227261 - A Christian woman is worried that her marriage to her Muslim husband may be invalid

the question

I am Christian woman married to a Muslim men. We got married more than two years ago and have a child that was conceived after the marriage.
We are living like husband and wife but now I am not sure our marriage is valid. In surah Al-Maidah it is written that the woman of the Book must be chaste in order to get married with a Muslim man. Unfortunately, I had a boyfriend and sexual relationships with him before I met my husband. We were not informed about the necessity of being chaste and my husband did not have enough knowledge about that prior marriage.
I would really appreciate to get an answer is our marriage valid?
I am really worried of my husband committing a sin without even knowing that (I still have not told him about it as I do not want him to be in doubt and blaming himself without getting an answer first).
Moreover, I am worried that our son was born in sin. If this is the case, is there and punishment for my son? I have read two different opinions. One says he will not enter the Paradise (but I am not certain about the authenticity of the Hadith stating that). Another opinion says that the baby is not responsible for anyones sins as he is innocent and pure and should not suffer for anything he has not done. Which opinion is the right one?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

We hope – before we answer your question – that your sincere feelings towards your husband and your child are a glimmer of light that has reached your mind and heart, and that this will prompt you to reflect more on your situation and your future, and what Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, expects from you in your life and after you die.

Man is always in a state of confusion and wondering, always watching and waiting, feeling that whatever fate will befall him is unknown during this life, but what awaits him in his grave after death is the most important factor that motivates him to search for bliss and salvation on that Day.

The matter is simple and straightforward, by Allah's leave; it is simply to have a deeply-rooted belief that Allah is the One Who has created us, He has decreed this worldly life for us, and He is with us, watching over our affairs, One God with no partner or associate, no father or son, and that all the Messengers and Prophets, from our father Adam until Sayyiduna Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them all) are a mercy from the Lord of the Worlds to all of humanity. He sent them to guide people to their Creator and show them the Way that will bring them back to Paradise from which their father Adam (peace be upon him) was expelled, when he ate from the tree. That was the beginning of trials for all people on this earth. So Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, sent the Messengers and Prophets to guide people and show them the way back to Paradise, so that the devils would not lead man to the path of destruction and loss.

We cannot hide the fact that we are very surprised by many of those who believe in the Messiah 'Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary – blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), who is a Prophet and a Messenger from the Lord of the Worlds, yet they do not believe in his brother Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). We can hardly understand the logic that leads to this conclusion.

What is it by which the Messiah is distinguished that was not also brought by Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)? What clear difference is it that motivates people like you, who are rational and goodhearted, and keen to seek that which is with Allah, and who fear His punishment and wrath – what is it that causes you and other fair-minded people like you to continue differentiating between the Messengers and Prophets?

Are they not all brothers who confirm one another? Did not the earlier ones give the glad tidings of the coming of the later ones? Are their beliefs not all the same, as they point to Allah, the One

God, and their laws are similar to the extent that a Muslim man may marry women from the People of the Book (Jews and Christians)?

What greater closeness can you look for than the fact that your husband and your child are Muslims who believe in the Messiah (peace be upon him) as a human being who was a Messenger, and they also believe in the Messengership of Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)?

Why does curiosity not prompt you to adopt the best that your family has, and also believe in Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) as a Prophet and Messenger, and study his teaching that the Messiah (peace be upon him) will descend at the end of time to rule according to those teachings and guide people to them. The ummah (nation) of our Prophet Muhammad, the Muslims, began with Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and will end with the Messiah (peace be upon him), when he descends at the end of time.

One of the (former) Christians said, when the light of belief in Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) dawned in his heart: “I have gained Muhammad but I did not lose the Messiah!”

It is to this gain that we call you; we are not calling you to disbelieve in the Messiah (peace be upon him); rather we are calling you to believe in all the Prophets and Messengers, from Adam to Muhammad, including Nooh (Noah), Ibraaheem (Abraham), Moosa (Moses) and ‘Eesa (Jesus), … Blessings and peace of Allah be upon all of them.

Thus we will be among the party of the Messengers and Prophets, all of them, before our Lord, and we will attain happiness in this world and in our graves, and we will join them in the Hereafter in the gardens of bliss.

Not only this; rather the noble Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) has given us the glad tidings that for people like you, who believed in their Prophet before Islam, then entered Islam, there will be a double reward, not just a single reward!

The Prophet of Islam Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “There are three who will be given their reward twice: a man from among the People of the Book who believed in his Prophet and came to know of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and believed in him and followed him; he will have a twofold reward…”

Narrated by Muslim (219).

For more information, please see the answer to question no. 6389

As for believing in some of them and disbelieving in others, this is a grave risk which the Holy Qur’an regards as tantamount to disbelieving in all of the Prophets. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muslims), ‘We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibraaheem (Abraham), Ismaa‘eel (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac), Ya‘qoob (Jacob), and to Al-Asbat (the twelve sons of Ya‘qoob (Jacob)), and that which has been given to Moosa (Moses) and ‘Eesa (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islam)”

[al-Baqarah 2:136].

Secondly:

With regard to the answer to your question about marriage, do not worry about your marriage, because it is valid according to Islamic law. The condition of chastity i.e., refraining from fornication, on the part of the wife – whether she is Muslim or otherwise – means that the husband does not marry her whilst she is persisting in doing that evil deed. But if she had committed that sin in the past, then given it up and become chaste, then there is nothing wrong with a Muslim man marrying her in that case. Islam does not look at that error that a person has given up and put far behind them.

The validity of the marriage is further confirmed if the husband is not aware of what she did before he married her.

Therefore she does not have the right to disclose this matter to him. She has moved on by giving up haraam relationships and turning over a new leaf, so there is the hope that the husband will have a good influence on her and teach her means of repentance and to rely upon the Creator, may He be glorified and exalted, and to draw closer to him by means of daily acts of worship, dhikr (remembering Allah), showing kindness to the weak, supporting those who are wronged or oppressed, and spreading good in the land. Then his wife will learn how much she had neglected the path to Allah, and how great was her need for the love of Allah, may He be exalted, and to love the path of guidance that was brought by all of the Prophets, which is the path of Islam, as Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:85].

With regard to your question about your son, and so on, there is no room for this kind of question so long as the marriage is valid. If you want to know more about the rulings on a child who is born as a result of an illegitimate relationship, please see fatwa no. 21818.

Finally, if you save yourself and ransom yourself from the Fire by entering Islam, these questions will not matter and there will be no room for sorrow or fear, for Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“We said: Get down all of you from this place (the Paradise), then whenever there comes to you Guidance from Me, and whoever follows My Guidance, there shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.

But those who disbelieve and belie Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) such are the dwellers of the Fire, they shall abide therein forever”

[al-Baqarah 2:38-39]

“O Children of Adam! If there come to you Messengers from amongst you, reciting to you, My Verses, then whosoever becomes pious and righteous, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they

grieve.

But those who reject Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and treat them with arrogance, they are the dwellers of the (Hell) Fire, they will abide therein forever”

[al-A‘raaf 7:35-36].

And Allah knows best.