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Preaching

AALIMAH
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THE FATIMI ETIQUETTE OF ANSWERING

In Munyat al-Murid, (The Desire of the Aspirant) Shahid al-Thani narrates a beautiful narration from the Tafsir attributed to Imam Hasan al-Askari (a). In it, there is a story of Lady Fatima (a) and the impeccability of her character, as well as the beauty of her God-centric worldview. A woman one day visits her, and asks her several questions, after which she begins to feel embarrassed that she is burdening and bothering the daughter of Rasulullah (saw). In response, Lady Fatima (a) says: *"Come now, ask me whatever you like. Have you seen a person who is hired to take a heavy load up to the roof in return for a wage of a hundred thousand gold coins, would he [indeed] find his work heavy for him?"* The woman responds in the negative, after which, Lady Fatima (a) says: *"Then know that I have been hired [by Allah SWT], for a wage greater than if you filled all that is between the Earth and God's throne with pearls, in return for every question you ask. So, it should neither be a burden for me."*

Here, she not only comforts the woman who is asking her questions to help her feel comfortable, but she affirms her Qur'anic and God-centric worldview in that everything that a person does, is for their own benefit:

لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ

Whatever [good] it [i.e. the nafs] earns is to its own benefit, and whatever [evil] it incurs is to its own harm.

(Qur'an - 2:286)

Even in acts where we may help others, the true beneficiary is none but the one who does the good and will reap its reward in the Hereafter.

Thereafter, when elaborating on the rewards of those who spread knowledge, she says the following:

"I heard my father say: 'The scholars from among our followers [Shias] will be gathered [on the Day of Resurrection] and they will be bestowed with robes according to the quantity of their knowledge and their earnestness in guiding God's servants. Then one of them will be given a million robes of light, and our Lord's caller will call out: "O you who fed the orphans of the descendants of the Prophet and watched over them when they were separated from their [true] fathers, their Imams [a]! These are your students, the orphans whom you fed and watched over, so clothe them in robes of light, just as you clothed them with the clothes of knowledge in the Worldly Life!"

Here, this narration from Rasulullah (saw) discusses how believers, when they are disconnected from their leaders, are in a sense, orphans. Moreover, scholars of knowledge play the role of foster-parents in connecting these spiritual orphans to their spiritual fathers in that they connect them to this vast treasure of knowledge.

REFERENCE: TRANSLATION ADAPTED FROM "DESIRE OF THE ASPIRANT", A TRANSLATION OF MUNYAT AL-MURID OF SHAHID AL-THANI, BY ALEXANDER KHALEELI