

# IMAMS AGAINST FORCED MARRIAGE

Forced marriages are not associated with any particular religion or religious practice. However, the practise continues to exist across communities. As a civilised society we can not remain silent on an issue which destroys so many lives.

In Islam marriage is a big part of someone's life. Marriage creates new relationships as well as rights and obligations on both partners. Marriage is supposed to be something which brings happiness, stability, peace and harmony.

The Quran states:

**“And among His wonders is this: He creates for you mates out of your own kind, so that you might incline towards them, and He engenders love and tenderness between you: in this, behold, there are messages indeed for people who think!” (30:21)**

A marriage based on force goes against these concepts of love and mercy, and therefore, goes against the spirit of Islam. Moreover, the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) was against forced marriages.

A previously unmarried woman is reported to have come to the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) and mentioned that her father married her against her will, so he allowed her to exercise her choice (Abu Dawud: 2096).

In another report Aisha (may God be pleased with her) reported that a young woman came to her and said, **“My father married me to his brother's son in order to raise his social standing, and I did not want this marriage (i.e. I was forced into it)”**. Aisha said, "Sit here until the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) comes. The Messenger of Allah (peace & blessings be upon him) came and she told him about the girl, so he sent for her father, then he gave the girl the choice of what to do. She said, **"O Messenger of Allah, I have accepted what my father did, but I wanted to prove something to other women (i.e. that fathers have no right to force them into marriage)"** (Al-Nasa'i: 3269).

Some parents believe they have the Islamic right to force their child to marry whoever they wish. **This is a case of culture confused with religion.**

Forced marriages are different to arranged marriages in which the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the prospective spouses have the choice on whether or not to accept.

As Muslims we are only obliged to follow Islam, cultural practices are only acceptable if they conform to Islamic principles. Culture is not an excuse for forced marriages and our obligation as a community is to change those aspects of our culture which go against our faith.

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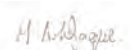
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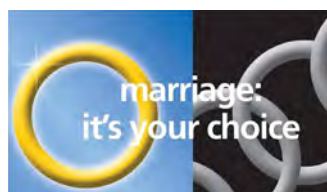
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