

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON MARRIAGE

1. Marriage is the legal union of man and woman for life with the aim of love and procreation.
2. It is a matrimonial contract between man and woman whose validity depends on proposal by the man and acceptance by the woman.
3. In Islam, marriage is a permanent relationship and continuous harmony not only between man and woman but also between them and Allah.
4. It is a religious duty, moral safeguard and a social necessity.
5. Marriage is an obligatory act incumbent upon every Muslim of defined qualifications and a rule every Muslim must observe unless there is a special reason barring him.

Allah says in **Q (24:32)**; *“Take in marriage those women among you who are single and those male and female slaves who are honest. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them from His own abundance”*

6. From the above verse, being poor is not a sufficient excuse for not marrying because the poor are assured of Allah’s enrichment from His wealth.
7. Islam encourages self-satisfaction but it does allow free satisfaction of sexual desire. Therefore, any conjugation outside marriage is not allowed.
8. Though marriage is optional, it is the most encouraged and necessary act in Islam without which the deeds of a believer are not fully accepted. The Prophet PBUH is reported to have said that one who cannot marry should fast always.
9. Free intimacy is not allowed and everything possible has been ordered by Allah to eliminate it. A Muslim must enter a marriage contract unless otherwise.
10. The Prophet PBUH is reported to have said that marriage was his recommended custom and whoever turns away from it turn away from him.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

1. It is necessary for obtaining natural and mutual benefit by a man and woman that human morals are protected by means of nikah. Without the Ihsan free mixing of opposite sexes is unnatural. This is a cause of mischief for not only human morals but also for human culture. If such bad conduct becomes common in any society it cannot maintain its very survival for a long time nor can human life remain balanced in such society.
2. Marriage acts a cure of certain diseases in grown up men and women such as backaches and boredom. This is because it gives peace of the mind and contributes to the physical beauty of the married couple.
3. Furthermore, with marriage, an idle man is turned into an active one and his mind is set up to thoughts and actions which were dormant before marriage.

4. It is through marriage that society is procreated, thereby bringing about multiplication of the human race. Allah says in **Q (16:72)**;

“Allah has given you wives from among yourselves, and through them He has granted you sons and daughters and grandchildren and provided for you sustenance of the best...”

5. Marriage is the basis of the family which is the real unit of the human race and the first cohesive force which makes civilization possible. So, marriage is a means of uniting the different elements of humanity and consequently bringing about civilization.
6. In addition, marriage leads to the development of the feelings of love and service. Marriage love is described in the holy Qur’an as a sign of Allah as per **Q (30:21)**.
7. Marriage helps to satisfy the natural sexual urge, failure to satisfy it may lead to either deviation or maladjustment. It is thus a means of checking unruly sexual feelings and falling into sin.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“Marriage is the best check on lustful eyes and effective help to maintain chastity” (Bukhar).*

He also said; *“Oh you young people! Whoever of you who can marry, let him do so. Those who cannot afford it should keep fast, because it may protect them against sin” (Bukhar).*

8. In marriage, there is comfort of the soul, beauty to look at, company and play, all of which relieve the heart from its burdens and make the mind able to concentrate during worship.
9. Marriage enhances the status of the married couple because of the added responsibilities one gains after getting married. Living with a spouse trains one in accommodating oneself in new experiences, hence gaining respect in society.
10. It fulfills half of Muslim’s faith because in marriage one learns a number virtues like patience, kindness, gentleness and social responsibility, all of which are important for one’s faith.
11. Marriage is a form of worship and therefore rewardable by Allah. This is because of the family responsibilities one gains in marriage.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“A man will be rewarded for what he spends on his wife, even for putting a piece of food into her mouth.”*

He also said; *“Whoever performs prayer correctly and spends on his children in spite of his modest means and does not speak ill of others will be in paradise as close to me as these two fingers of mine”*

PROCEDURES OF CHOOSING A MARRIAGE PARTNER IN ISLAM

1. Marriage is recommended for partners who share a common way of life and should be able to fulfill their purpose of creation as defined by Allah.
2. Partners should share the common goal of building a well-integrated Muslim community and be able to work harmoniously towards it.
3. When man and woman decide to marry, they should have every intention to make it a lasting success for good or for bad, for better or for worse.
4. The holy Qur'an enjoins Muslims to select partners who are good and pure.

Allah says in **Q (24:26)**; *“Women of purity are for men of purity and men of purity are for women of purity.”*

5. The Prophet PBUH recommended Muslims to select those partners who are best in religion and character.

He said; *“A woman may be married for four reasons: for her property, for her rank, for her beauty and for her religion. So marry the one who is best in the religion and character and prosper.”*

6. The consent of both man and woman is important because Islamic marriage is not forced. Therefore, the mutual choice of the would-be-spouses is given the highest consideration.

Allah says in **Q (2:232)**; *“... do not prevent them from marrying their husbands when they agree themselves in a lawful manner.”*

The prophet PBUH said; *“Give women in marriage to men they approve of.”*

7. The process of choosing a marriage spouse should not stop the influence and consent of parents/guardians nor should the parents/guardians ignore the wishes and consent of the would-be spouses.

8. Beauty and physical compatibility is another factor in choosing a marriage partner.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“The best woman is the one who is pleasing to look at, who carries out instructions when you ask her with solemnity of oath, who responds favourably and in your absence she protects your trust in herself and your property.”*

9. Falling in love is not a pre-condition for marriage in Islam but for purposes of selecting an appropriate spouse, the would-be-spouses are allowed to lawfully see and or talk to each other.

The prophet PBUH said; *“When one of you seeks a woman in marriage, and then if he is able to have a look at whom he wishes to marry, let him do so.” (Abu Dawooda)*

10. The would-be-spouses are allowed to see each other for matrimonial purposes under the direct supervision of their nearest relatives but this must be done with piety and modesty.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“No man has a right to be in the privacy with a woman who is not lawful to him. Satan is their third partner unless there is a relative.”*

11. The would-be-spouses living in non-Muslim societies are recommended to enter into pre-nuptial commitment to safeguard Islamic values and Muslim personal law.

12. The would-be-partners should not deceive each other or conceal a defect during the selection process because it can have serious implications if exposed after marriage.

13. It is not allowed to marry an ill-natured man (bad tempered) because he can mistreat the wife and at the same time the bride-to-be should be avoided if she lacks good nature. Such a woman make the life of her husband miserable.

14. The messenger of Allah PBUH gave great emphasis on taking into consideration a good family background when choosing a marriage partner.

He is reported to have said; *“Marry in the lap of a decent family, since the semen and the genes have effect.”*

15. Regarding the giving away of girls in marriage, the Prophet cautioned Muslims to be careful when giving away their daughters in marriage.

He said; *“Giving away a girl in marriage is almost like giving her into slavery. Therefore, be careful and see where you are depositing your daughters”*

16. It is not allowed to marry a foolish and insane person. This is because his/her company is a distress and the children also get wasted.

17. The physical and mental health of the partner-to-be should be considered.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“When one intends to marry a woman, he should ask about her hair just as he asks about her face since the hair is one of the two beauties of a woman.”*

18. When choosing a marriage partner, one should consider the fact that sharia places certain restrictions on the choice of a spouse depending up on blood relationships and religious affiliations.

19. Man is also advised to choose for marriage a woman who will be affectionate to him and bear him children.

The prophet PBUH said; *“Marry a lovely woman who can give birth to children so that on the day of judgement, I will be delighted by your crowd compared to other nations.”*

20. The factor of age should not be ignored as well. It is reported that the Prophet PBUH refused to give Fatimah to Abu Baker and then Umar bin Khattab because she was still young but he accepted Ali bin Abu Talib who was also young and ready to marry her.
21. The man should make a proposal of marriage either to the woman he wants to marry directly or through her parents/guardians. It then becomes illegal for other men to propose to her until the first man fails or has been rejected.

The Prophet PBUH said; *“A man must not propose to a woman when his Muslim brother has done so already until the first proposer withdraws.”*

22. A certain time should be allowed to pass before marriage is concluded between the would-be-spouses. This period is necessary for them to find defaults in their marriage and correct them or otherwise.