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Unfixed Labour

From ***Unto Thee We Grant...***

Suleiman b. Ja'far accompanied Imam 'Ali b. Musa ar-Ridha' (as) to work. It was late in the evening when they returned. Just as Suleiman wanted to part, Imam said: "Why don't you be my guest tonight?" Suleiman complied.

When they entered the house, a group of Imam's servants were busy in the garden. Imam looked at them and found a stranger among them working on a small patch. "Who is he?" Imam queried. "We have hired him to help us finish the work," the servants replied. "Very well," Imam said. "How much labour has been fixed for him?"

The servants said that nothing had been fixed but they would pay him something at the end. Immediately Imam (as) showed his displeasure. His voice rose with anger and the servants were terrified.

How often have I told you that the labour must be fixed before hiring? If you exact labour from a worker without telling how much you would pay him, he would never be satisfied at the end. And I do not mind if you pay him more than what you promised him. But his wage must be fixed from the beginning. And remember, pay a worker before his sweat dries on his body.

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