

(Episode: 40)

The stature of woman in Islam and Christianity

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-The broadcaster: would you tell us about the stature of woman in Islam and Christianity

-Father Zakaria: in order to answer that question we have to refer to the references, what they said about the women to have a proper judgment not a quick one

Before mentioning the stature of woman in Islam, let me first begin with the stature of woman in Christianity as you asked me in your introduction to mention it in Christianity also

When God created the woman Eva, he created her from Adam's rib, he didn't create her from his head not to be superior to him, he didn't create her also from his feet. Not to let him squash her by his feet, but he created her from his rib to be equal to him and in his level

The verse mentioned in the beginning affirms that" Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man" here is the equality in the Lord.

The woman dignity in Christianity is well known, as woman is Virgin Mary, look to her worth, dignity, respect and grandiosity, she has all the dignity and respect, also in the holy bible there were ladies as prophets like Prophet Debora , and Prophet Mary, the sister of Hârûn and not virgin Mary , she was a prophet and a judge, we have also lord savant as Phoebe , so woman in Christianity is regarded a equal to man in her dignity ,stature and respect

In Christianity woman is not merchandise for man's amusement, and not for man's enjoyment, but it is a holy secret binding them together

Actually, that arises from the fact that: man had accepted the Christ in his life, so he got his worth , also woman accepted the Christ in her life, so she got the same worth, from that the binding between them is based on mutual respect , mutual appreciation , mutual love and mutual sacrifice

Would you let me read for you what was written in the Holy Bible, to see the stature of woman and her holy bond with man?

In Ephesus, chapter 5:" Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church., just as the church is submissive to Christ, so wives must be submissive to their husbands in everything"

What about the devise for man (Husbands):" love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it", as he sacrificed by himself for the church to rescue it – so in the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself.

And the wife should respect her husband. "Nevertheless each of you must also love his own wife even as himself"

The Holy Bible gave 3 devises for man a sacrificing love and 3 devises for woman a submissive love – it is a harmony, accordance and union

That's in short the stature of woman in Christianity

- About the stature of woman in Islam

In Sahih Al-Bokhary, menses chapter: the prophet says about women:" those deficient in mind and religion" that's a devaluation of woman stature as it is obvious from that as the meaning is obvious " deficient in mind and religion", but why? Why?

**That's because woman has no similar stature as man, as she exists for the sake of man
Woman in cow chapter (Surat Al-Baqarah) 2:82 not equal to man in testimony, as it is supposed to have 2 witnesses for testimony if they were men, but if they were women it must be 2 women in the place of a man, but can we replace the 2 men by 4 women, No there must be on a man among the witnesses, so her witness in half of that of a man**

The heritage: the same thing applies; woman inherits half of man's heritage, as in woman chapter (Surat An-Nisa') 4:11

It is really a strange situation why? Why? Why woman is devaluated,

they are telling that's for the heritage to be confined to the family only, and so what, let it go outside the family, that's a legal right must be given to the one who deserves it fairly

So there is no fairness and justice .no equality between man and woman

So from the books and references there are big question marks

The Muslim woman is veiled, why then man is not veiled?

That exists as we know in The Confederates chapter (Surat Al-Ahzab), the veiling of woman, that was the suggestion of Omer Ibn Al-Khatib who said to the prophet: look women are facing intruders of pious and impious people, so he suggested to veil them and the verse came down with that meaning, here Omer said I accorded with my lord in 3 things among them the veiling of women

The most serious of what I have read is what was mentioned in Sahih Al Bokhary, the prayer book, a converse saying:" woman is like dog and donkey as she disrupts the prayer, if someone touches woman before praying and he had already performed ablution, his ablution is ruined and he must do ablution again

-The broadcaster: do you have a proof for that?

-Father Zakaria: yes, Sahih Al Bokhary, the prayer book

Man is thinking why? Did the Muslim woman think of that situation? Would she accept that? She is subdued and can't object

It is even More than that, really I am feeling a real bitterness when I am reading such things, as woman was created on God's image, she has her own worth, dignity ,her own feelings, and stature, that is unfair

Could you imagine in woman chapter (Surat An-Nisa'), verse 15 and 35: it was mentioned that man or the husband can punish his wife by striking her, abandoning her and imprisoning her to death

-The broadcaster: that is for a reason?

- Father Zakaria: with or without a reason, my dear whatever the reason was, who is among us without a sin? And is it an accidental one or a life style, man is mistaking and learning from his mistakes as he goes on in his life

You reminded me by the case of a sheikh of a mosque in Spain, he wrote a book giving men advices concerning executing that verse he advised men to strike their wives with a soft stick and in places leaving no marks on her

-The broadcaster: what a shameful advice!

- Father Zakaria: yes, he was sued and punished and sentenced for jail with suspension of verdict's execution

Could you imagine that trickery?

Now, I am asking a very serious question , now as we are in the twenty first century ,is the Islamic legislation valid for every time , or as happened during the time of prophet Muhammad and quran as verses were coming interrupted and in succession one after the other and verdicts are developing according to the circumstances , with verses abrogating others

Do we need new verses now, with the changing of circumstances and women being involved in life, working and going outdoors, a question needing an answer?

Also something strange in woman chapter (Surat An-Nisa') 24: speaking about a women being merchandise, for a man to have a pleasure with her he should give her a wage

-The broadcaster: you mean the temporary (or pleasure) marriage, that has certain regulations, like if a man is travelling away, so instead of committing adultery he rather marry

- Father Zakaria: It is Ok if he marries, but that's a temporary marriage, he gives her money for the time he spends with her an hour or two, a day or two

So it is a moral issue and a holy sacrament

So from the beginning is marriage a holy sacrament? Is it a respectful commitment between a husband and wife?

So let him give woman the full right as man , as man can marry two, three or four and what his right hand can possesses, so if there is fairness why there is no verse permitting woman to marry two, three or four and what her right hand can possesses

-The broadcaster: that's unacceptable and irrational

- Father Zakaria: Excuse me, if this is unacceptable for woman so it is unacceptable for man, where is justice – it is not because it is irrational, we just ignore it

-The broadcaster: you are right – what about the divorce issue also, in Christianity there is a divorce

Father Zakaria: in Christianity, the Christ himself said: any man who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery" as he will let her to have commitment with another man while she is still committed to him, so it is a holy sacrament and also the same for the man

In Islam, he can divorce her once, and twice then if he divorces for the third time, she needs a facilitator or Mohalel (محلل), that's well known for everybody; a man who is not her husband to marry her, then after divorcing her, she can go back to her husband if he wishes for that, that's an obvious prophetic converse

There was a woman who came to the prophet, she told him my husband divorced me , then I was married to another man , he was.....she uttered a word meaning that he was not competent with women , then he asked her: then you want to go back to your first husband, she replied: of course, he told her: of course not , until he taste your "Othilatekعسيلاتك" (sweetness)and you taste his "Othilatohعسيلاته" (sweetness) , Of course the meaning is hidden in his mind

So what is her guilt, suppose that her husband had temperament and divorced her

A man in a bad temperament divorced his wife, then divorced her once again ,then a third time ,doesn't he deserve punishment for that ?look here, they will take his wife and give her to another man ,as if she is the guilty one , what guilt did she commit, this poor woman?

Where is the logic?

-The broadcaster: what about the paradise? What is the portion of woman in the paradise in Christianity and Islam?

- **Father Zakaria:** the Christ spoke with people when they asked him: as in the old canon there was a system that if a man marries a woman and he dies without having children then his brother would marry his wife and when he had children from her they will be attributed to the deceased man , for the offspring of that man to be continued , they asked the Christ: there was a man who married, then died without having offspring then his brother took his wife , but he died also without having offspring , they were seven brothers and after all they died ,so in heaven to whom she will be a wife? . The Christ said to them you are mistaking, is there a marriage in heaven? In heaven they neither marry nor get married but they will live as God's angels, so in heaven there is no marriage, woman will be in a body of light as an angel ,also man will be in a body of light as an angel, they will be a holy spiritual family, enjoying living with God

- In Islam, the situation is so much different as the believer when he dies will get the paradise women and immortal boys; they are boys not for service

Someone made a very big research about them, named Muhammad Galal Keshk, they confiscated his research, he sued them in front of the court, so they formed a committee from Al-Azhar scholars to study his research , they found it completely correct , and nothing wrong in it , he wrote: the immortal boys are for sexual pleasure

The broadcaster: that's really a repugnant saying, so that's the situation in the paradise, Ok, that's for man, what about woman what she will get in the paradise?

- Father Zakaria: nothing, she will get nothing in the paradise, so even in the paradise there is no equality between man and woman