdom and martyrs... is [like] lighting a lamp on the path taken by the movement of the Revolutionary generation. Today's sons should know who their fathers, sisters and brothers were, what they did, and with the help of what inner strength they went through minefields and, under a rain of lead and fire... shouted in memory of the Imam of [the day of] Ashura' [Hussein]:

"Death is but a bridge which carries you over from suffering and distress to spacious Paradise and permanent favors." [A saying by Imam Hussein on the Day of Ashura', Arabic]

"Death is but a bridge which brings you from suffering and hardships to the spacious Paradise and the Divine permanent favors." [Persian translation]

Such glorification and honoring can take various forms, such as... inviting family members of the martyrs, and presenting wonderful and exciting examples of resistance, self sacrifice, belief and spirituality on the [battle] fronts.

Defense Readiness 1 – Teacher's Guide, High School Grades (2002) p. 2; Defense Readiness 2 – teacher's Guide, High School Grades (2002) p. 2

As part of their homework, the students are given an assignment to draft a letter to their municipal authorities with various requests and suggestions. One of the guiding examples indicates the importance of martyrs in Iranian public life.

Honorable Municipality of...

Greetings.

...A square has been built in our neighborhood and no name has yet been chosen for it. It is requested that you issue an order to name this square in memory of the commander of the battlefronts of truth against falsity, the martyr Ali Bastami.

Thank you.

A group of students of ... school

Crafts and Techniques Instruction, Grade 8 (2004) p. 96

Another exercise teaches the student to write a letter of condolence to a martyr's relative.

A Letter of Condolences

In God's name

We belong to God and to Him we are bound to return

My dear teacher,

With a grieving heart I congratulate [you] and offer [you my] condolences [on the occasion] of the martyrdom of your heroic brother under oppressive conditions...

Persian Language, Grade 9 (2004) p. 113

Another school assignment treats the local aspect of martyrdom.

Write down the names of three persons from among the martyrs of your village or town.

Persian, Grade 6 (2004) p. 26

In another assignment the student is requested to end the story by himself.

Self Testing

Looking at the beginning of the following story, give it an appropriate ending and choose for it an appropriate name.

"He was dying, but not of the mine's explosion, or even of the coup-de-grace fire of the Iraqis, but, rather, of gladness..."

Persian Language, Grade 10 (2004) p. 64

In the following quotation, the martyrs are used as a means to pressure teachers to do their duty.

It is you [i.e., the teachers], who can rise to guard the blood of the martyrs and of those who sacrificed for God's sake, consolidate the precious Islamic beliefs in the children's souls and spirits, and develop today's children to [be] the most worthy, the bravest and the most honest people of tomorrow.

Yes, such a great responsibility has been placed on your shoulders. The risen nation of Iran and the pure souls of thousands of martyrs expect that from you. If someone allows for the slightest negligence in this respect – which [no one] will ever do – he will be responsible [for that] before God and [His] servants...

Introduction, **Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) pages not numbered**

A comparison is made by Imam Khomeini between martyrdom and publications.

The importance of publications is like the importance of the blood spilt at the fronts. "The [religious] scholars' pen is better than the martyrs' blood". Although the martyrs' blood is highly valuable and constructive, the pens can be still more constructive. In principle, the pens build the martyrs and it is the pen that nourishes the martyr.

Persian Language, Grade 10 (2004) page not numbered

II. Martyrs of Oppositionist Activity and of the Islamic Revolution

Sheikh Mohammad Khomeini: One of the freedom-loving clergymen of [the Azeri city of] Tabriz who opposed internal tyranny and Tsarist Russia and attained martyrdom.

Persian, Grade 6 (2004) p. 186

The executioners of the regime... martyred that oppressed descendant of the Prophet [i.e., clergyman Modarres], who was seventy-one years old, [in 1937].

Persian, Grade 6 (2004) p. 23

After Reza Khan came to power, [Ayatollah] Modarres, who knew that the English had brought Reza Khan to power, proceeded to fight him relentlessly. Finally, in 1316 [1937], he attained martyrdom on Reza Khan's order.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 63

Martyrs of the Islamic revolution are those who were killed while fighting the Shah's regime, as well as the leaders of the Islamic regime who were assassinated by the opposition, such as Ayatollah Beheshti, President Rajayi and Prime Minister Bahonar.

The regime of our country is the Islamic Republic which has been achieved for a price of thousands of martyrs.

Social Studies [Civics], Grade 8 (2004) p. 23

Torture was a normal and regular practice in the [Shah's] prisons. Brave fighting clergymen... spent years under torture in prison, and... attained martyrdom under severe torture at the hands of the Savak in those years.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 252

Following are references to the anti-Shah riots in 1962-63 which were suppressed by the regime.

In the year 1341 [1962], following Imam Khomeini, the clergy and the people of [the Iranian city of] Qom fought the oppressive Shah, and [thus] the Islamic Revolution started out in Qom. For this reason the city of Qom is also named 'the City of Blood and Uprising'.

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 22

Having climbed onto the roofs surrounding [the Feyziyyeh religious college in Qom in 1963], the [Shah's] anti-riot forces started to shoot in the direction of the clergymen and also hurled some of the students from the roof tops to the ground. When the

people outside the school saw the crimes of the regime's agents, they decided to enter the school and help the students. But the agents beat and killed them too.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 239

The people of Qom, who heard that the Imam [i.e., Khomeini] was arrested in that morning, poured into the streets – men and women – and demanded his release. The brave resistance of the people of Qom led to their being shot at on the ground and from the air, and many were killed and injured.

When the news of the Imam's arrest reached Teheran, the people of this city too launched demonstrations on a very wide scale, under the slogan "Release Khomeini". The regime, which was stricken with panic and did not anticipate such a strong reaction, ordered its agents to shoot the people. As a result, a large number of the people of Teheran became martyrs or were injured.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 76

The spreading news in Teheran of the Imam's arrest stirred the people... the military guardsmen fired mercilessly at the people and left a large group wallowing in their pure blood around the [Shah's] palace.

... The regime's armed men set out in a few trucks towards Varamin [a town near Teheran], surrounded the peasants... and massacred [them] in the most tragic manner.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 243

The Shah arrested and imprisoned Ayatollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic movement of Iran. The people of Teheran, Qom, Shiraz and Mash'had held demonstrations. But the Shah's forces shot them and many became martyrs in this incident.

Persian, Grade 8 (2004) p. 8

The death of Ayatollah Khomeini's eldest son in Iraq in 1977 is regarded as martyrdom at the hands of the Shah's agents.

In 1356 [1977] his honorable son, Hajj Aqa Mostafa Khomeini, attained martyrdom in Najaf [Iraq] at the hands of the Shah's agents.

Persian, Grade 8 (2004) p. 9

In the month of Aban 1356 [Fall 1977] the news came that Hajj Aqa Mostafa, Imam Khomeini's elder son, died mysteriously in [the Iraqi city of] Najaf... The evidence indicated that the Shah... had decided to kill the leader's elder son...

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 262

The following quotations refer to the martyrs of the Revolution which began in city riots in late 1978.

The Shah's regime... could not bear this movement [protest in Qom in 1978]... shot the students and the people of Qom, and martyred and wounded a large number...

On... the fortieth day of [mourning over] the martyrs of Qom, disturbances suddenly broke out in Tabriz...

On the fortieth day of the Tabriz martyrs... the people of many cities in Iran held commemorative gatherings in the mosques. This time, the Shah's men opened fire on the demonstrators and at the large gathering of the people in [the city of] Yazd. Similar incidents also took place in the towns of Jahrom and Kazerun.
History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 263

Government forces opened fire on the demonstrators [in the city of Qom] and martyred and injured a large crowd ...

Forty days after this incident, the people of [the city of] Tabriz wanted to perform the Fortieth Day's [religious] ceremonies [in memory] of the martyrs of Qom. Having been prevented [from doing that] by the regime's agents, they started demonstrations. The streets of this city became the scene of a bloody encounter between the people and the Shah's forces.

History, Grade 8 (2004) pp. 86-87

The people of Teheran, who had decided a day before to gather... in Zhaleh Square (Martyrs [Square] now) assembled in that square without paying attention to the soldiers' threats. Seeing the people gathering and resisting, the Shah's mercenaries shelled them and martyred thousands of women, men, children and youths.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 88

Unaware of the fact that a military government had been proclaimed, the people gathered in Zhaleh ([now] Martyrs) Square. They confronted the soldiers, who were surrounding them, and a large number of people attained martyrdom in Zhaleh Square on that day.

Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) pp. 187-188

On that day the people of Teheran stood [in Zhaleh Square] facing the executioners' bullets and shouted "God is greatest, Khomeini is the leader" and "Death to the Shah". The Shah's mercenaries shot the brave Muslim women and men. ...On that day, several thousand people of Teheran attained martyrdom... A large number of young women and girls became martyrs as well, and their black chadors tangled in the red blood of their bodies.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 266



An example of the Shah's crimes on Black Friday [Zhaleh Square in Teheran]
History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 265

The Students and schoolchildren gathered in the University of Teheran and started a demonstration against the regime. Around noontime the regime's armed forces suddenly attacked them. Opening fire, they martyred and wounded a group of the youngsters.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 267

A large number of schoolchildren, and a group of students, who had gathered at the university, came under siege from the Shah's forces and were shot at. Some of them attained martyrdom.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 89

In the southern parts of the city of Teheran, the people... poured into the streets shouting "Death to the Shah"... As a result, a number of them became martyrs and some were wounded. On the next day... the people poured into the streets again... The [Shah's] agents again opened fire on the people. Some [people] attained martyrdom in the Sarcheshmeh neighborhood in Teheran.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 269

Following is a language exercise in which the students are asked to change a sentence from passive to active voice with the active subject given in parentheses:

The innocent people were being shot at in great numbers (the Shah).

Persian Language, Grade 10 (2004) p. 56

..."I prayed the martyrdom prayer and put my identity card in my pocket, in case I become a martyr..."

Persian Literature, Grade 9 (2004) p. 61

The people made many self sacrifices in the fall and winter of 1357 [1978] and eventually, after thousands of Muslim and revolutionary women and men had attained martyrdom at the hands of the Shah's mercenaries, the Islamic Revolution came close to victory.

Persian, Grade 9 (2004) p. 9

Eventually... the people attacked the [army] bases and took control of all of them, after bloody armed confrontations, and having offered thousands of martyrs.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 278

We celebrate each year the 'Ten Days of Dawn', and honor the memory of Imam Khomeini and the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution.

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 1 (2004) p. 101

Ayatollah Qazi Tabataba'i: Friday Imam of [the city of] Tabriz, and a knowledgeable Revolutionary clergyman, who attained martyrdom in 1358 [1979].

Persian, Grade 6 (2004) p. 186

[The great sportsman Gholamreza] Takhti fought the Shah's government and attained martyrdom in this cause in the end.

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 56

Now we understand for what [cause] the martyrs, whose tombs we saw at the Zahra Cemetery, have become martyrs. They sacrificed their own lives in order to expel these plundering oppressors from our country, and bring into existence the Islamic government in place of the Imperial government.

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 41

Questions

5. For what [cause] have the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution sacrificed their own lives?

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 42

"I have told you that a hundred times, my son: The winter of the year in which you were born was the year of the Revolutionary victory," he then lowered his voice, "the year when your father became martyr."

Persian Language – Teacher's Guide, Grade 9 (2004) p. 210

Following are references to the martyrs of the Revolutionary regime at the hands of opposition groups.

Ayatollah Madani: A resisting clergyman, and a teacher of high morality, who made great efforts towards the Islamic Revolution, and in the end attained martyrdom in the praying niche at the hands of the Hypocrites³⁷ in 1360 [1981].

Persian, Grade 6 (2004) p. 186

³⁷ *Hypocrites: An Islamic historical term used to denote those who were outwardly Muslim but acted against Muhammad and cooperated with his enemies. In today's Iran it is used as an epithet for the oppositionist 'Mojahedin-e Khalq' group.*

In [the fall of 1980] Dr. Mohammad Mofatteh, the Revolutionary clergyman, and a professor at the Teheran University, attained martyrdom.

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) P. 284

...The petty groups and especially the Hypocrites [the oppositionist Mojahedin-e Khalq] started [their] terror [campaign against] the people and the high-ranking personalities of the Revolution. First, they attempted to kill Ayatollah Khamene'i with a bomb. A day later... they blew up the headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran Party in Teheran, and caused the martyrdom of seventy-two state officials, including Ayatollah Beheshti – head of the judicial authority, and an influential and leading personality of the Revolution, four of Rajayi's cabinet ministers, and twenty-seven members of Parliament...

...By exploding another bomb, [the Hypocrites] caused the martyrdom of [President Mohammad Ali] Rajayi and [Prime Minister Mohammad Javad] Bahonar.

...The petty groups, and especially the Hypocrites, continued their conspiracy, bombing, and terror, and caused the martyrdom of Revolutionary clergymen and Friday mosque preachers...

History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) pp. 290-291

In [another] part of the martyr cemetery one could see many more [visiting] people. Ali asked: "What is there?" Mr. Javad said: "The tombs of the martyr Ayatollah Beheshti, and of seventy two of his companions, are there."



The tomb of the martyr president Rajayi, and the martyr prime minister Dr. Bahonar, are also there. All went there and read the [Koranic Surah of] Fatihah. Some pupils also arrived at the Zahra Cemetery with their teachers.

After that, the Hashemi family went to visit the tombs of Ayatollah Taleqani and of the martyr Dr. Chamran...



Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) pp. 34-35

Martyr Morteza Motahari, who is regarded as one of the greatest Muslim thinkers of this century, spent his lifetime in spreading Islamic teachings and confronting anti-Islamic thoughts. Eventually, he attained martyrdom in this cause.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 82

The foreign mercenaries... martyred great clergymen and revolutionaries, like Ayatollah Motahari, Dr. Beheshti, and many others.

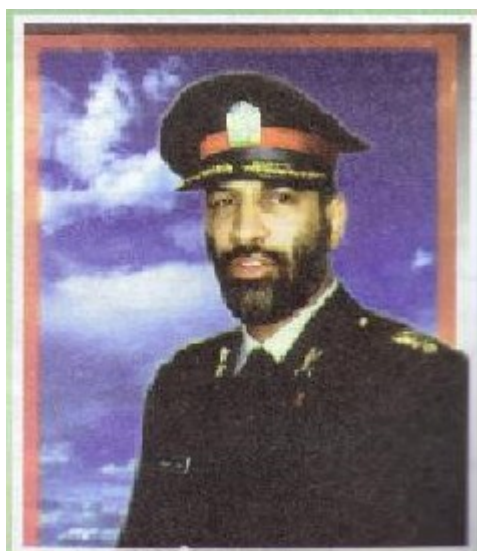
History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 93

[President] Rajayi was a plain and pure teacher, who fought in the cause of belief. He attained victory with Divine grace, the people's support, and his own pure and God-seeking nature. Eventually, in that cause as well, he obtained the favor of martyrdom, alongside his old friend and colleague, [Prime Minister] Dr. Mohammad Javad Bahonar, in the [Iranian] month of Shahrivar [August-September] 1360 [1981].

Persian, Grade 7 (2004) p. 19

Dr. [Mohammad] Mofatteh, head of the Faculty of Theology at Teheran University, attained martyrdom at the hands of the counter-revolutionists, after the victory of the Revolution.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 88



...It is appropriate here to appreciate the efforts of the martyr commander Brigadier General Javad Haji Khodakaram.

This brave Jihad fighter had taken great pains in keeping order and security in [the provinces of] Teheran, Qom, Sistan and Baluchestan. He dedicated his noble life to the realization of the goals of the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to the confrontation with the wicked counter-revolutionaries and the smugglers... Eventually, he drank from the cup of martyrdom.

We here exalt in appreciation the efforts of all the martyrs of the Internal Security [Police] Forces, and take an oath, in memory of these martyrs, to strive for the promotion of the goals of the holy regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

...It is appropriate that the defense readiness teachers endeavor to guide the youngsters by mentioning these martyrs, as well as the other martyrs...

Defense Readiness 2 – Teacher's Guide, High School Grades (2002) p. 61

...The Martyr Commander Lieutenant General Ali Sayyad Shirazi

Date of Martyrdom: 21.1.1378 [1999]

Place and Manner of Martyrdom: Teheran, while coming out of [his] house, at the hands of the hardhearted Hypocrites [who were] dressed as street sweepers, in the presence of his son.

Part of the Martyr's Will: "...O God, [our] passing away is in your hands. I do not know when I will pass away, but I know that I should ask you to put me in the service of my Hidden Imam [the Shiite twelfth Imam who still lives according to Shiite belief], and fight the sworn enemies of your religion so much that I attain the blessing of martyrdom."

Defense Readiness, Grade 10 (2004) p. 13

[On the Islamic Republic Day], we go to visit [the graves of] those who have given their lives, as well as the families of the Revolutionary martyrs, and greet the self-sacrificing and free martyrs who have offered freedom to their nation.

Persian, Grade 4 (2004) p. 95

Great praise to all the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution who have taught us the lessons of courage, freedom, piety, belief, glory, and greatness!

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) p. 19

What lessons have the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution given us?

Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) p. 22

III. Martyrs of the Iraq-Iran War

When the enemy violated our homeland's soil on Shahrivar 30, 1359 [September 1980], the people of [the Province of] Khuzestan carried the burden of war more than other Iranians. They sacrificed and sustained losses in defense of the country's independence, and of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Close to one million and three hundred thousand persons of the people of Khuzestan became homeless in that war. [Even though] several years have passed since the end of the war, the pure bodies of our martyrs are still hidden under the blood-soaked lands of the mine fields. Each day, some of them come out from the bowels of the earth, excavated by the devoted searchers. There is no family in Khuzestan who has not been hurt, or bereaved, by the attacks of the Baathi enemy.

Persian, Grade 7(2004) p. 90

Lesson 3: Example of Resistance and Altruism

...

Explanation:

Basic activities for class activation:

- Encouraging the students to read stories and poems about the war of Iran and Iraq.
- ...
- Students interviewing a son of one of the neighborhood martyrs and presenting that in class.

Persian – Teacher's Guide, Grade 7 (2003) p. 75

The Presence of Women

Women formed a large section of the *Basij* in the eight years of Holy Defense... Young women... carried arms and defended the Islamic Revolution. Some of these women attained martyrdom, and some others were injured, or were taken prisoner...

The Role of School Students

...During the eight years of Holy Defense, more than 500,000 school students were sent to the fronts. 36,000 martyrs, thousands of missing-in-action, invalids, and liberated [prisoners-of-war] of this sacrificing section were offered to the Islamic Revolution.³⁸

Defense Readiness, Grade 10 (2004) pp. 10-11

³⁸ According to testimonies from the battlefield which could not be substantiated, the children were given plastic keys symbolizing the keys to Paradise and sent to charge enemy positions through minefields in order to clear the way for the regular forces.

From the beginning of the formation of the army of twenty millions [i.e., the *Basij*], school students had – like the other sections of the *Basij* – a rightful share in it. During the eight years of Holy Defense, they accomplished [their] duty, both on the war fronts and in auxiliary works. In memory of this valor, and in order to preserve the memory of the school students who attained martyrdom in the cause of Islam and the Revolution, the Honorable Leader [Khamene'i] proclaimed in 1369 [1990] the eighth [day] of [the Iranian month of] Aban, [which is] the anniversary of the martyrdom of the school student, the martyr member of the *Basij*, [Hossein] Fahmideh, as the School Student *Basij* Day.

Defense Readiness, Grade 10 (2004) p. 8

When the aggressive government of Saddam attacked Iran, he [Dr. Mostafa Chamran], who was defense minister, went to the war fronts from the first day, and eventually attained martyrdom on one of these fronts. Martyr Chamran's life shows the living pattern for a true Muslim.

History, Grade 8 (2004) p. 95

Commander of the Army of Islam, the Martyr Dr. Mostafa Chamran

...Date of Martyrdom: 30.3.60 [1981]

Place and Manner of martyrdom: [In] Susangerd, Dehlaviyeh, by a mortar shell of the Baathi [Iraqi] forces.

...Part of the Martyr's Will: "I am ready to die. This is a natural phenomenon and I have long known that. But this is the first time that I am writing a will. I am happy to attain martyrdom in this manner. You, O Imam, do not deviate for a moment from the truth... I am proud to drink the potion of martyrdom in your glorious cause.

Defense Readiness, Grade 10 (2004) p. 12

[Oil Minister Mohammad Javad Tondguyan who was captured by the Iraqis in the war] attained martyrdom under torture, away from home...

Martyr Mohammad Javad Tondguyan employed his knowledge in the service of religion and homeland. He fought the corrupt and treacherous government of the Shah, and eventually, after enduring years of captivity, he attained martyrdom in the cause of serving the Muslim homeland.

Persian, Grade 7 (2004) p. 24

Write one paragraph, using in it the following words: homeland, hero, fighting, martyrdom, victory, people.

Persian, Grade 7 (2004) p. 25

...Commander of the Army of Islam, Martyr Hajj Ebrahim Hemmat

...Date of Martyrdom: 24.12.62 [1983]

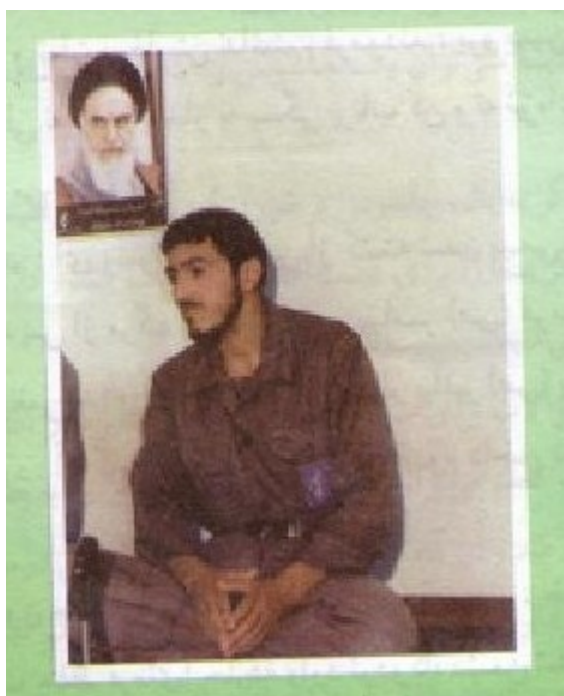
Place and Manner of Martyrdom: The island of Majnun, during the Khaybar operation, by a fragment of a cannon shell.

Part of Martyr Hajj Ebrahim Hemmat's Will: ...I would like to live like Ali [the first Shiite Imam] and become a martyr like Ali, to live like Hussein [the third Shiite Imam] and become a martyr like Hussein...

Defense Readiness, Grade 10 (2004) pp. 12-1]

Martyr Major-General pilot Abbas Babayi was one of the bravest pilots of the air force. He completed [his] flight training course in America before the victory of the Islamic Revolution. Martyr Babayi showed his tremendous bravery during the years of the Holy Defense [against Iraq, 1980-88] and with his combat aircraft brought down many enemy planes. This courageous warrior finally attained martyrdom on the day of Feast of Sacrifices in 1366 [1987], and has left [behind him] an eternal epic story.

Koran Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) p. 73



Martyr Mahdi Zein al-Din, commander of Division 17...

Defense Readiness 1 – Teacher's Guide, High School Grades (2002) p. 8

There are also families living around us who are deprived of the blessing of having a father. The fathers of some of these families fought the Jihad bravely during the Imposed War [with Iraq, 1980-88] and attained martyrdom.

Social Studies [Civics], Grade 6 (2004) p. 50

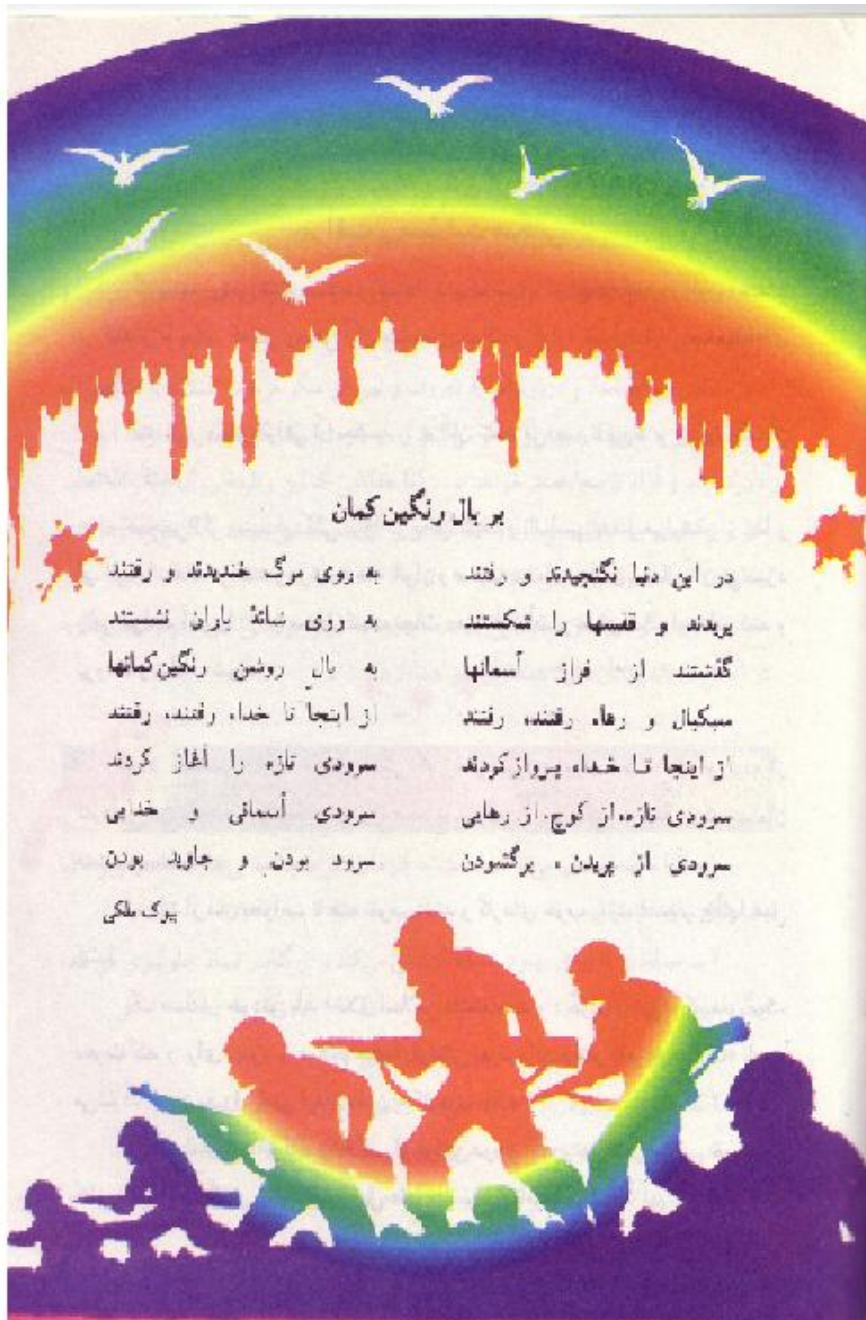
After visiting Imam Khomeini's tomb, they all went to visit the tombs of the martyrs and read the [Koranic Surah of] Fatihah. Above the tombs of many martyrs the flag of the Islamic Republic was hoisted. Photographs of many brethren of the [Revolutionary] Guards, the *Basij* and the army, who have sacrificed their lives in defense of the Islamic revolution, caught the eye.

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 34

Questions

4. In what cause have the martyrs of the army, *Basij* and the [Revolutionary] Guards sacrificed their own lives?

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 36



بر بال رنگین کمان

در این دنیا نگنجیدند و رفتند	به روی مرگ خندیدند و رفتند
پیدند و قفسها را شکستند	به روی شامه باوان نشستند
گشتند از فواز آسمانها	به بال روشن رنگین کمانها
سبکیال و زفاه رفتند رفتند	از اینجا تا خداه رفتند رفتند
از اینجا تا خداه پرواز کردند	سرودی تازه را آغاز کردند
سرودی تازه از کوچ از رهایی	سرودی آسمانی و خدایی
سرودی از پیدن « برگشودن	سرود بودن و جاوید بودن

پیرگ ملکی

Upon the Rainbow Wing

They were not contained in this world, [so] they went
 They laughed in the face of Death and went
 They flew and broke the cages
 They sat on top of the rain's shoulder
 They passed above the Heavens
 On the lit wings of the rainbows
 They went and went, with light wings, and free
 They went and went from here to God
 They flew from here to God
 They began a new song
 A new song about wandering and deliverance
 A Heavenly and divine song

A song about flying and wing spreading
The song of being, and of being eternal
Religious Instruction, Grade 5 (2004) p. 39

The *Basij*³⁹ Boy

He was [one] of the people of Qom, the City of Blood and Uprising. At the time of the [Iraqi] enemy's attack against Iran, he was living in [the city of] Karaj. The enemy wanted to annihilate the Islamic Revolution of Iran in a broad attack. With this aim, it shelled the country's cities, killing his innocent brothers and sisters.

He decided that he would defend the Islamic Revolution, and drive the enemy out of the beloved homeland. With this purpose, he arrived quickly from Karaj to the front...

His age was apparent from the smallness his body. Had he washed the blood and the dust off his face, he would have looked thirteen years old...

He did not have an opportunity for reflection. He had to do something. He had to show the enemy that a Muslim is not afraid of canons, tanks and machine-guns...

He advanced towards the enemy's tanks... Several hand-grenades were tied to his belt... [His] eye was fixed on one of the enemy's tanks... The tank reached him... In the twinkling of an eye a frightening noise came out. The enemy tank was severely shaken and flames spread from within and around it. Hossein Fahmideh has now realized his wish.

Hossein Fahmideh was a little lad who created a great epic. The people of Iran have never forgotten this brave and self-sacrificing boy. Imam Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, said about him: "Our leader is that child of the age of thirteen, who ties grenades to himself and goes under the tank."

It did not take long before Davud, this martyr's brother, also went to the front and eventually has also become a martyr.

Today, school children in our country proudly mention the name of Hossein Fahmideh, this *Basij* boy... What heroic sons Islam has!

Persian, Grade 4 (2004) pp. 17-18

The first class at Martyr Fahmideh School has 38 students, the second class has 43 students and the third class has 27 students. How many students do the first, second and third classes have altogether?

Mathematics, Grade 2 (2004) p. 156

Questions

1. What did Hossein Fahmideh want to defend?
2. ...

³⁹ *Basij* means 'mobilization' in Persian. Nowadays this term denotes the volunteer units which serve as the main support of the regime. It accepts volunteers of various ages.

3. What did Imam Khomeini say about him?
4. Why, in your opinion, was the enemy tank severely shaken and caught fire?
5. Why do the students in the schools of the Islamic Republic of Iran take pride in Hossein Fahmideh?

Persian, Grade 4 (2004) p. 19

Composition Exercise

3. Ask and write down the opinion of one of your friends regarding Hossein Fahmideh.
4. Write a summary of five lines about one of the martyrs whom you knew or whose life story you have heard.

Persian, Grade 4 (2004) p. 21



The Eighth of [the Iranian month of] Aban [October 30], the martyrdom anniversary of the *Basij* school student Hossein Fahmideh, has been declared the School Student *Basij* [Unit] Day.

Social Studies, Grade 5 (2004) p. 158

...Gholam-Reza prepares the RPG again. But this time, before the cry of "God is greatest", a bullet cleaves the air and settles in his tall forehead. His last "God is greatest" call goes to Heaven with the flight of his pure soul.

A Koranic Message:

"Never think that those who were slain in the cause of God are dead. They are alive, and well provided for by their Lord." (Al Imran 169)

Koran Studies, Grade 8 (2004) p. 39

From the very first hours of [Iranian] victory, the enemy's planes come to retaliate for the defeat, while on the battlefield of the hearts of God's Jihad fighters tranquility – which is the result of faith – prevails. The enemy is perplexed: How is it possible that one should not be afraid of death? How can a person be afraid of death when he is aware of the eternity of his soul under God's mercy?

Persian Language, Grade 9 (2004) p. 73

Prepare a passage about the life of one of the martyrs of the Imposed War.
History of Iran and the World [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) p. 298

IV. Self Sacrifice

It should be noted that 'self sacrifice' [fadakari], unlike martyrdom [shahadat], does not necessarily have a Muslim religious connotation. In a language textbook for grade 4, a story titled 'the Self-Sacrificing Boy' tells of the little Dutch boy who saved his village from sea-flooding by inserting his finger in a crack he found in a nearby dam (Persian, Grade 4, pp. 9-12). In the following text, the term is used in both contexts. The material of this section is available on the website only.

Self Sacrificing People

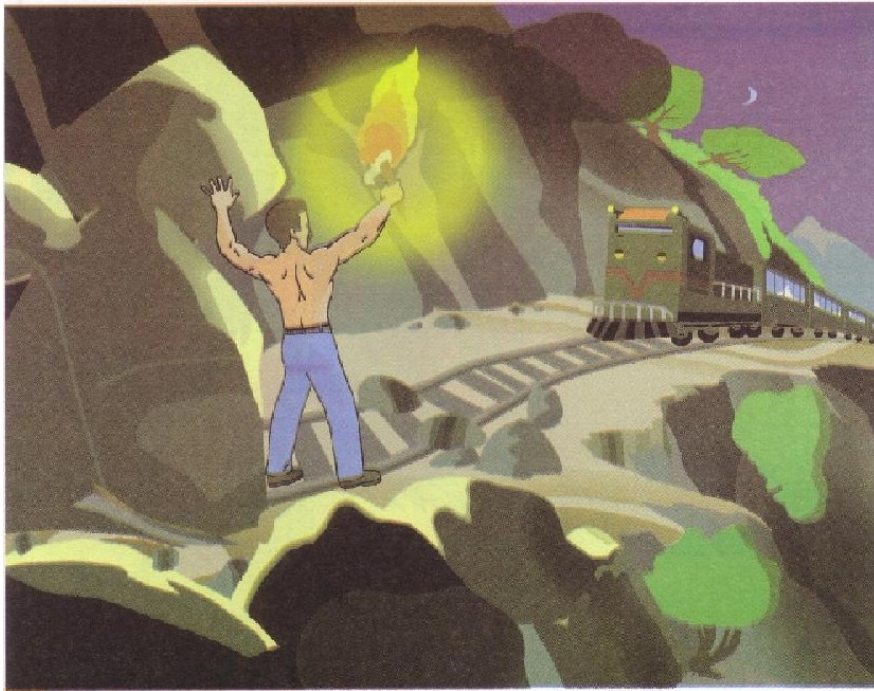
Everywhere, there have always been great and self-sacrificing men, who endangered their own lives in order to save the lives of others, or help their own kind. Their names and memory have become eternal.

There are many such great and glorious men in every country. In the great country of Iran too there are plenty of self-sacrificing men and women, and even children and youngsters. The lives of these people are our model and road lights.

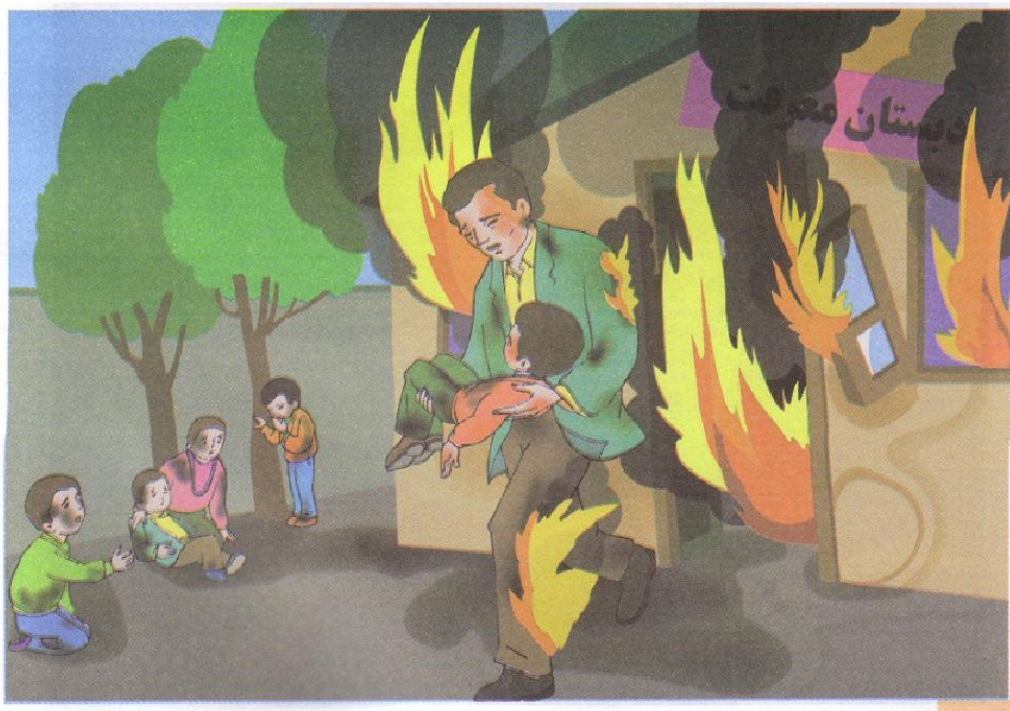
Have you heard the names of the martyr Hossein Fahmideh, Riz-Ali Khajavi and Hasan Omidzadeh?



The martyr Hossein Fahmideh was a self sacrificing boy, who tied hand-grenades to his belt and sacrificed his life under the chains of an enemy tank, in order to prevent their advance towards Iranian soil.



As he was returning home in the evening of a cold autumn day, Riz-Ali Khajavi, a self-sacrificing Azeri peasant, noticed that because of a landslide the rail track was obstructed. At that moment a train came... Riz-Ali hanged his shirt on his cane, spilled kerosene from his lamp on it and set it on fire. The train driver stopped when he saw the fire, and the passengers' lives were saved from certain death.



Hasan Omidzadeh is a self-sacrificing teacher, who saved the lives of schoolchildren in a fire incident. The heater in classroom caught fire, and the students were trapped

in the flames. This brave and self-sacrificing teacher from the Gilan [province] threw himself into danger. He saved all the students, and he was [himself] burned in the fire. He survived, but the burning marks, which are the token of his glory, remained on his body permanently.

In this manner, the self-sacrificing school students, peasants, and teachers, are the source of our glory. If you look at lanes and streets of cities and villages, you will see plenty of names of these noble and self-sacrificing men.

We honor these great and lovely people. Let us try to be among them too.

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) pp. 48-50

Listen and Say

1. What did the martyr Mohammad Hossein Fahmideh do?
2. What did Riz-Ali Khajavi do?
3. Why did the self-sacrificing teacher throw himself into danger?
4. What are "self-sacrificing actions"?

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) p. 51

The martyr Mohammad Hossein Fahmideh, the self-sacrificing boy, gave his own life under the enemy tank.

Riz-Ali Khajavi, the Azeri peasant, saved the lives of the train passengers.

Hasan Omidzadeh, the Gilani teacher, threw himself into danger.

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) p. 52

Tell your friend

2. What self-sacrificing women do you know in your own country and city?
3. What self-sacrifice have the martyrs performed?

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) p. 53

If you were in the place of the story heroes, what would you do?

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) p. 53

1. Write [a few] sentences in which the self sacrifice of Mohammad Hossein Fahmideh and Riz-Ali Khajavi appear.
3. Replace the red word [with another] word with the same meaning:
The martyr Mohammad Hossein Fahmideh was an intelligent person [*Fahmideh* in Persian].
Riz-Ali Khajavi was a fearless person.

Persian: Let's Write, Grade 3 (2004) p. 52

In this list there are six words in this table [taken] from the lesson. Find them and write them down.

[Fahmideh, Self Sacrificing...]

Persian: Let's Write, Grade 3 (2004) p. 53

V. Other Aspects of Martyrdom

Class Activity

2. If a school, a street, or a lane in the place where you live has been given the name of a martyr, ask those who are older [than you] about this martyr, and tell the class of the result.

Social Studies, Grade 3 (2004) p. 36

The Martyrs Elementary School has 300 students. 15% of the students of this school participated in the camp. How many... participated in the camp and how many remained in school?

Mathematics, Grade 5 (2004) p. 158

A recurring motif in the context of martyrdom is the red tulip, which symbolizes the martyrs' blood.

I looked again at the [Iranian] flag and asked: "Dear father, what is the symbol in the middle of the flag?" My father said: "It is the word 'Allah' [God]... in the form of a tulip. The tulip is the symbol of the martyrs' blood."

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) p. 98

The sun, the tulip, and the night are the manifestations of what, in your opinion?

Persian, Grade 7 (2004) p. 55

Answers to the Exercises of Lesson 7:

- ...
- ...the tulip is the manifestation of blood, of martyrdom, and of the martyr...

Persian – Teacher's Guide, Grade 7 (2003) pp. 84-85

O Iran, Country of the Brave

...I love the beauty of your tulips which remind [us] of the blood of thousands of martyrs.

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) p. 42

Questions

2. Red tulips are considered to be the symbol of what?

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) p. 44

Write one or two adjectives for each of the following nouns:

Blood, ...Martyr, ...Tulip.

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) p. 45

...I am drawing the tulip garden

The color of a martyr's blood...

Persian: Let's Read, Grade 3 (2004) p. 111

The Tulips Are Present

Again the first day of [the Iranian month of] Mehr has come⁴⁰

And the teacher quietly

Reads the names:

"Asghar-e Purhossein!"

The answer came:

"Present"

"Qasem-e Hashemiyan!"

The answer came:

"Present"

"Akbar-e Leilazad!"

"..."

No one answered

Again he read:

"Akbar-e Leilazad!"

"..."

No one answered

We were all silent

His place was here

But now, only

A basket of red tulips

Was next to us

A moment later the teacher saw the flower basket

His shoulders trembled

We were all silent

Suddenly we felt humming at heart

A bud in our heart was springing

The flower of shouting opened

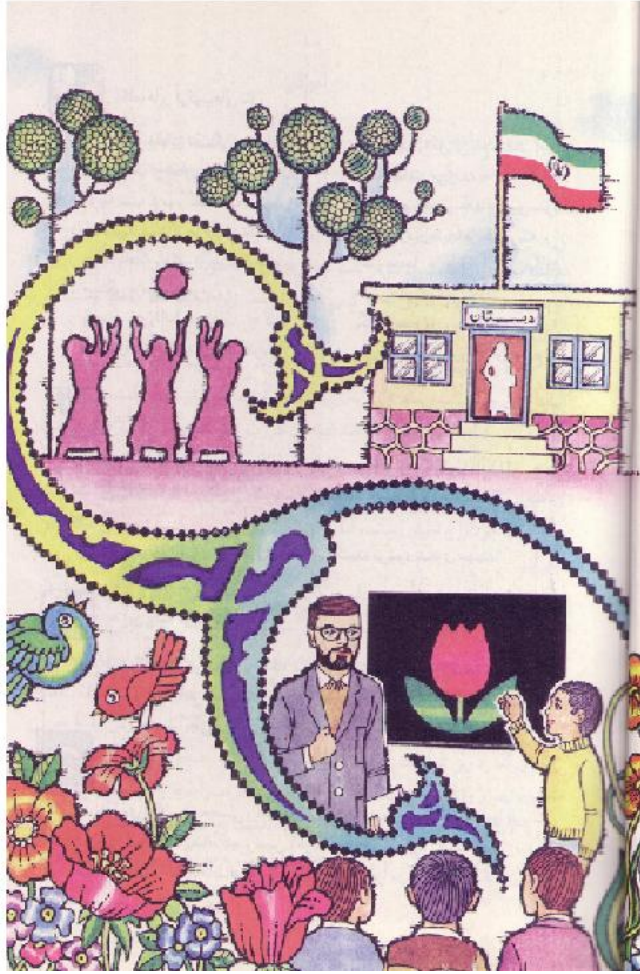
We all answered:

"Present!"

We all are Akbar-e Leilazad!

Persian, Grade 5 (2004) pp. 116-117

⁴⁰ *Mehr 1st (September 21) is the first day of school year in Iran.*



...On the first day [of Mehr] we will draw a tulip
A red one, on the school's blackboard...

Questions

3. What does the red tulip drawn on the blackboard on Mehr the 1st indicate?
Persian, Grade 5 (2004) pp. 4-6

This example is called a 'half-illustrated sentence'...



From the [drops of blood of] the homeland youth [tulips] sprout.
Art Instruction, Grade 6 (2004) p. 68

...Each tulip is the trace of a wayfarer's pace
Or [it] is the blood of a martyr that springs out of the earth's heart
Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) P. 107

...Among his [Gholam-Reza Qodsi's] beautiful and passionate poems there is a lyric poem composed in prison before the Revolution, in memory of martyred companions, when he heard the news that some of the Muslim revolutionaries were executed...

Picked Flowers

The picked flowers' scent is coming
My blood comes from the heart to the eye [i.e., I weep blood]
The flower comes pale
To see the martyrs' buds
Out of grief for the loss of the flower-faced [ones]
The tulip emerges from the soil full of blood
Persian Literature [Humanities], Grade 11 (2004) pp. 111-112

Why does the poet describe, in the poem 'Picked Flowers', the flowers which have come to see the martyrs as pale?

Persian Literature, Grade 11 (2004) p. 114

Geranium as well sometimes symbolizes the martyr.

Geranium is a flower which blossoms in many seasons of the year. In this poem, the geranium recalls the martyr's life, resistance and endurance. Exactly as the geranium announces with its blossoming the beginning of life once again, so the martyr announces with his martyrdom the coming of the spring of victory... The meaning of the verse is that life is like a candelabrum, and the martyr is a candle which never goes out. He is always lit and alive in this candelabrum.

Persian – Teacher's Guide, Grade 7 (2003) p. 74