

MARRIAGE



FULFILLING RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL REQUIREMENTS



MARRIAGE IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Marrying and having children is required in Islam. Marriage is a religious, social, and sometimes even economic contract between two families. Mothers and fathers may be involved in finding a spouse for their son or daughter, even arranging a match for them.

Arranged marriages usually depend on the consent of those involved; but it is still common in some Muslim cultures for people, especially young girls and women, to be married against their will. Often there is both a religious ceremony and a separate legal registration, but this is not always the case. Singleness, especially for women, is to be avoided at all costs, as it carries much shame.

Weddings are expensive, and many in the Muslim world are delaying marriage because they lack enough money. A Muslim husband is required to give a dowry (mahr) of money or property directly to his wife, which becomes hers alone (Quran 4:4).

Wedding customs vary across the Muslim world. Sometimes they are simple ceremonies, sometimes lavish events lasting for days. The bride's hands and feet can be decorated with a dye (henna), and she may wear a red or gold dress rather than white (or wear several dresses throughout the day).

WHAT DOES ISLAM TEACH ABOUT MARRIAGE?

If he can treat them all equally, the Quran allows a man to marry up to four wives, including women of other faiths (Quran 4:3). Since having more than one wife is expensive, only a minority of Muslims practice this. The Quran seems to sanction, in a contentious verse, a husband's power over his wife which allows him to beat her if she does not obey him (Quran 4:34).

While Islam allows divorce (Quran 33:49; 65:1), the controversial practice of talaq, which allows a husband to divorce simply by repeating "I divorce you" three times to his wife, is not found in the Quran.

Though many Muslims deny it exists, "temporary marriage" (mut'ah) is allowed in Islam (Quran 4:24) and practiced primarily by Shia Muslims. Some use this to justify an affair; some use it to give marriage a trial period with a potential partner.

There is a tradition that Muhammad once said that "When a man marries, he has fulfilled half of the religion; so let him fear Allah regarding the remaining half" (Tirmidhi 3096). Another tradition states "no one in Paradise will be unmarried" (Muslim 2834).

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate. — Mark 10:9

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. — Hebrews 13:4

The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. — Proverbs 31:11

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. — Ephesians 5:25

In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. — Ephesians 5:28

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. — 1 Peter 3:7

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. — Colossians 3:18-19

Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct. — 1 Peter 3:1-2

PRAYER POINTS

“IF YOU ASK ME ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT.” JOHN 14:14

- ❖ Pray for Christ-like love to replace violence, abuse, and inequality in marriages.
- ❖ Pray for husbands and wives to follow Jesus together.
- ❖ Pray for broken marriages to be transformed into representations of God’s love for the world.