What are the different dimensions of Lady Fatimah's (SA) ?character

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The dimensions of Lady Fatimah's (as) character are very vast and can only be understood through deep and profound thought and study. Reading and researching about her spirituality, knowledge and political struggles and the other aspects of her life, will help us in reaching our goal.

According to both Shia and Sunni sources, some of her characteristics are as follows:

1- Her contentment to a simple life of small wealth and few facilities, while being able to have the best life possible.

2- Her donation and giving of things that she herself was fond of and liked.

3- Frequent worship and supplication at the peak of pureness in intention.

4- Her modesty and humility.

5- A role model in Islamic hijab and covering.

6- Her vast knowledge; a small example of it being her knowing all of the contents of the "Mus-haf Fatimah".

7- Her political and social struggles and efforts in defending Imam Ali's (as) successorship to the Prophet (pbuh) after his demise.

Detailed Answer

Many books have been written and many words have been said regarding Lady Fatimah's (as) high character and spiritual rank, yet if a thousand times more of these books were to be written by man (and his limited intellect), it would only be a drop of the sea of virtues that she truly bears.[1] In this article, we admit to our inability to be able to do so as well, but at the same time will try to do our best because it is much better than nothing.

The smartest intellects of the world are in astonishment of her knowledge, and in order to be able to even get close to it, there is no other choice but to go to the hadiths of the Ahlul-Bayt and see what they have to say about it. According to many authentic hadiths that have been narrated from the imams, Lady Fatimah (as) is the true essence of Laylatul-Qadr . That is because Laylatul-Qadr is the where the "silent" Quran was revealed in, while Lady Fatimah (as) is where eleven of the "speaking Qurans" have been revealed and descended from (meaning that the imams are of her offspring).[2]

Her rank is so high that her anger is the anger of the Prophet (pbuh) and Allah (swt) as has been mentioned in a hadith by the Prophet (pbuh): “Fatimah (as) is a part of me, whosoever pleases her, has pleased me, and whosoever pleases me, has pleased Allah (swt), and whosoever bothers her has bothered me, and whosoever bothers me has bothered Allah (swt). Also, Fatimah (as) is the dearest of all people to me.”[3] In another hadith, the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) says: “Maryam (as) was the master of all of the women of her time, but my daughter Fatimah (as) is the master of all women of the world from its beginning to its end.”[4] He also says: “An angel descended upon me and gave me glad tidings that Fatimah (as) would be the master of all women of Paradise and the highest of all women.”[5] Hence, her superiority to Lady Maryam (as) and all other great women such as Asiyeh (the wife of the Pharaoh who was righteous) becomes manifest through these and other similar hadiths. Not only is she higher than women such as Lady Maryam (as) and Asiyeh, but they are honored to have served Lady Khadijah (Lady Fatimah’s (as) mother) when she was delivering Lady Fatimah (as).[6]

As for her virtues and high characteristics, she was content to a simple life of a small wealth and few facilities, while having the potential to be of a very good and well-off one. The proof for that is the fact that her father was a prophet of Allah (swt) and his excellency owned the valuable if not priceless garden of Fadak that would give a good monthly income to its owner, which he had granted to his beloved daughter.[7] Her husband also had a good income from “the sweat of his brow”, therefore she had all the potential needed to live a comfortable and luxurious life. Yet, she would spend all of these incomes and wealth in the way of Allah (swt) through charity and helping the needy, thus living a hard life herself and was content about it.

Another of her characteristics is her generosity and giving. The stories of her granting her wedding gown to a needy person on the night of her wedding and giving food to those who needed it for three consecutive nights (remaining hungry for those nights) when she and her family might have been the ones in need of it most (because they were fasting those three days and didn’t have any other food in the house to break their fasts with) are famous. The latter has been mentioned in surah Dahr (Insan) of the Quran.

Her worship is so vast, that it covers every second of her life; her behavior, her speaking, her looking, her efforts, even her breathing throughout the day and night were all worship.[8] Every night, after putting her children to sleep and running all of the remaining chores in the house, she would stand to prayer, to the extent that her blessed feet would become swollen.[9] Her excellency’s worship is so unique, that the light coming from it would astonish and give pleasure to the angels of high ranks, to the extent that seventy-thousand high-ranked angels would send peace and blessings upon her.[10]

One of the things that the Shia are proud of, is the Sahifa or book of Fatimah (as). Shias believe that this book has been given to Lady Fatimah (as) through divine inspiration.[11]

The modesty and covering of Lady Fatimah (as): Many different beautiful instances of Lady Fatimah's (as) doings and sayings regarding hijab and covering have been reported that women need to follow. One day, the Prophet (pbuh) asked those present in the mosque: "What is the best way of living for women?" Lady Fatimah (as), answered through Salman (who had gone to Lady Fatimah's (as) house for an answer that he didn't know): "It is best for women not to see non-mahram men and for non-mahram men not to see them either."[12]

In the end, we will point to the most important trait that she must be followed in, which is the defending of imamate and wilayah. That is because she is the one who exhibited the best defense against imamate and wilayah after the death of the Prophet (pbuh).[13] She was well acquainted with the people of her time and knew that they didn't deserve her guidance and also didn't bear the courage to rise along with her against the situation that had come up after the Prophet's (pbuh) death, yet she wanted to defame misguidance and unveil the truth for future generations. As she herself said: "I know that you are all pitiful and caught in the claws of despicableness. Not helping has taken over your whole existence and the cloud of unfaithfulness has shadowed over your hearts, what can I do? For I am burning inside and cannot hold my tongue from complaining."[14]

Lady Fatimah (as) never hesitated in unveiling the truth, so that all Muslims throughout history would know that silence isn't acceptable regarding important issues that have to do with culture and religion and that they must be confronted. She stood up against the falsification of Islam, revealing the truth and making clarifications, because she knew through divine inspiration and the angel Jibra'il what was to take place in the future and knew that eventually one day, some deserving hearts would embrace this truth and play an important role in the fruiting of imamate and the achievement of the goal of creation.[15]

For further information, see the following sources:

1- Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi, Jami az Zolale Kowsayr.

2- Ayatullah Seyyid Muhammad Kadhim Qazwini, Fatemeye Zahra az Veladat ta Shahadat.

3- Majid Kashani, Hemaseye Kowsariyye Sharhe Yeganeh Dokhte Payambare Geramiye Eslam.

Reference:

[1] Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi, Jami az Zolale Kowsayr, vol. 1, pg. 24.

[2] Ibid, pg. 17.

[3] Sheykh Tusi, Amaliyy, vol. 1, pg. 24.

[4] Biharul-Anwar, vol. 43, hadith 20.

[5] Sheykh Tusi, Amaliyy, vol. 1, pg. 457; Dala'ilul-Imamah, pg. 8; Ghayatul-Maram, pg. 177; Biharul-Anwar, vol. 43, pg. 2.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Al-Kafi, vol.1, pg. 538, chapter of fey' wal-anfal wa tafsirul-khums wa hududihi wa ma yajeb fih.

[8] Ihqaqul-Haqq, vol. 4, pg. 481.

[9] Biharul-Anwar, vol. 42, pg. 117.

[10] Ibid, vol. 43, pg. 12, hadith 6.

[11] From the will of Imam Khomeini, Sahifeye Nour, vol. 21, pg. 171. We are proud to have supplications from our imams that have also been named "the ascending Quran" (signifying that they have no difference with "the descending Quran" other than the fact that one is ascending to Allah (swt) from his best servants and the other is descending from Allah (swt)). We are proud to have the supplication of Munajat Sha'baniyyah of the imams, the Dua Arafat of Imam Husein (as), the Sahifah Sajjadiyyah of Imam Sajjad (as) and the Mus-haf of Fatimah or the Sahifah of Fatimah which was revealed unto her through divine inspiration.

[12] Wasa'elul-Shia, vol. 14, pp. 43 and 172; Biharul-Anwar, vol. 43, pg. 54.

[13] Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi, Jami az Zolale Kowsayr, pg. 145.

[14] Kashful-Ghummah, vol. 1, pg. 491; Al-Ihtijaj, pg. 102; Dala'ilul-Imamah, pg. 37.

.[15] Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi, Jami az Zolale Kowsayr, pg. 149