

The Holy Qur'an Teachings on Polygamy

Excerpt reprinted from the Maulana Muhammad Ali translation of the Holy Qu'ran on page xxiii

"And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice between them, then **marry only one** or what your right hands possess; **this is more proper that you may not deviate from the right course**" (4:3).

"And they ask thee a decision about women. **Say, Allah makes known to you His decision concerning them, and that which is recited to you in the Book concerning orphans of the women** to whom you do not give what is appointed for them while you are disinclined to marry them" (4:127).

"MONOGAMY IS THE RULE IN ISLAM..."

"...AND POLYGAMY ONLY AN EXCEPTION ALLOWED SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS....THE ARABS WERE GUILD OF A DOUBLE INJUSTICE TO WIDOWS: THEY DID NOT GIVE THEM AND THEIR CHILDREN A SHARE IN THE INHERITANCE OF THEIR HUSBANDS, NOR WERE THEY INCLINED TO MARRY WIDOWS WHO HAD CHILDREN, BECAUSE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE CHILDREN WOULD IN THAT CASE DEVOLVE UPON THEM. THE QUR'AN REMEDIED BOTH OF THESE EVILS; IT GAVE A SHARE OF INHERITANCE TO THE WIDOW WITH A SHARE ALSO FOR THE ORPHANS, AND IT COMMENDED THE TAKING OF SUCH WIDOWS IN MARRIAGE, AND ALLOWED POLYGAMY EXPRESSLY FOR THIS PURPOSE. IT SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT MONOGAMY IS THE RULE IN ISLAM AND POLYGAMY IS ALLOWED ONLY AS A REMEDIAL MEASURE, AND THAT, NOT FOR THE SAKE OF THE MAN, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF THE WIDOW AND HER CHILDREN..."

"...THIS PERMISSION WAS GIVEN AT A TIME WHEN THE WARS, WHICH WERE FORCED ON THE MUSLIMS, HAD DECIMATED THE MEN, SO THAT MANY WIDOWS AND ORPHANS WERE LEFT FOR WHOM IT WAS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE. A PROVISION WAS MADE IN THE FORM OF POLYGAMY SO THAT THE WIDOW SHOULD FIND A HOME AND PROTECTOR AND THE ORPHANS SHOULD HAVE PATERNAL CARE AND AFFECTION..."



Muhammad Speaks Newspaper

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