The Position of Women in Classic Islamic Theology

Introduction

The position and role of women in the Muslim World is very variable and generalisations are rarely helpful. This paper is presented to 'prime the pump' in your thinking.

To get us thinking about evangelism and discipling women who have come to faith out of Islam we thought it might be helpful to describe, from an orthodox and theological position, how the role of women is seen in Islam. This will help us see the traditional role of women.

Qur'anic teaching about the position of women

In pre-Islamic Arabia people were in tribes with no central authority and frequent inter-tribal warfare. These wars and raids were within the confines of accepted rules. Feuds within families and between families for revenge had no rules. Many pre-Islamic cultural features were absorbed into Islam including the honour-shame culture.

Honour **Shame**

	Acts that bring honour to an individual and to the tribe.	**Acts that bring shame both to the individual and to the tribe.**
Men	Fight bravely Revenge all wrongs done to relatives Display generosity even to strangers Protect the women of the family from dishonour	Back down from a fight Ignore slights to relatives Refuse to offer hospitality Be indifferent to family/tribal honour
Women	Bear children – especially sons Encourage men in battle by their presence at the battle Marry appropriately within the tribal group and class Display loyalty to tribal values.	Not being able to bear children If unmarried – having sexual relationships with a man If married, having sexual relationships with men other than their husband. (If either of these becomes public the woman is killed by her family)

It has been wrongly stated that the Qur'an teaches that women have no soul. There is a Hadith that states, *"Whereas out of every thousand* (Muslim) *men only one will go to hell, yet, out of every thousand* (Muslim) *women only one will be found in heaven."* We will look later at some Hadith relating to women.

- **Women in general**
    - The Qur'an expresses the equality of the work of both sexes and the oneness of the origin of the sexes.

3:195 *"And their Lord answered them, 'I will not suffer the work of him among you who works, whether of male or female, to be lost. The one of you is the issue of the other.' "*

4:1 *"Mankind fear your Lord who created you of a single soul and from it created a mate."*

- Spiritually men and women are equal.

  16:97 *"Whoso does that which is right, whether male or female, if a believer, him will we surely quicken to a happy life and recompense them with a reward meet for their best deeds."*

  So both men and women are to keep the five main religious duties.

- Reward is promised to good women as well as to good men. In 33:35 it says that God has prepared for believing, devout, truthful, patient, humble, almsgiving, fasting, modest women who remember Him – forgiveness and a mighty hire!

  In practice, modesty is the chief virtue of a woman.

  33:59, *"O prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to let down over them their outer wraps."*

- **Men are superior to women**

  4:34 *"Men have authority over women because Allah has made the one superior to the other."*

  This statement is often used to prevent equality in law and in governance (politics etc) between men and women. One of the reasons given in the Qur'an for this is that men are physically stronger – 2:228

- **Marriage**

  A bit of background

  Muhammad married his first wife, Khadija, when he was 25. She actually proposed to him! She gave him money, status and four daughters – his only children to survive infancy. Only Fatima survived to old age. Khadija became Muhammad's first convert. He was married to her for 25 years. She seems to have had a great deal of independence and power. She died nine years after the first revelation when Muhammad was 49 years old. It was only after her death that there were revelations on the status of women.

  Soon after Khadija's death, Muhammad married Sawda bint Zamaa of the Quarish. She was a matronly older widow, an early convert to Islam and a devoted follower. Next Muhammad married Aisha whose father was Abu Baker. Aisha was only six and the marriage wasn't consummated. She remained with her family and no one told her of her change of status! The marriage was consummated when she was nine (some sources say in puberty). She was nineteen when Muhammad died.

  Three more women – all war widows – were joined to Muhammad by marriage:

  Hafsah (20 years old and daughter of Omar) Omar ibn-al-Khattab was also from the family of Hashim. Originally he was a violent opponent of Islam, but during the Meccan period he professed faith in Islam. Hafsah's previous husband was killed in the battle of Badr. Omar became the second caliph.

  Zeinab bint Khusaima who was known for her generosity to the poor. She had already been widowed twice. She died eight months later.

  Umm Salamah of the Quraish tribe **–** a famous beauty. Aisha was very jealous of her.

  There was also the controversial marriage to **Zeinab** the wife of his adopted son Zaid. In his last two years Muhammad acquired five new women. Two were Jewesses – **Raihama** who was captured after her Jewish tribe was defeated in battle and **Safiya** bint Huayy whose husband was a Jewish tribal leader who was killed in battle. One was a Coptic Christian, **Mirayam**.

She has a son who died in infancy. Some think he was killed by the jealous Aisha who had no children. It is a matter of debate whether Muhammad actually married Mirayam.

- **Marriage is one of the signs of God's power and mercy**.

  30:21 *"And one of his signs is that he has created wives for you of your own species, that you may dwell with them and has put love and tenderness between you."*

  In 16:72 marriage is represented again as a gift of God and it is said to be the normal condition for women.

- **Women are required to remain sexually pure before marriage** (24:30-33) and to avoid adultery after marriage. In the Qur'an the punishment for adultery is 100 stripes (24:2) not stoning as in the Hadith. The punishment for falsely accusing an honourable woman without producing the right number of witnesses is 80 stripes. The Qur'anic word for marriage is *'nikah'* which, in today's Arabic, is rather a crude word referring to physical sex and is not used in polite company.

- **The Qur'an teaches that the purpose of marriage is to produce children** (42:9). The wife is to be treated with love and mercy.

  30:31 *"He has set between you love (mawaddah) and mercy."*

  4:19 *"Consort with them (women) in kindness (ma'ruf)."*

  'Ma'ruf' means 'customary law'.

- **Marriage to a Jewess or a Christian woman** (i.e. People of the Book) is permissible, but not marriage to an idolatress (5:7; 2:220) A Muslim woman may only marry a Muslim.

- **A list of near relatives forbidden in marriage** is given in which marrying one's father's wife was especially forbidden.

  4:27 *"Forbidden unto you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your mother's sisters, and your brother's daughters and your sister's daughters and your foster mothers and your foster sisters and your mothers-in-law and your step daughters who are born under your protection."*

  The wife of an adopted son was allowed (3:4) because Muhammad married Zeinab who was the wife of Zaid who was a freed slave who was adopted by Muhammad and raised as his son.

- **A course of action is given for dealing with a rebellious woman.**

  4:24 *"Righteous women are obedient … and those you fear may be rebellious (Nushuz) admonish. Banish them to their couches and beat them."*

  Some translations use 'scourge them' (Mohammad, Picktall and Rodwell). The Arabic word is *'dharaba'*.

  According to the Qur'an a man has responsibility to admonish his wife. He has the right to desert her sexually and beat her to correct any rebelliousness in her behaviour. The woman can't resort to such measures if she sees rebelliousness in her husband.

  4:128 *"If a woman fears rebelliousness or aversion in her husband then no fault is in them if the couple set things right between them. Right settlement is better."*

  So the woman only has diplomacy and the husband has the use of force.

- **Children and the family**

  - **It is the duty of husbands to run the family.**

    2:228 *"And it is for the women to act as they* (the husbands) *act by them, in all fairness; but the men are a step above them."*

- **Children are a gift from God** (16:74). Daughters as well as sons are a gift from God. Muhammad reproves his people for lamenting the birth of a female child (16:60-61) and he prohibits female infanticide – see the reference in 6:138 to *'idolaters killing their children'.*
- **A child's obedience to his/her parents is like that which is due to God** (37:102). The approval of God reveals itself in the approval of parents and the anger of God reveals itself in the anger of parents (64:14-15).
- **Looking after an elderly parent is part of our worship of God** (6:152).
- **Reverencing your mother is part of Qur'anic teaching.** (4:1; 17:24 and 46:14) "*We have enjoined on man the doing of good to his parents; with trouble did his mother bear him and with trouble did she bring him forth ….*"

➢ **Family Planning**

There is a Turkish family planning poster that reads:

"Family planning does not mean prevention of births. The Holy Qur'an says, 'Have as many children as you can look after.' "

There is a Hadith where Muhammad sanctioned coitus interruptus and this is the common birth control method of today.

➢ **Veiling**

In Muhammad's life in Medina, initially his wives helped as battlefield nurses. In the Arabian tribes women often fought in battles. Some even preached in the mosque – especially Aisha. But increasingly the enemies of Islam began to harass the wives of Muhammad making rude comments etc. At this point Muhammad got a revelation that his wives should stay hidden behind a curtain *(hijab)* in his house and when going out they should be shrouded from head to foot. *"If you ask his wives for anything, speak to them from behind a curtain (hijab). This is purer for your hearts and their hearts."*

For Muslim women who were not part of Muhammad's household, the guidelines were not so severe*. "Tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent and to draw their veils over their breasts."*

Gradually full veiling spread to all Muslim women especially when Islam spread out of Arabia. Persians had long segregated their women. In Iraq the wives of nobles veiled as a sign of status.

➢ **Singleness of women**

There is a Hadith that says, *"Marriage is half of the faith"*. There is no prohibition or affirmation of singleness in the Qur'an – probably because it was exceptional. A famous heretical Sufi lady, Rabi'a, was single and a few early Sufis encouraged celibacy. Orthodox Muslims see celibacy in women as an aberration.

In general all women should get married. There is a Hadith that expressly forbids celibacy – Sahih Bukari 67:8. Fathers of girls over 12 years of age have sinned if they have not married off their daughters.

➢ **Polygamy**

In the Qur'an polygamy is sanctioned both in this world and in the next.

4:3 *"But if you cannot do justice between orphans* (girls) *then marry what seems good to you of women, by twos or threes or fours. And if you fear that you cannot be equitable, then only one or what your right hand possesses (i.e. female slaves)."*

So although Muhammad limited and regulated polygamy by this legislation a Muslim is allowed, in addition, slave girls at his discretion (70:30; 23:4; 4:298).

Wives are to be treated with strict impartiality and the marriage of orphan girls is to be carefully arranged (4:26). Muslims have argued that since maintaining equality is impossible, then marrying more than one wife is not permissible using 4:129: *"Try as you may. You cannot treat all your wives impartially. Do not set yourself altogether against any of them."*

Widows must not marry unless they have waited four months and ten days.

The main argument in favour of polygamy is that the physiological need for sex is more compelling in a man than in a woman and that his needs continue to an advanced age. Barrenness, illness or long menstruations hinder relationships (2:222). So to guard against the sin of adultery the Qur'an proposes polygamy.

It is true that 4:3 was revealed after a battle against the Meccans where about 65 Muslim women were widowed. This is the context in which Muhammad had the revelation endorsing the taking up of four wives.

In Muhammad's case the need to make alliances with defeated enemies through marriage caused revelations exempting him from the four-wife limit. He had nine wives at one time in addition to concubines (like Mirayam).

- **Divorce**

Men and women don't have equal rights in this matter. Only the man is free to send his wife away. It is usually argued that if the wife could freely divorce her husband then she would be less concerned with preserving family life.

In the Qur'an there are some steps to be taken towards reconciliation:

- A husband should admonish his wife.
- If she doesn't respond he should refuse to have sexual relations with her.
- If she still doesn't respond he should beat her (4:38).
- If she doesn't respond he can appeal to two arbitrators – one from his family and one from his wife's family (4:39).

Divorce will be pronounced when all the above fail. The wife then joins her parents' family for four months. At the end of this period the husband will have another chance to reverse his decision.

The woman has to wait three menstrual cycles before re-marrying lest there is any doubt about the paternity of any newborn child (2:227). During this period and if she is pregnant until the birth and weaning of the child (a two-year period according to the Qur'an), the divorcing husband is bound to provide for the woman and the child (2:233).

The husband can divorce his wife twice only. On each occasion the man may take the woman back if she is pregnant during the four months. If the wife is retained after the divorce she is to be treated kindly and if she is sent away she may not be deprived of her dowry. If the woman does not want to re-marry she may give up her dowry to induce her husband to part with her (2:229).

The husband cannot take a divorced wife back until she has consummated a marriage with another husband.

2:230 *"But if the husband gives sentence of divorce to her a third time, it is not lawful for him to take her again until she shall have married another husband and if he also divorces her then no blame shall be attached to them if they return to each other thinking that they can keep within the bounds fixed by God."*

- **Legal Issues**
  - **In a court of law** it requires the testimony of two women to rebut the testimony of one man.

2:282 *"….and let them call two witnesses out from amongst their men; or if there be not two men, then a man or two women from those whom he chooses as witnesses…."*

The context is confirming a written contract in a business transaction.

- **In the matter of inheritance** a daughter generally inherits half of what would come to her brother.

  4:11 *"God instructs you concerning your children; for a male the like of the portion of two females."*

  The rationale for this is given in 4:37 *"Men stand superior to women in that God has preferred some of them over others and in that they expend of the wealth."* (i.e. men are more involved in business.)

- **The issue of dowry**

  Dowry *(makr)* is a technical term meaning the money (or its equivalent) that must be given to the woman in the marriage contract in exchange for enjoying her. The dowry is agreed and written in the wedding contract. In effect, this is a pre-nuptial agreement. The main Qur'anic verses are 4:24-25.

  "O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women's estates against their will; nor to hinder them that you go off with part of what you brought them unless they manifestly commit fornication …. But if you wish to exchange one wife for another and have given them a talent (a large dowry), then take not from it anything."

➢ **Paradise**

All a woman's piety is considered useless if she disobeys her husband. The Qur'an promises God-fearing men:

44:51-54 *"Lo! those men who kept their duty will be in a secure place amid gardens and water springs, attired in silk and silk embroidery, facing one another. Even so* (it will be). *And we shall wed them to huris* (fair ones) *with wide, lovely eyes."*

55:56-58 *"Therein maidens restraining their glances untouched before them by a man or jinn … lovely as rubies, beautiful as coral."*

55:72 *"The fair, the beautiful ones* (huris) *… with large dark eyeballs kept close in their pavilions."*

78:33 *"Surely for the God-fearing awaits a place of security, gardens, vineyards and maidens of swelling breasts, like of age and a cup overflowing."*

The teaching of the Hadith about the position of women

➢ **Between the Qur'an and the Hadith**

The whole community in Medina was aware that Aisha was Muhammad's favourite wife. Aisha was just a year or two younger than Fatima. Fatima's marriage to Muhammad's nephew Ali was arranged soon after Aisha's marriage was consummated. The seeds of rivalry between Fatima and Aisha began early and developed into bitter enmity. This eventually led to the Sunni-Shiite schism. The temperaments of the two young women were very different. Fatima was shy, quiet and self-effacing. Aisha was quick-witted and outspoken. This led to a growing feud between Ali and Abu Bakr (Aisha's father). This feud was to threaten the political future.

When Muhammad died, Aisha was 19 years old. As a "mother of the believers" she could not marry again. All she had was influence because she had spent so much time with Muhammad. Originally 2210 Hadith were attributed to her. Bukhari included only 174. She had much influence during the time that her father, Abu Bakr, was Caliph.

At Muhammad's death Fatima very publicly fought for Ali's right to be Caliph. By that time all her sisters had died childless and so her sons and daughters were Muhammad's only descendants. She stated that the leadership of Muslims should remain with Muhammad's blood relatives. The Shiat Ali (party of Ali) was formed. Fatima always refused to recognise Abu Bakr. Conspiracy theorists maintain that her death six months after her father was not due to illness! Abu Bakr died after two years. Aisha hated Omar as a violent misogynist, but she hated Ali more.

It was largely Omar who changed a lot of the traditions laid down by Muhammad regarding women. He made stoning the official punishment for adultery and pressed for the hijab for all Muslim women – not only the prophet's wives. He wanted to prevent women praying in mosques. Aisha's influence in restraining much of this was noticeable.

On Omar's death, Aisha again supported Othman, his successor. When Othman was murdered Ali finally became Caliph 24 years after his father-in-law's death. In opposition to Ali's rule, Aisha made a brave attempt to overthrow Ali. If she had succeeded the balance of power between men and women in Islam might have been very different! She led an army into battle against Ali in 'the battle of the camel'. She rode ahead of her troops encouraging them to fight bravely on a camel. Seventy men died trying to protect her. She lost and many of those who supported the equality of women died. This defeat proved disastrous for Muslim women.

A Hadith was circulated at this time: "No people who place a woman over their affairs will prosper."

Aisha finally made her peace with Ali on the condition that she retired from politics into seclusion.

The Hadith were collected between 256 AH (AD 870) and 303 AH (AD 915) – i.e. between 240-280 years after the death of the prophet.

- **The Hadith**

In many ways the Hadith have a greater impact on the lives of Muslims than the Qur'an. It is the Hadith that determine the place of women in classical Islam. The Hadith is a commentary on the Qur'an and its explanation. This is why Muslims always rely on the Hadith to explain and interpret the Qur'an. The difference between the Qur'an and the Hadith is that the Qur'an was supposed to be revealed to Muhammad directly through the angel Gabriel. The Hadith were revealed through the life of Muhammad. The Hadith is to be followed exactly.

- **Man's superiority and woman's deficiencies**

  Based on the Qur'anic verse 4:34 it is assumed that men are superior to women because women are deficient.

  - ✓ <u>Deficient in intelligence and religion</u>

    Sahih Al Bukhari 1:301 *"Narrated Abu Sa'id Al Khudri: Once Allah's messenger went out to the Musalla of Eid-al-Adha or Al-Fitr. Then he passed by women and said, 'O women! Give alms as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of hell fire are you women!' They asked, 'Why is it so O Allah's messenger?' He replied, 'You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious, sensible man would be led astray by some of you.' The women asked, 'O Allah's messenger what is deficient in our intelligence and religion?' He said, 'Is not the witness of two women equal to the witness of one man?' They replied in the affirmative. He said, 'This is the deficiency in your intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast while having a period?' The women replied in the affirmative. He said, 'This is the deficiency in your religion'."*

- ✓ <u>Deficient in gratitude</u>

  Sahih Al Bukhari 1:28 *"Narrated by Ibn Abbas: The prophet said, 'I was shown hell fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were disbelievers or ungrateful.' It was asked, 'Do they disbelieve in Allah (or are the ungrateful to Allah)?' He replied, 'They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favours and the good done to them.' If you have always been good to one of them for a period of time and then she sees something in you not of her liking she will say, 'I have never seen any good from you.' "*

So women are deficient in three areas:

- Ingratitude to their husbands
- Inadequate intelligence
- Inadequacy in their religious duties

- **The spiritual standing of women**

  The Hadith describes a good woman as follows:

  Mishkat al-Masabih 1:43 *"The virtuous wife – if her husband bids her, she obeys. If he looks at her, she pleases him. If he gives her an oath, she fulfils it and if he is absent from her she guards herself and his property."*

  It is believed that the majority of women will end up in hell because:

  Sahih al-Bukhari 7:33: *"The prophet said, 'I have not left any calamity after me more detrimental to men than women.' "*

  The reason assumed is that women sexually tempt men to commit adultery so losing all honour in this life and hell in the future.

  In 1145:6600 Sahih Muslim records: *"Among the inmates of paradise the women would form the minority."*

  So women are the greatest stumbling block to the eternal destiny of men.

  Kanz-al-Ummal 21:825: *"Had it not been for women, God would have been truly, truly worshipped."*

  Kanz-al-Ummal 21:825: *"There is no calamity I fear in my nation more than women."*

  Kanz-al-Ummal 21:831: *"Men perished the day they obeyed women."*

- **The role of women**

  - ✓ <u>Being a toy</u>

    It was a common saying in the first two centuries that the role of woman is as a toy for man. Muhammad is reported to have said, *'The woman is a toy, whoever takes her let him take care of her.'*

  - ✓ <u>Being a source of shame</u>

    A woman has on her body ten 'awrat' (something to be ashamed of).

    Kunz-al-Ummal 22:858: *"Ali reported the prophet saying, 'Woman has ten awrat. When she gets married the husband covers one and when she dies the grave covers ten.' "*

    Different schools of law state what these 'awrat' are. The Hanbali (the strictest school) say they include feet, ankles, hands, face and hair. These should all be covered. Others say it doesn't include the face and hands, but the face should be without make up. (This includes the Hanifi school and the Maleki school.)

All schools agree that a woman should cover her body. This is the reason behind wearing the hijab.

Sunan a-Turmizi states a Hadith, *"The woman is awrat. When she goes outside the devil welcomes her."*

So, in herself she is an object of shame who, in exposing herself in any way, delights the devil. This is the reason women are discouraged from going outside unless they are fully covered.

There is another Hadith, *"A woman is closest to God's face if she is found in the core of her house. And the prayer of the woman in the house is better than her prayer in the mosque."*

- ✓ Being like a rib

  The character of women is likened to a rib – bent, and crooked.

  Sahih al-Bukhari 8:113,114: *"A woman is like a rib; if you try and straighten her she will break. So if you want to get benefit from her, do so while she still has some crookedness."* This 'bentness' is inherent and incurable.

- **A husband's rights over his wife**

  - ✓ The husband's desires must be met at once.

    Miskut al-Masabih 1:61 *"The Prophet of Allah said, 'When a man calls his wife to satisfy his desire, let her come to him though she is occupied at the oven.' "*

    Sahih al-Bukhari 7:121: *"The Messenger of Allah said, 'Whenever a man calls his wife to his bed and she refuses and then he passes the night in an angry mood, the angels curse her till she gets up at dawn.' "*

    Sahih Muslim restates this: *"When a man calls his wife to his bed and she refuses, the one who is in the heaven will be angry with her until he (her husband) is pleased with her."*

  - ✓ The wife's obedience is the condition of her entering paradise.

    All a woman's religious deeds are useless if she disobeys her husband.

    Mishkat al-Masabih 2:74: *"There are three persons whose prayer will not be accepted, nor their virtues be taken above; the runaway slave until he returns back to his master, the woman with whom her husband is dissatisfied and the drunk until he becomes sober."*

    Mishkat al-Masabih 2:60: *"Whosoever female dies while her husband is pleased with her will enter paradise."*

    Kanz-al-Ummal 22:868: *"The Prophet once said to a woman, 'Watch how you treat your husband for he is your paradise and your hell.' "*

    This obedience to her husband is almost an act of worship. Muhammad said:

    Mishkat al-Masabih 1:70: *"Had I ordered anyone to prostrate before anyone, I would have ordered women to prostrate before their husbands on account of man's rights over women ordained by Allah."*

    In Mishkat al-Masabih 1:62 we read: *"Muraz reported the Messenger of Allah who said, 'A woman does not give trouble to her husband in this world but his wife of the pure-eyed huris does not say to her: 'Do not give him trouble. May Allah destroy you, he is only a passing guest with you and it is very near that he will leave you to come to us.' "*

The editor writes a footnote to this Hadith: "No woman should given trouble and anxiety to her husband. She is to give him ease and comfort in his household. If she acts otherwise, she will not be able to be his wife in Paradise. There the huris will be his consorts."

- **A woman's rights**

  This is a Hadith:

  Sunan Ibn Mayah 1850: *"O Messenger of Allah, what right has the wife of one among us got over him? He said, 'It is that you give her food when you have taken your food, that you shall clothe her when you have clothed yourself, that you shall not slap her on the face nor revile her nor desert her except within the house.' "*

  So a woman's right is simple food and clothing after her husband has had enough and no public humiliation!

  If the wife fails to obey, the husband's duty (as we have seen) is admonishment, sexual desertion and finally beating. According to a Hadith, *"The beating should not cause permanent injury."* (Mishkat al-Masabih 1:76).

  The English translator ofthe Mishkat al-Masabih says that beating is allowed in 4 cases:

  (a) When she doesn't wear fineries though her husband wants these.

  (b) When she is called for sexual intercourse and refuses without a lawful excuse.

  (c) When she is ordered to take a bath from impurities for prayer and refuses.

  (d) When she goes outside without the permission of her husband.

  There is a Hadith that says, *"The Prophet said, 'The man is not to be asked why he beat his wife.' "*

- **Divorce**

  Sahih al-Bukhari 7:10: *"In Islam, a man may say to his brother, 'Have a look at either of my wives (and if you wish) I will divorce her for you.' "*

The Conclusion

Dr. Sa'dawi, in her book ***'The Hidden Face of Eve'***, wrote:

"Under the Islamic system of marriage a woman has no rights unless we consider that a slave has rights under a slave system. Marriage, in as far as women are concerned, is just like slavery."

In Ihy'a Ulum el-Din written by the great Arab theologian Ghazali seven hundred years ago, it says much the same thing.

"The most satisfying and final word is that marriage is a form of slavery. The woman is man's slave and her duty therefore is absolute obedience to the husband in all that he asks of her person."

So Ghazali sees marriage as a master-slave relationship. The sad fact is that for millions of Muslim women this **is** their reality!

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