

## FATIMA is FATIMA

It is most difficult to speak about the personality of Fatima (A.S.). Fatima (A.S.) is the woman that Islam wants a woman to be. The concept of her visage is painted by The Prophet himself. He melted her and made her pure in the fire of difficulties, poverty, resistance, deep understanding and the wonder of humanity.

She is a symbol in all the various dimensions of being a woman.

The symbol of a daughter when facing her father.

The symbol of wife when facing her husband.

The symbol of a mother when facing her children.

The symbol of a responsible, fighting woman when facing her time and the fate of her society.

She herself is an Imam, a guide, that is, an outstanding example of someone to follow, an ideal type of woman and one who bears witness to any woman who wishes to "become herself" though her own choice.

She answers the question of how to be a woman with her wonderful childhood, her constant struggling and resisting on two fronts, inside and out, in the home of her father, in the home of her husband, in her society, in her thoughts and behaviour and in her life.

I do not know what to say. I have said a great deal. Still much remains unsaid.

In the expression of all of the

amazing aspects of the great spirit of Fatima (A.S.), that which causes the most wonder in me, is this that Fatima is the travelling companion, steps in the same steps, flies together with the great spirit of Ali (A.S.), through the ascension of humanity towards completeness and the stages of the descent of the spirit and the psyche.

She was not just a wife to Ali. Ali (A.S.) looked upon her as

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a friend, a friend who was familiar with his pains and his great wishes. She was his endless refuge, the one who listened to his secrets. She was the only companion of his loneliness. This is why Ali (A.S.) looked at her with another look and also at her children.

The Prophet (PBUH) also saw her with different eyes. From among all of his daughters he would only discipline Fatima (A.S.). He only relies upon her. From an early age, she accepted the great invitation.

I do not know what to say about her. How to say it? I wanted to imitate the French

writer who was speaking one day in a conference about the "Virgin Mary". He said, "For 1700 years all of the speakers have spoken of Mary. For 1700 years, all philosophers and thinkers of various nations of the East and West have spoken of the values of Mary. For 1700 years, the poets of the world have expressed all of their creative efforts and power in their praise of Mary. For 1700 years, all of the painters and artists have created wonderful works of art showing the visage and states of Mary. But the totality of all that has been said, thought and the efforts of all the artist throughout all of these many centuries were not able to sufficiently describe the greatness of Mary as these words, "Mary was the mother of Jesus Christ".

And I wanted to begin in this manner with Fatima. I got stuck. I wished to say, "Fatima is the daughter of the great Khadijeh (A.S.)". I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, "Fatima is the daughter of Mohammad (PBUH)". I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, "Fatima is the wife of Ali (A.S.)". I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, "Fatima is the mother of Hasan (A.S.) and Hosein (A.S.)". I sensed it is not Fatima. I wished to say, "Fatima is the mother of Zainab (A.S.)". I still sensed it is not Fatima.

No, these are all true and none of them are Fatima. FATIMA is FATIMA. □