



both partners must agree and it is revocable. There is some debate in Islám if marriage is obligatory or not. Also, as in Bahá'í marriage, the groom must give a marriage-gift (Mahr; i.e. a dowry) to the bride (Qur'án 4:4). However, the amount and form of the Mahr is not divinely specified, unlike in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. During the ceremony, the couple announce their willingness to enter into a marriage contract (though there is no specific Qur'anic verse which is required). Current practice requires that the couple formally sign a marriage contract, and that it be witnessed by two sane adult witnesses. A Khutbah-nut-Nikáh (Marriage sermon) is then recited by the couple, consisting of the Shahadah (Islámic confession of Faith), three Qur'anic verses (4:1, 3:102, 33:70-71) and the following Hadith: "By Alláh! Among all of you I am the most God-fearing, and among you all, I am the supermost to save myself from the wrath of Alláh, yet my state is that I observe prayer and sleep too. I observe fast and suspend observing them; I marry woman also. And he who turns away from my Sunnah has no relation with me" (Sahih Muslim, Book 8, No. 3236). This Hadith, was apparently often used by the Prophet during ceremonies. Also interesting to note, as can be seen in the following tradition from Mishkat, the Prophet, like 'Abdu'l-Bahá', urged that marriage ceremonies should be simple: "The best wedding is that upon which the least trouble and expense is bestowed" (MW's note).

#### METADATA

Views23421 views since posted 2001-12; last edit 2022-06-20 13:00 UTC;

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Inventory #

BH03116

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translator

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