23420 - Love Marriage or Arranged Marriage: Which Is Better in Islam?

the question

What is more stable in Islam, a love marriage or an arranged marriage?

Summary of answer

If love between two parties did not transgress the limits set by Allah or make them commit sin, then there is the hope that this love marriage will be more stable. For more about love marriages and arranged marriages in Islam, see the detailed answer.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What does Islam say about love marriages?

The issue of love marriage s depends on the ruling on what came before it. If the love between the two parties did not transgress the limits set by Allah or make them commit sin, then there is the hope that the marriage which results from this love will be more stable, because it came about as the result of the fact that each of them wanted to marry the other.

If a man feels some attraction towards a woman whom it is permissible for him to marry, and vice versa, there is no answer to the problem except marriage . The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “We do not think that there is anything better for those who love one another than marriage.” (Narrated by Ibn Majah, 1847; classed as sahih by al-Busayri and by Shaykh al-Albani in al-Silsilah al-Sahihah, 624)

Al-Sindi said, as noted in Hamish Sunan Ibn Majah:

The phrase “We do not think that there is anything better for those who love one another than

marriage" may be understood to refer to two or to more than two. What this means is that if there is love between two people, that love cannot be increased or made to last longer by anything like marriage. If there is marriage as well as that love, that love will increase and grow stronger every day."

But if that marriage comes about as a result of an illicit love relationship, such as when they meet and are alone together and kiss one another, and other haraam actions, then it will never be stable, because they committed actions that go against sharee'ah Sharee'ah and because they have built their lives on things that will have the effect of reducing blessings and support from Allaah, for sin is a major factor in reducing blessings, even though some people think, because of the Shaytaan's whispers, that falling in love and doing haraam deeds makes marriage stronger.

Moreover, these illicit relationships that take place before marriage will be a cause to make each party doubtful about the other. The husband will think that his wife may possibly have a similar relationship with someone else, and even if he thinks it unlikely, he will still be troubled by the fact that his wife did do something wrong with him. And the same thoughts may occur to the wife too, and she will think that her husband could possibly have an affair with another woman, and even if she thinks it unlikely, she will still be troubled by the fact that her husband did something wrong with her.

So each partner will live in a state of doubt and suspicion, which will ruin their relationship sooner or later.

The husband may condemn his wife for having agreed to have a relationship with him before marriage, which will be upsetting for her, and this will cause their relationship to deteriorate.

Hence we think that if a marriage is based upon an illicit premarital relationship, it will most likely be unstable and will not be successful.

What does Islam say about arranged marriages?

With regard to arranged marriages where the family chooses the partner, they are not all good

and not all bad. If the family makes a good choice and the woman is religious and beautiful, and the husband likes her and wants to marry her, then there is the hope that their marriage will be stable and successful. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) urged the one who wants to get married to look at the woman. It was narrated from al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah that he proposed marriage to a woman, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "Go and look at her, because that is more likely to create love between you." (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 1087; classed as hasan by al-Nasaa'i, 3235)

But if the family makes a bad choice, or they make a good choice but the husband does not agree with it, then this marriage is most likely doomed to failure and instability, because the marriage that is based on lack of interest usually is not stable.

And Allaah knows best.