

off places.

- It is appropriate that the bridegroom be a few years older than the bride.
- If the father of the girl is an Ālim or pious and capable of performing nikāh, then he should himself solemnise the marriage.
- One should endeavour to give the Mahr-Fātimi as dowry, but if one does not have the means, then there is nothing wrong in giving less.
- It is totally un-Islāmic for those, who do not possess the means, to incur debts in order to have grandiose weddings.
- It is fallacy to think that one's respect will be lost if one does not hold an extravagant wedding and invite many people.
- The present day practice of the intermingling of sexes is an act of sin and totally against Shar'iah.
- There is nothing such as engagement parties and mendhi parties in Islām.
- Great care must be taken as regards to Salāh on occasions of marriage by all - the bride, the bridegroom and all the participants
- It is un-Islāmic to display the

bride on stage.

- The unnecessary expenses incurred by the bride's family in holding a feast has no basis in Shar'iah.
- For the engaged couple to meet at a public gathering where the boy holds the girl's hand and slips a ring on her finger is a violation of the Qur'ānic law of Hijāb.
- It is un-Islāmic for the engaged couple to meet each other and also to go out together.
- Three things should be borne in mind when giving one's daughter gifts : Presents should be given within one's means (it is not permissible to take loans, on interest, for such presents); Necessary items should be given; A show should not be made of whatever is given.
- It is Sunnah for the bridegroom's family to observe a walimah. Whatever is easily available should be fed to the people and care should be taken that there is no extravagance.
- To delay nikāh after the engagement is un-Islāmic.

(Ar-rasheed)

AN ISLAMIC WEDDING

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Sayyadinah Fatimah (R.A.) was the youngest and the most beloved daughter of our beloved Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). He said, "The queen of the ladies in Jannah is Fatimah." He also said, "Fatimah is part of my body. Whoever grieves her, grieves me." When Fatimah (R.A.) reached the age of fifteen, proposals for her marriage began to come from high and responsible families.

Sayyadinah Ali (R.A.) who was 21 at the time, says: "It occurred to me that I should go and make a formal proposal, but then I thought, "How could this be accomplished, for I possess nothing." At last, encouraged by the Holy Prophet's kindness, I went to him and expressed my intention to marry Fatimah (R.A.). The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was extremely pleased and asked, "Ali! Do you possess anything to give her in mahr (dowry)?" I replied, "Apart from a horse and an armour I possess nothing." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "A soldier must, of course, have his horse. Go and sell away your armour."

So, Ali (R.A.) went and sold his armour to 'Uthman (R.A.) for 480 dirhams and

presented it to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Bilal (R.A.) was ordered by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to bring some perfume and a few other things and Anas (R.A.) was sent to call Abu Bakr, 'Uthman, Talhah, Zubair with some companions from the Ansār (Radiallahu Anhum). When these men arrived and had taken their seats, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) recited the khutbah [sermon] of nikāh and handed Fatimah (R.A.) in marriage to Ali (R.A.). He announced, "Bear you all witness that I have given my daughter Fatimah in marriage to Ali for 400 mithqāl of silver and Ali has accepted."

He then raised his head and made Du'ā saying, "O Allah, create love and harmony between these two. Bless them and bestow upon them good children." After the nikāh, dates were distributed. When the time arrived for Fatimah (R.A.) to leave for Ali's (R.A.) house, she was sent without any clamour, hue and cry.

After the Ishā Salāh, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) accompanied by Umme Ayman (R.A.)

went to their house, took permission and entered. He asked for a basin of water, put his blessed hands into it and sprinkled it on both and made Du'ā for them.

The sovereign of both worlds gave his beloved daughter a silver bracelet, two Yemeni sheets, four mattresses, one blanket, one pillow, one cup, one hand-grinding mill, one bedstead, a small water skin and a leather pitcher. In this simple fashion, the wedding of the daughter of the leader of both the worlds was solemnised.

In following this Sunnah method, a wedding becomes very simple and easy to fulfil, devoid of the many customs observed today as follows:

- The many customs as regards engagement are contrary to Sunnah. A verbal proposal and answer is sufficient.
- To unnecessarily delay nikāh of both the boy and the girl after having reached the age of marriage is incorrect.
- There is nothing wrong in inviting one's close associates for the occasion of nikāh. However, no special pains should be taken in gathering the people from far