84102 - Is Love Which Ends in Marriage Permissible in Islam?

the question

Is love that ends in marriage prohibited?

Summary of answer

No wise person will doubt that the relationship between a man and a non-Mahram woman is prohibited, because it involves a man being alone with a non-Mahram woman, looking at her, touching her, kissing, and speaking words filled with love and admiration, which provokes desire.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Understanding the Concept of Love in Islam

The relationship that develops between a man and a non-Mahram woman, which people call "love" is a combination of prohibited things that transgress Shar`i and moral limits.

No wise person will doubt that this relationship is prohibited, because it involves a man being alone with a non-Mahram woman, looking at her, touching her, kissing, and speaking words filled with love and admiration, which provokes desire.

This relationship may lead to things that are more serious than that, as is happening nowadays.

We have mentioned a number of these prohibited things in the answer to question no. 84089.

Statistics on the Success of Love Marriages vs. Traditional Marriages

Studies have shown that most of the marriages that are based on prior love between a man and woman fail, whereas most marriages that are not based on prohibited relationships, which people

call “traditional marriages”, succeed.

In a field study done by a French sociologist, the conclusion was:

Marriage is more likely to succeed when the two parties did not fall in love before marriage.

In another study of 1500 families, undertaken by Professor Isma`il `Abd Al-Bari, the conclusion was that more than 75% of love marriages ended in divorce, whilst the rate among traditional marriages – those which were not based on prior love – was less than 5%.

We can mention the most important causes of this outcome:

Emotion blinds one to seeing faults and dealing with them, as it is said: “Love is blind”. One or both parties may have faults that make them unsuitable for the other, but those faults only become apparent after marriage.

The lovers may think that life is an unending journey of love, so we see that they only speak of love and dreams, etc. They never speak about the problems of life and how to deal with them. This notion is destroyed after marriage, when they are confronted with the problems and responsibilities of life.

The lovers are not used to debate and discussion, rather they are used to sacrifice and compromise in order to please the other party. Often they have arguments because each party wants to compromise and please the other. Then the opposite happens after marriage, and their arguments lead to a problem, as each one is used to the other agreeing with him or her, without any argument.

The image that each lover has of the other is not a true image, because each party is being kind and gentle and trying to please the other. This is the image that each is trying to present to the other during the so-called “love” phase, but no one can carry on doing that throughout his or her life, so the true image appears after marriage, and leads to problems.

The period of love is usually based on dreams and exaggerations that do not correspond with the

reality that appears after marriage. The lover may think that he is going to bring her a piece of the moon, and he will never be happy unless she is the happiest person in the world, and so on.

The Dangers of Unrealistic Expectations in Love Marriages

But in return, she is going to live with him in one room and on the ground, and she has no requests or demands so long as she has won him, and that is sufficient for her.

As one of them said, “A small nest is sufficient for us” and “A small morsel is sufficient for us” and “I will be content if you give me a piece of cheese and an olive”! This is exaggerated emotional talk, and both parties quickly forget it after marriage, and the woman complains about her husband’s miserliness, and his failure to meet her needs. Then the husband begins to complain about having too many demands and too many expenses.

For these reasons and others, we are not surprised when each party says after marriage that they were deceived and that they rushed into it. The man regrets not marrying So and So who was suggested to him by his parents, and the woman regrets not marrying So and so whom her parents approved of, but in fact they rejected him because of her wishes. So the result is this very high rate of divorce for marriages which people thought would be examples of the happiest marriages in the world!

Divine Consequences of Disobeying the Laws of Allah

The reasons mentioned above are real, and have happened in real life, but we should not ignore the real reason for the failure of these marriages, which are based on disobedience to Allah. Islam can never approve of these sinful relationships, even if the aim is marriage. Therefore they cannot escape the just divine punishment, as Allah Says (interpretation of the meaning):

{But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Quran nor acts on its teachings) verily, for him is a life of hardship.} [Ta-Ha 20:124]

A hard and difficult life is the result of disobeying Allah and turning away from His Revelation.

And Allah Says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And if the people of the towns had believed and had the Taqwa (piety), certainly, We should have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth.} [Al-A`raf 7:96]

Blessings from Allah are a reward for faith and piety, but if there is no faith or piety, or only a little thereof, the blessing will be reduced or even non-existent.

And Allah Says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Whoever works righteousness — whether male or female — while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter).} [An-Nahl 16:97]

A good life is the fruit of faith and righteous deeds.

Allah indeed spoke the truth when He Said (interpretation of the meaning):

{Is it then he who laid the foundation of his building on piety to Allah and His Good Pleasure better, or he who laid the foundation of his building on the brink of an undetermined precipice ready to crumble down, so that it crumbled to pieces with him into the fire of Hell. And Allah guides not the people who are the wrongdoers.} [At-Tawbah 9:109]

The one whose marriage is based on this prohibited foundation must hasten to repent and seek forgiveness and seek a righteous life that is based on faith, piety and righteous deeds.

May Allah help us all to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allah knows best.