26220 - Marrying a Hindu girl who wants to become Muslim

the question

I am a Mulsim male, 24 years old. I live in the U.S. I have known a particular girl for over 6 years now, and she is a HINDU. She and I want to marry, and she wants to learn more about Islam and convert after her knowledge and faith are stronger. Her family was hesitant at first, but is ok with it if this is what she wants. My family on the other hand has reservations about it. They are telling me that she MUST change her name to a Muslim name. Also, since she is the only child of her parents, she still wants to have, in addition to the Muslim ceremony, a Hindu ceremony so that her parents can have what they have always wanted. She has agreed with me to take out parts from the Hindu ceremony that are at all RELIGIOUS, and just do the traditional/cultural parts of it. I feel ok with this, but my parents are making a BIG deal about this. she is willing to learn and accept Islam, and she is just getting upset and frustrated that my parents are making this so difficult, and not being flexible or understanding to her situation. What are your thoughts? Please advise.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We appreciate your confidence in us, and we ask Allaah to make us as you think we are.

Firstly:

Please note, may Allaah guide you, that it is not permissible for a Muslim man to marry a non-Muslim woman, unless she is of the people of the Book (Jewish or Christian).

See question no. 8015.

If she becomes Muslim, there is nothing wrong with you marrying her in that case.

Secondly:

Try to make sure that your marriage has the approval of your parents, because the approval of your parents will have a good effect on your married life, and this is part of the honouring of parents for which a man will be rewarded.

Thirdly:

With regard to changing the name, Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

It is not essential to change the name unless it is a name that is not permitted in sharee’ah, such as names which indicate servitude and submission to something other than Allaah and the like, which must be changed. Similarly if it is a name that is used exclusively by the kuffaar and no one else, then it must be changed lest one resemble the kuffaar thereby and lest one feel an attachment to this name which is exclusively for the kuffaar or be accused of not having become Muslim yet.

See al-Ijaabaat ‘ala As’ilah al-Jaaliyaat, pp. 4-5.

In the future her changing her name will please your parents, so there is nothing wrong with your convincing her to change it to please your parents.

Fourthly:

You should pray istikhaarah so that your Lord will help you to choose that which is best for you in this world and in the hereafter. You can learn how to pray istikhaarah in question no. 2217.

We ask Allaah to help you to do that which He loves and which pleases Him and to bless us with wives and children who will bring us joy.

And Allaah knows best.