131382 - Should she delay marriage so that she can complete memorising the Qur'aan and strive hard in seeking knowledge?

the question

Is it permissible for me to refuse any offers of marriage until Allah makes it easy for me to finish memorising the Holy Qur’aan and seeking obligatory knowledge only? I cannot be certain that the one who proposes to me will be pious and pure and teach me what I do not know of my religion, and even if he is like that, he may not have enough time to teach me. In addition to the fact that marriage takes up a lot of time, I am worried that I may go astray and not be able to be fully devoted to Islam if I get married in this state of ignorance.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Hastening to get married is something that is required in Islam for the one who is able to do that, and this injunction applies particularly to the young, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “O young men, whoever among you can afford it, let him get married, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding one’s chastity. And whoever cannot afford it, let him fast, for it will be a shield for him.” Narrated by al-Bukhari (1905) and Muslim (1400).

Al-Nawawi said: In this hadeeth there is the command to get married for the one who can afford it and feels inclined towards it. There is consensus on this point.

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

My advice to all young men and women is to hasten to get married if they are able to, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “O young people, whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so…” (Agreed upon). And he (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “If there comes to you one whose religious commitment and attitude pleases you, then marry [your female relative who is under your care] to him, for if you do not do that, there

will be tribulation on earth and much corruption.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi with a hasan isnaad. And he (blessings and peace of Allah on him) said: “Marry the one who is loving and fertile, for I will feel proud of your large numbers before the other Prophets on the Day of Resurrection.” Narrated by Imam Ahmad; classed as saheeh by Ibn Hibbaan. And because there are many benefits in that, as the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) pointed out, such as lowering the gaze, guarding chastity, increasing the numbers of the Muslim ummah, keeping safe from tribulation and trouble. End quote.

Fataawa Islamiyyah, 3/141

Indeed, marriage may distract one from seeking knowledge, but that is not necessarily the case. It may be the opposite. There are women who memorised the Qur'aan after marriage, and who learned and gained a great deal of understanding of Islam after marriage.

What you have to do is to make a good choice: choose a man who is religiously committed and of good character, and is keen to learn and understand more about Islam, so that you can help one another to obey Allah, may He be exalted.

The scholars of the Standing Committee were asked:

I am married and marriage is Sunnah, but seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim, male or female. Can I divorce my wife so that I can go and seek knowledge?

They replied: Marriage is the Sunnah of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and with it a man completes his religion, as it helps him to lower his gaze and guard his chastity. You should not divorce your wife, and marriage should not prevent you from seeking knowledge if you are determined. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah, 20/5

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

There is a seeker of shar‘i knowledge who wants to get married but he is afraid that if he gets

married he will be distracted from seeking knowledge. What is your advice to him? What do you suggest if he wants to give up studying for jihad?

He (may Allah have mercy on him) replied:

Marriage does not get in the way of seeking knowledge; rather it may help in seeking knowledge. A person may be blessed with a wife who reads and writes and helps him; even if that is not the case, then at least he will no longer have to deal with waswaas and thinking about marriage, so marriage will help him to seek knowledge. End quote.

Liqa' al-Baab al-Maftooh, 48/18

Moreover, you should know that the amount of knowledge that one is required to attain does not need one to delay getting married, because this amount of knowledge does not require years to attain it; rather a Muslim may acquire it in a very short length of time. And after marriage, in sha Allah, you will find enough time to acquire shar'i knowledge.

Our advice to you is: if you receive a proposal from someone whose religious commitment and character are good, then accept him.

We ask Allah to make things easy for you and to bless you with beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds.