

1114 - Ruling on taking boyfriends or girlfriends

the question

I am deeply in love with a Muslim man and want to marry him. I know that Allah forbids girlfriend-boyfriend relationships, and feel very sorry in my heart for our relationship. I feel that because we have been in this relationship which is abhorred by Allah, he will never marry me because he has lost respect for me. What does the Quran say about this?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“... Wed them with the permission of their own folk and give them their mahr (dowry) according to what is reasonable; they should be chaste, not adulterous, nor taking boyfriends...” [al-Nisaa’ 4:25]

In his commentary on this aayah, Ibn Katheer (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

“Muhsanaat [translated as “chaste”] means that they should be pure, not indulging in zinaa (unlawful sexual conduct), hence they are described as not being musaafihaat, which means promiscuous women who do not refuse anyone who wants to commit immoral acts with them. Regarding the phrase wa laa muttakhidhaati akhdaan (‘nor taking boyfriends’), Ibn ‘Abbaas said: ‘al-musaafihaat means those who are known to commit zinaa, meaning those who will not refuse anyone who wants to commit immoral acts with them.’ Ibn ‘Abbaas also said: ‘muttakhidhaati akhdaan means lovers.’ A similar interpretation was narrated from Abu Hurayrah, Mujaahid, al-Sha’bi, al-Dahhaak, ‘Ataa’ al-Khurasani, Yahyaa ibn Abi Katheer, Muqaatil ibn Hayyaan and al-

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Saddi. They said: (it means) lovers. Al-Hasan al-Basri said: 'It means a (male) friend.' Al-Dahhaak also said: 'wa laa muttakhidhaati akhdaan also means a woman who has just one boyfriend or lover with whom she is happy. Allaah has also forbidden this, meaning marrying her so long as she is in that situation...'"

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Made lawful to you this day are al-tayyibaat [all kinds of halaal (lawful) foods...]. The food of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them. (Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before your time, when you have given their due mahr (bridal money given by the husband to the wife at the time of marriage), desiring chastity (i.e., taking them in legal wedlock), not committing illegal sexual intercourse, nor taking them as girlfriends. And whosoever disbelieves in the Oneness of Allaah and in all the other Articles of Faith, the fruitless is his work, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers." [al-Maa'idah 5:5]

Ibn Katheer (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

"Muhsineen ghayr musaafiheen wa laa muttakhidhi akhdaan ('desiring chastity (i.e., taking them in legal wedlock), not committing illegal sexual intercourse, nor taking them as girlfriends'). Just as Allaah imposed the condition of chastity on women, meaning that they refrain from zinaa, so it is also imposed on men. The man must also be pure and chaste. So they should be ghayr musaafiheen, meaning they should not be adulterers who do not refrain from sin and do not refuse any who come to them (for immoral purposes). Nor should they be muttakhidhi akhdaan, meaning those who have girlfriends or female lovers with whom they have an exclusive relationship, as quoted above from Soorat al-Nisaa'. (The one with many lovers or the one with just one lover) are both the same. For this reason Imaam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allaah have mercy on him) said that it is not right to marry a promiscuous woman unless she has repented, or to arrange a

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marriage of such a woman to a chaste man, so long as she is still conducting herself in this manner. Similarly, he (Ahmad) says that it is not right for a promiscuous man to marry a chaste woman unless he repents and gives up his immoral conduct, because of this aayah... We will discuss this matter in further detail after quoting the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Let no man guilty of fornication or adultery marry any but a woman similarly guilty, or an unbeliever: nor let any but such a man or an unbeliever marry such a woman: to the Believers such a thing is forbidden.” [al-Noor 24:3]

Among the stories that show that it is forbidden to have girlfriends or to marry them is the story of Marthad ibn Abi Marthad, who used to smuggle Muslim prisoners-of-war from Makkah to Madeenah. There was a prostitute in Makkah, called ‘Anaaq, who had been a friend of Marthad’s. Marthad had promised to take one of the prisoners from Makkah to Madeenah. He said: “I came to the shade of one of the gardens of Makkah on a moonlit night, then ‘Anaaq came and saw my shadow by the garden. When she reached me, she recognized me and said: ‘Marthad?’ I said, ‘Marthad.’ She said: ‘Welcome! Stay with us tonight.’ I said, ‘O ‘Anaaq, Allaah has forbidden zinaa (unlawful sexual relations)’ ... I came to the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and asked him, ‘O Messenger of Allaah, should I marry ‘Anaaq?’ The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) remained silent and did not answer me at all, until the aayah ‘Let no man guilty of adultery or fornication marry any but a woman similarly guilty, or an Unbeliever; nor let any but such a man or an Unbeliever marry such a woman; to the Believers such a thing is forbidden’ [al-Noor 24:3 – Yusuf ‘Ali’s translation] was revealed. Then the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ‘O Marthad, Let no man guilty of adultery or fornication marry any but a woman similarly guilty, or an Unbeliever; nor let any but such a man or an Unbeliever marry such a woman, so do not marry her.’”

(Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 3101; he said: it is a hasan ghareeb hadeeth).

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'Abd-Allaah ibn Maghfal reported that there was a woman who had been a prostitute during the days of ignorance (before Islam). A man passed by her, or she passed by him, and he touched her. She said: "Stop it! (Mah! A word connoting a rebuke or denunciation). Allaah has done away with shirk and had brought Islam." So he left her alone and went away, still looking at her, until he walked into a wall, hitting his face. He came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and told him what had happened. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "You are a man for whom Allaah wishes good. When Allaah, may He be blessed and exalted, wishes good for His slave, He hastens the punishment for his sin, so that it is dealt with before the Day of Resurrection." (Reported by al-Haakim, 1/349, who said this hadeeth is saheeh according to the conditions of Muslim, and al-Dhahabi agreed with him. See Saheeh al-Jaami', 308).

These aayaat and ahaadeeth clearly indicate that it is haraam (forbidden) for men to have any kind of friendship or relationship with non-mahram women (women to whom they are not closely-related and to whom they could get married). The evil consequences and misery caused by such relationships are obvious to anyone who observes real life. A similar question has been asked under [#2085](#). We ask Allaah to keep us far away from that which is forbidden, to protect us from all that may earn His wrath and to keep us safe from a painful punishment. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad.