

Achieving Virtues and Perfections of The Human Potential of Women in The Holy Quran

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Abstract

Religious schools and communities have expressed different opinions about the real perfection of women. Obviously, identifying the women's ultimate perfection has essential role to determine fate of them and human society. Among the schools, comprehensive Islamic law which is originated of revelation, have considered enormous status for women by paying great attention to women traits. Based on Quran attitude, women are at the same position as men in terms of humanity. Certainly, there are a lot of wise genesis differences between men and women, but the main addressed in divine revelations is human truth and gender has no role in awarding the guidance. In Quran third longer Sura , is called "Al- Nnesa" that means women and also In other ten Suras there have been pointed out about some women's affairs . Virtues of exemplar women are introduced by Quran as follows: the wife of Pharaoh, faith exemplar; mother of Moses (AS), exemplar of surrender to God, the wife of Moses (AS), modesty exemplar; mother of Mary (SA), exemplar of honesty and sincerity, Mary (SA) exemplar of chastity and modesty ; wife of Zechariah (AS) exemplar of righteous and obedience (SA) the wife of Job, a patient exemplar and the Queen of Saba, exemplar of surrender to God orders. In some Ahadith of the Prophet (SAW), master of women in the paradise (and in other Ahadith, world) are four: Mary (mother of Jesus), Asia (wife of Pharaoh), Khadija and Fatima. And the most perfect one is Fatima. These Contents in the teaching of Islam itself indicate possibility of growth and excellence in female personalities to the top of humanity virtues. Spiritual virtues of women in Quran are: 1- individual virtues (piety and moral virtues) 2- social virtues. Women are able to achieve to best degree of sincerity, faith and piety the same as men. They are equal in being Muslim, faithful, obedience ability, truthfulness, tolerance, fear of God and give alms, fasting, self-preservation, remembering God and finally in extract of all virtues which is piety, (Al- AHZab 35). Moreover, Quran puts men and women together in undertaking social responsibilities. In ignorant and superstitious communities in which women would only be considered as objects, Quran takes over a heavy responsibility such as friendship and supervision, invitation to goodness and denial of badness, standing prayer and giving alms. The Prophet has got votes from women. This study is a library one and in deductive method.

The main resource is the holy Quran. Thus, men and women are equal in enjoyment of business and undertaking their duties and responsibilities and rewards. Physiological differences between men and women are essential to the survival of human life that builds differences in some duties and rights. The

purpose of this study is to describe the types of virtues in the Quran for women, which reach us to this result that obtaining human virtues for men and women as a ratio, it is important Because the Quran from the perspective of both are equal in humanity and virtue are superior to them.

Keywords: Islam, Women, Virtues, perfection, Position
Comments:

Introduction

Social history of human often indicates that women been away of their humanistic status they deserve in humanistic societies and they even have been in doubt of having humanistic identity. Positions and statuses of women in culture of every society indicate the importance of women to them and different religious and social schools have had various ideas and opinions about actual perfections of women. Among these schools, comprehensive schools, Islam, in which commands are originated of reveals, by having great approach and considering all specifications of women, have regarded great and valuable positions for them.

Gustave Le Bon, French thinker stated in his book "The Arab Civilization":

"Islamic virtuous deeds are not limited to honoring and respecting women, but rather, we can add that Islam is the first religion to honor and respect women. We can easily prove this by illustrating that all religions and nations, prior to the advent of Islam, caused much harm and insult to women." ¹ (Le Bon, 1884, 488)

According to Islam's approach, obtaining all human virtues are possible with regard to their duties and natural and actual capabilities.

Sir Hamilton (1788_1856) English thinker and philosopher in his book on Islam and Arab Civilization says:

"The rules, regulations and verdicts concerning women in Islam are clear, frank and open. Islam capitalizes on the complete care that should be given to the protection of a woman against anything that may harm her personally, or cause ill-fame to her reputation or character."² (Hamilton, 1989, 166)

¹ Le Bon, Gustave. [1884] 1974. *The World of Islamic Civilization*. New York: Tudor Pub. Co. p.488

² Sir Hamilton (1788_1856), *Islam and Arab Civilization*, published by the Royal Asiatic Society, Princeton U. Press, 1989, 166

Today, Muslim women are between two ignorance bands. First one is the traditional ignorance which considers women in lower levels in comparison to men and has left women back of much perfection and humanistic sights in excuse of protecting her security and modesty. And contemporary ignorance era which illustrates women superficially, keep them away of their actual identities and levels because of social participation of women and defending of their rights and does not let them obtaining many moral virtues.

Islam's illustration of women based on the main works indicates that women are human, but they are not men. Fields of life are divided to two different parts, humanistic and gender.

Humanistic part has nothing to do with their genders, in this stage both are active and seeking perfections. But in this stage, women should remain women and do their activities and be stand with them.

Quran has considered an equal possibility of obtaining moral virtues for men and women. They are equal to obtaining individual virtues like, Muslim being, faithful being, obedience, truthfulness, tolerance and finally origin of all of the virtues, i.e. piety. Although these virtues have been used generally for whole people (Muslims or Mumens) including men and women, they are particularly used for women and some women have considered as successful exemplars in having such perfections.

At this article, we deal with different kinds of virtues which are mentioned by Holy Quran about women

Equal Possibility of Having God Gifts Enjoying

Holy Quran has given the best creation to human regardless to gender.

(4/تین) لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَن تَقْوِيم

In the perspective of the Quran, the creation of men and women was the same and they have equal identity. Quran says:

يا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ. (حجرات/13)

Thus, according to Quran, there is no difference between men and women in terms of obtaining spiritual sta and piety. .

وَمَنْ عَمِلْ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً

(97/نحل) .

•In case of equality of men and women, will be rewarded both the same

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ إِنَّي لَا أَضِيعُ عَمَلٌ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ

(195/آل عمران)

Therefore, God SWT, created human and divided them to two different genders in order to subsistence and perpetuating their generation and in what is requirement of human kind (human species) are equal and in some traits and characteristics that are requirement of each gender are different and these differences cannot damage to their humanity.

(78/مهدی، شخصیت و حقوق زن در اسلام، شرکت انتشارات علمی و فرهنگی، تهران، 1382 مهریزی).

The human Reality, is neither male nor female. In fact the Reality human makes up his soul not his body, man's humanity, his soul identify his human species no his body and no the total of body and soul.

76 جوادی آملی، عبدالله، زن در آئینه جلال و جمال، مرکز نشر فرهنگی رجا، تهران، 1369 ق.

Based on Quran approach, males and females have been originated of the same origin and have got the same identity.

Tabatabayee believes that there is unity of identity between men and women by philosophic reasons.

(152-153/4/دفتر انتشارات اسلامی، قم 1376. 32 . طباطبائی، سیدمحمدحسین، المیزان، دفتر انتشارات اسلامی، قم 1366

Therefore it can be said that every species perfection which a gender can obtain, another gender can obtain it as well including the perfection which will be gained by believing God and complying of his commands.

The best and most complete meaning indicates this is the verse says:

(195/آل عمران). إِيَّا لَا أُضِيْعُ عَمَلٍ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنْتَى بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ :

Virtues of Women in the Quran

the Following verses state the moral values that men and women are partnership in them:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيراً وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْراً عظيماً

(35/احزاب)

Quran is expected women alongside men in the field of social responsibility, having social virtues and proper behaviors and propose heavy responsibilities and virtues such as friendship and supervision, Enjoin what is good (Amr-Bil-Ma'roof) and Forbid what is wrong (Nahi-Anil-Munkar), prayers and giving charity for women in primitive and superstitious society of that time.

المؤمنون و المومنات بعضهم اولياء بعض يامرون بالمعروف و ينهاون عن المنكر و يقيمون الصلوة

ويوتون الزكوه و يطيعون الله ورسوله اولئك سيرحم الله ان الله عزيز حكيم توبة 71

ان المصدقين و المصدقات و اقرضوا الله قرضاً حسناً يضاعف لهم و لهم اجر كريم: 18 حديد -

Therefore men and women have the ability to work in these areas and to achieve perfection and excellence.

Considering Virtues of Mentioned Women in Quran

The long third chapter in the Quran is called "Al- Nnesaa" i.e. women and a chapter is named to a perfect lady, Miriam (SA), and there have talked about other ladies in ten different chapters.

There have been mentioned fifteen different names of faithful ladies in the Quran, in which virtues of nine of them is much more emphasized than others.

1- Eve, Adam's Wife, Was of Repentant

Eve, mother of human, had been positioned in the paradise with Adam by God:

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَرَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

One of the popular characters of God is repentance i.e. returning towards the God out of any sin and Adam and Eve after having the Forbidden Fruit said:

اعراف: 23 قَالَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

And God accepted their repentance, and repentance is the first step of the guidance of human.

2 - Asieh Wife of Pharaoh, Was A Faithful and Enthusiastic Person to God

Asiah, daughter of Mozahem and Pharaoh's wife, is a person who has been appreciated by God for three things as below:

1-Has been kind to prophets

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّةُ عَيْنٍ لِي وَلَكَ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ

2- Has had requested a house in the paradise

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ

3- Has had requested to save her out of pharaoh's sins and cruel people.

وَ نَجِّنِي مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَ عَمَلِهِ وَ نَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

Therefore, Asieh's actions are appreciable for supporting prophet of God and persevering her faith and passion to Allah SWT.

3 - Moses's Mother Was of Relying People to God

Yukabed mother of Moses (AS) who God has mentioned her in Quran and revealed to her and given her two orders, two prohibitions and two

وَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خَفَتْ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَ لَا تَخَافِي وَ لَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَ جَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

3 - Moses's Mother Was of Relying People to God

Yukabed mother of Moses (AS) who has been mentioned by God in the holy Quran and revealed and given two orders, two forbiddances and two enunciation.

وَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خَفَتْ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَ لَا تَخَافِي وَ لَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَ جَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

4- Shoaib's daughter, wife of Moses, an exemplar of modesty

God has attributed the shame (and modesty) virtue to daughter of Shoaib, Safora (wife of Moses):

فَجَاءَتْهُ إِخْدِيئُهَا عَلَيَّ اسْتِخْيَاءً قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ

5- Queen of Sheba, who is reached to the felicity by her wise choice.

Belgheis thought properly in the Solomon's letter and said:

قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَ أَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

She saved herself and her country and her name remained due to her intelligence and wisdom.

6- Zechariah's wife was of overtaking of the alms and prayers.

Elizabeth or Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharias, John's mother is of women who have been admired in Quran. God gave John to her abnormally.

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَ وَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَ أَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ زَوْجَهُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَ يَدْعُونََنَا رَغَبًا وَ رَهَبًا وَ كَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ

7- Wife of Imran was of honests and loyal women:

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي

Hanna, Imran's wife, mother of Mary (AS) vowed sincerely and reached to peak of honesty by her loyalty to the vow.

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ

8-The emanation of perfections in Maryam (SA)

Maryam, the daughter of Imran is mother of Jesus and god has named a chapter of Quran in her name.

She reached to position in terms of spiritual statues which God introduces her as a perfect exemplar:

«و ضرب الله مثلا للذين آمنوا مريم ابنت عمران

God has explicitly mentioned her name for 34 times in Quran as well as her excellent traits either directly or indirectly;

Such as, good growth (وانبتها نباتا حسنا), the owner of apse ((آل عمران، 37)) being honest (كلما دخل عليها الزكريا المحراب) believe in the divine scriptures ((مائدة، 75) و امه صديقة) Virtue and modesty ((مريم، 12) (مريم ابنة عمران التي احصنت فرجها) (تحريم، 12) (اذ قالت (الملائكة يا مريم ان الله يبشرك بغلام...))

These phrases about Mary in Quran is high. Some how states in expression of Maryam's position:

«و اذ قالت الملائكة يا مريم ان الله اصطفىك و طهرک و اصطفىک على نساء العالمين* يا مريم اقمي لربک و اسجدي و ارکعي مع الراكعين» (آل عمران، 42 و 43)؛

She became the most perfect woman in the world due to her modesty, chastity, perfection.

9- Fatima, perfect exemplar of virtues

One of the admired women in the last holy book, Quran, is Fatima, daughter of Mohammad (SAW), God's prophet that have got many different virtues including:

1 – In Al- Ata chapter:

... يُوْفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا . وَ يُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَ يَتِيمًا وَ أَسِيرًا . إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ ... (دهر: 24-27)

These verses of this chapter of Quran are about a vow which is done by Fatimah and Ali (as) (her husband) for treating their children (Hassan and Hossein) and after the recovery they lived up to their pledge which was being fasting for three days and gave their own meals to poverty and orphans and just drunk water instead after breaking their fast.

This story is quoted in many different sources such as:

2- The another best witness of greatness of Fatima is Mobahala verse.

فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَانَنَا وَ ابْنَاتِنَا وَ نِسَاءَنَا وَ نِسَاءَكُمْ

All interpreters have written and certified that there have been no woman with Moahammad (SAW) except Fatima.

Prophetical Hadith indicates the only four women have reached perfection:

«أَفْضَلُ نِسَاءِ الْجَنَّةِ أَرْبَعٌ: خَدِيجَةُ بِنْتُ خُوَيْلِدٍ وَ فَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ مَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ وَ آسِيَةُ بِنْتُ مُرَاجِمٍ، إِمْرَأَةٌ فِرْعَوْنُ» (سيوطي، جلال-

الدين؛ الدر المنثور في تفسير المأثور، ص 246)

«فاطمه سيده نساء اهل الجنة الا ما كان من مريم بنت عمران.» [احمد بن حنبل مسند ج 4 ص 159

Ayesha has quoted that the Prophet said something to her daughter (Fatima) before his death, she started crying first but after that laughed. Then, Fatima expressed this that her father said in second:

«... الا ترضين ان تكوني سيده نساء العالمين او نساء هذه الامه؟ [سنن ابن ماجه ج 1 ص 518 و صحيح مسلم ج 2 ص 5-6]»

Therefore, despite of all virtues those are mentioned by holy Quran for women, perfections of Maryam and above her Fatima are really considerable.

Anyway, according to the perfections are mentioned in the holy verses for women, it can be understood that the virtues are for humans and have nothing to do with gender differences.

Conclusion:

Thus, the Quran's holy verses are addressed actuality of humans. So, women are addressed in all of the Quranical verses. Giving the virtues are based on the actuality of humans and men and women have equal rights of obtaining the prizes, virtues and punishments. Certainly, there are some actual differences between females and males which are effective in determining their duties and obligations. But, their legal differences have nothing to do with the gender difference and the mentioned virtues of women in the holy Quran let us know the ability of having them for females as well.

Quran believes that women are able to reach to peak of faithfulness and wisdom the same as men and have equal right in being Muslims, faithful, obedience, truthfulness, tolerance, god- scared, paying alms, fasting, stopping their ambitions, remembering God and finally the origination of all of these virtues i.e. wisdom.