



# AL-GHAZALI ABOUT THE ROLE AND VALUE OF A WOMAN AS A CRUCIAL MEMBER OF SOCIETY

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## ABSTRACT

*Given article is dedicated to thoughts Abu Hamida Ghazali about woman and family, and about that role, which they play of welfare society. The Material of the article is founded on composition of the thinker “Nasihah ul – mulk”.*

**KEYWORDS:** *morality, thinker, Hadith, a good temper, religion, society, sciences, wife, woman, spiritual values, faith, family, development, heritage*

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## INTRODUCTION

For each of us, morality is a necessary criterion for making us a worthy member of society. Today’s science characterizes morality as a synonym for the concept of “morality”. Morality covers all aspects of human life, regulating all our actions. The society does not tolerate immoral attitudes towards it. The morality of each one of us is determined by our inner spiritual world and is one of the forms of social consciousness. Issues of human morality today are among the main. The decline of morality in society leads to the death of many achievements of human civilization. The concepts of the moral attitude touched upon by Ghazali in his writings are relevant today.

The Thinker is a multifaceted scientist, the author of more than 70 works devoted to various fields of science. The concept and criteria of morality occupy a significant place in the works of the thinker. Basically, Ghazali in his writings examines the relationship of morality with religion. The morality of a Muslim and a Muslim woman is central to his writings.

The main sources that determine the morality of a person are, in the opinion of Ghazali, the Qur’an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, and bring his saying: “I am sent only to improve the nobility of morality”. Ghazali quotes Muhammad’s speech to show the role that the prophet played in the lives of Muslims. The formation of morality among Muslims Ghazali

connects with the religion of Islam. After all, people are not born with a good temper, but become so gradually. And the thinker sees the reason in the Qur’an, in the instructions of Muhammad, in religious rituals.

A true believer and a moral person is one who is executable in these teachings. “But some of those who refer themselves to Islam can be frivolous about the performance of acts of worship, demonstrating to their society their strong desire to observe these rituals, but at the same time, accomplishing very much of what is not compatible in any way with a noble disposition and true faith”. If you perform all religious rituals, give people good advice, and do not control your actions, then you cannot be considered a true believer. The ethic of Ghazali follows from the Muslim religion: “The role of morality is more than important, therefore it is necessary to constantly instruct others and give them advice so that in their minds and hearts the fact that faith, piety and morality are consistent and interrelated elements of one chain, links which are inseparable”.

The thinker clearly indicates that morality cannot exist separately from religion. Ghazali elevates morality to the degree of certain insight emanating from the side of Islam. “One of the Prophet Muhammad’s hadith sounds like this:” A person who does not lean towards my morality and does not remember me will lose the way to paradise”.



## MAIN PART

The Prophet managed to create a whole body of moral norms, following which the Muslim could, maybe sure of his place, prepared in paradise. After the unification of the Arabs under one religion, Muhammad wanted to control society. Islam was to be the main regulator of human relations. It is a religion based on moral norms, and closely interrelated with morality, that determines the behavior of each member. Abu Hamid Ghazali managed to create a set of moral norms, by returning to the sources of Islam, which distinguished him from other theologians of his time. "It is the duty of every Muslim to begin with his soul, correct it by strictly enforcing the regulations and refusing the forbidden actions, then teach the inhabitants of his house, then, having done this, turn to neighbors, then to the inhabitants of his quarter, then to the inhabitants of the city.....".

As V.V.Naumkin, according to Ghazali, a man in his natural constitution has a certain set of "natural inclinations", except for this, and the higher instinct, which is the basis of high human morality. Those the moral qualities of each person are laid by nature, but this does not mean that they cannot be improved or changed. The thinker divides the human soul into three kinds. Under the first, Ghazali has in view of the animal soul (an-nafs al ammara bi-s-su), which unites all bad attributes in a person, and it must be combated. The second human (an-nafs al-lavvama) and the third divine (annafs al-mutmainna) manifestations of the same inner higher principle in man, only the human soul is what prevents the animal soul, fights it, and the divine soul is "the soul pacified by the divine command", which is the peak of the moral state of man. Each person has a certain kind of soul, but at the same time, in our opinion, manifestations of each of these species exist in man.

And from how much more qualities of one of these kinds of souls, so this person has morality and corresponding spiritual qualities. But all people need certain moments in improving the moral qualities that are the basis of social relationships. In addition, according to the thinker, not all actions of a person are predetermined from above, and in the perfection of one's soul, one must sometimes rely on free will, "according to which the person's responsibility is limited by the fact that he" assumes "the commission of this or that act". Since the entire system of Ghazali is based on the principles of the Shari'ah, while expressing the role of religion and morality, he quotes the words of the Prophet "the most perfect faith of that believer who has the most good character and who is most affectionate with his loved ones", once again emphasizes that the morality of a Muslim is closely intertwined with his religion plays a crucial role in building relations between members of society.

Speaking about education, the thinker is sure that morality is developed over the years in education. "And the body is not perfect from birth, it is improved in the process of growth and development, which is promoted by food, so the soul is created with shortcomings, but it is improved through education, character improvement and nutrition by its sciences". The thinker is sure that moral qualities are not always given by nature, but are earned by the person himself. Similar to many great thinkers of the past, Al-Ghazali, a great scientist theology's, analyst of foundations of Islam, the person who regarded the issues concerning the human social being from the position of Islamic doctrines, could not walk past the socio-philosophical concept of the issue that is topical even today.

Theoretical analyses Al-Ghazali discusses the role of a woman in the society, explains the important role that she plays in social life and in the sphere of education particularly in his work "Instructions to the Rulers". In doing so, while considering politics, he considers that it (politics) includes such diverse sides of human existence as family, slaves, raising children, choosing a wife and treating her.

At the same time the cardinal postulate in his reflections about the role and place of women in the society is his assertion of the absolutely objective truth that a woman is an important and basic member of the society without whom there is no development and function of the society, education in the family and continuation of human kind. With an eye to this he emphasizes that "the building of the civilized world and the continuation of Adam's generation is possible owing to women"[1].

Thereby, he doesn't regard a woman as being whose purpose is to bring sensual pleasure, but he estimates her role highly in the society. According to the socio-philosophical concept of Ghazali a woman is a wife legitimate by shariah, vital partner of a man, the person who gives birth and together with her husband is responsible for fulfilling family duties and upbringing of children, for building prosperity and favorable climate in the family, and for carrying out a range of social and economic duties.

In Al-Ghazali's time, naturally moral norms of the society were dictated and regulated by then dominating Islamic religion and they (norms) served as a basis of the relationship between a man and a woman, marital relations, criterion of the social behavior and spiritual image of a woman. He asserted that "religion is a foundation of morality and a source from where virtues and high models of behavior are drawn; and if a woman follows them, she will keep her nobleness, show her humbleness to her husband and his relatives; whereas an unbelieving woman follows her passions in her deeds; pays no attention to her husband and doesn't look after him, treats him



with contempt and flings away his money and property”[2].

Al-Ghazali disapproved of marriage with a non-Muslim woman, as it contradicted shariah. In his opinion, customs and tendencies of a non-Muslim woman were not suitable for Islam, and her behavior and basis contradicted Islamic morale. According to Al-Ghazali’s conviction, she won’t raise children in Islamic spirit, is not able to provide with sacredness the home and as a result the family will fail. These principal reflections of Al-Ghazali were the answer to the winnowing of time, when the cult of getting pleasure by material goods started to flourish, the rich wanted luxuries, people started buying slaves from overseas, who introduced the society to alien to Islam customs, norms of behavior. Under their influence morality started to decrease, and vices and different sorts of perversions started to spread. The morality of the Muslim society was in a critical state.

As it can be seen, by considering exactly a woman as one of the efficient factors of overcoming the weakening of the morality of the society, strengthening moral level of the society, strengthening social importance and effects of noble families, he creatively proved his opinion of a woman in creating and functioning of a family. With all his intellectual strength, persuading, he called on the society to follow those spiritual values and social qualities, necessary for a woman, proven by him clearly, understandably and reasonably.

As the above-mentioned shows Al-Ghazali considers the social morale enlightened by Islam as the aggregate of the best spiritual values, as an important condition of becoming an orderly woman, a true keeper of the home and as the foundation of creating a virtuous family that corresponds with the social requirements of that time.

While considering the creation of a happy, healthy family which corresponds with the interests of the society as of the most important task of the society, Al-Ghazali draws our attention to the initial side of its organization – the issue of choosing a future wife with the most necessary characteristics. In his reflections of women with the best qualities, he refers to a Hadith that “the best and most blessed of the women are those who are beautiful, and who can bear many children...”, i.e. in his social understanding of the world the woman’s beauty and health are of the highest priority. He simultaneously told that if one who wanted good behavior could not find a beautiful woman to love, he then “needs a faithful woman, as that that has faith is better and even more blessed. And if there is faith, there will be wealth, because a woman, who has no faith, no foundation, will never bring welfare.”

Marriage, a man and a woman’s starting a family is characterized by him as conscious mutual relationship between the two sexes, whose purpose of starting it is to fulfill the requirements of the shariah

and to provide with the continuation of the human race. The most important criteria, which he singled out, of the relationships in the family which must be inherent to and followed by a woman, serve, in his opinion, as a basis of mutual respect and love between spouses and strengthening the family. They are actual and rational in many ways. “And the woman - he wrote, - becomes dearer to her husband and his love increases towards her, if she treats him with respect and obedience..., thinks of his interests and refrains herself from anything that harms him, raises his child, ... if she is pure in her heart, patiently deals with the hardships, cares whether he eats in time, ... receives him tenderly and happily and doesn’t make him do the impossible, ...”.

With the help of amusing, instructive stories he advises a woman to be generous and good in heart, welcoming, friendly, and not to show hostility towards guests. According to Al-Ghazali the level of the happiness of a family directly depends on a range of other qualities of a woman, which are defined by her social status. In his opinion, a Muslim’s wife must also possess the status of a free person, as a free woman is more preferable to a slave woman. Here he mentions a Hadis of the Prophet, “A free woman is better for you, as a she is cleaner and more blessed for you.”

Theoretical reflections of Al-Ghazali about a free woman, about the rights of man and woman allow us to come to a conclusion that he in some degree accepted the emancipated state of a woman, adequate to the level of development of social relations of that time. Al-Ghazali has a negative view of marrying or creating a family on the basis of a contract and he does not conceal his disgust towards a man who wishes to marry for the riches and high position of the woman in the society. He says, “Don’t look for a woman who has popularity and wealth, because the wealth will turn into evil and your wife will not give it to you”.

Al-Ghazali by exalting the role of Islamic belief as a condition of becoming a blessed woman, provision of a strong healthy family, high family welfare, certainly, first of all, meant the influence of an embodied step of the development of human moral. This asserts the idea that the stronger the faith oriented at creativeness, in particular, if it is scientifically proven and reflects vital democratic interests of the society in the belief of future developed society, the stronger its moral side and its influence not only on the personality of a woman, on the development of her social potential and role, on a family, but certainly on the whole society as well.

From ancient times mankind has been trying to thoroughly comprehend its social being, as well as such an actual issue as woman and society, woman and family, woman and man and their socio-structural interrelation and functioning.



## CONCLUSION

Learning a range of ideas of Al-Ghazali about a woman, her role and place in the society makes us come to a conclusion that in accordance with the historical time, he not only as a scholar, but as a socially concerned person, citizen formulated an originally conceptual approach, imbued with tireless care for preservation and strengthening of morality of the society, about improvement of the role of a woman in the creation and strengthening of a family as an important social institute which improves the state of the society. His suppositions and conclusions are a worthy contribution to the modern spiritual heritage and they are still actually in our days. And this serves for us as one of the conditions of objective scientific understanding of today's reality and purposeful manifestation of active life position.

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