

How much was the Prophetic Dowry in Today's Economy?

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فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ إِنَّ

**“So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord,
let him work righteousness and associate none
as a partner in the worship of his Lord.”**

The Noble Qur.aan - Soorah al-Kahf, Aayah 110

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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In Islāmic tradition, the Mahr – translated as dowry - is an amount of wealth or property which is gifted by a man to his prospective wife at the time of the Nikāh (marriage contract).

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How much was the Prophetic Dowry in Today's Economy?

In the name of Allāh, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy.

In Islāmic tradition, the Mahr – translated as dowry - is an amount of wealth or property which is gifted by a man to his prospective wife at the time of the Nikāḥ (marriage contract). It is a necessary and an intrinsic part of the marriage contract. It should not be confused with 'bridal-gifts' which are given in some cultures to brides by their own families.

The dowry is legislated in the Qur'ān, as well as through the authentic traditions of the Prophet ﷺ.

Allāh (the Most High) said,

{And give the women [upon marriage] their gifts (i.e. dowry) graciously} [04:04]

{Lawful for you are [all other women] beyond these, provided that you seek them [in marriage] with [gifts from] your property (i.e. dowry), desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse. So for whatever you enjoy [of marriage] from them, give them their due compensation (i.e. dowry) as an obligation} [04:24]

One day, the virtuous companion 'AbdurRahmān ibn 'Awf came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and there were traces of yellow [perfume] on him. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ asked him about it, and he told him that he had just married a woman of the Ansār.

He then asked him, **"How much did you give her?"**

He replied: **"Gold equal to the weight of one date stone."**

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ then supplicated for blessings to be placed in their union [as husband and wife].¹

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It is a necessary and an intrinsic part of the marriage contract. It should not be confused with 'bridal-gifts' which are given in some cultures to brides by their own families.

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¹ Narrated by Anas Ibn Mālik; Collected by Al-Bukhārī (No. 4756)

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The wisdom for the legislation of the Mahr

The dowry acts as a symbolic gift to honour and please a woman during a monumental change in her life. It should be given **{graciously}** i.e. in the spirit of happiness and generosity, with an open and willing heart.

It was legislated by Islām, in a time of Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islāmic ignorance) wherein women were belittled and had no status in society. The above Āyah was revealed because before Islām, 'a [father] would marry off his daughter to a man and then take possession of her dowry, so Allāh forbade this practice and revealed **{And give the women [upon marriage] their bridal gifts (dowry) graciously}**².

Also, the dowry symbolises the beginning of a relationship in which the husband and wife will sacrifice what they have to help and support each other; in the case of the husband it is a portion of his wealth as a gesture of commitment to his wife.

Who has the right to possess the dowry?

The dowry remains the exclusive right of the wife; it is her personal property, and none of her family, relatives, husband or in-laws have any share of it unless she herself chooses to share or donate it, as Allāh mentioned in the second part of the same Āyah,

{...But if they [wives] give up willingly to you anything of it [the dowry], then take it in satisfaction and ease} [04:04]

Islāmic names for dowry

The word Mahr is the most commonly used term when referring to the dowry, however other terms have been used in Islamic texts which further symbolise its nature.

Ibn Qudāmah said, "the dowry has nine names: Şidāq, Şadaqah, Mahr, Niḥlah, Farīdah, 'Ujr, 'Alāiq, 'Uqur and Hibā'a³.

In addition to the above, it is also referred to as: Nikāḥ and At-Tawl.

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The dowry acts as a symbolic gift to honour and please a woman during a monumental change in her life. It should be given {graciously} i.e. in the spirit of happiness and generosity, with an open and willing heart.

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2 Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr of Āyah [04:04]

3 Refer to: Al-Mughni, the Book of Dowry (Vol. 7 p. 160)

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1. Niḥlah:

Lit. A gift or a present which is given to a person for nothing in return. It is used in the context of marriage with the meaning of giving a dowry in a good-spirited manner, as a form of a religious obligation. It is considered a gift 'for nothing in return' as both husband and wife mutually benefit from marital relations.⁴

2. Ṣidāq:

Lit. A truthful act of charity. It is a symbolic act of sacrifice in which a person gives something which is naturally beloved to his heart i.e. money. The term Aṣ-Ṣadaqah has a similar meaning.

3. 'Ujr:

Lit. A due compensation. The dowry is a compensation for one's wife on account of the marriage which permits them to have intimate relations with each other.

4. 'Alāiq:

Lit. Gifts which are precious to somebody and they will be attached to them. When the Prophet was asked the meaning of this word, he replied: "That which your spouses are pleased with".⁵

5. Ḥibā'a:

Lit. A gift by which a husband honours his wife. It is an amount given to the wife in addition to the Mahr, however it comes under the rulings of a Mahr.⁶

6. Tawl:

Lit. Ability and wealth. Taken from the saying of Allāh, **{And whoever among you cannot [find] the means (i.e. does not have the availability and wealth to provide a dowry) to marry...}** [04:25]

“

Lit. A gift or a present which is given to a person for nothing in return. It is used in the context of marriage with the meaning of giving a dowry in a good-spirited manner, as a form of a religious obligation.

”

4 Refer to: Tafsīr Al-Ulūsi of Āyah [04:04]

5 Narrated by Ibn Abbās; Collected by Ad-Daruqtnī and Al-Bayhaqī. Weakened by Al-Ḥāfidh Ibn Hajr in At-Talkhīs al-Ḥabīr (3/385)

6 Refer to Al-'Awn Al-Ma'būd Sharḥ Sunnan Abī Dawūd (Vol. 5 p.13) : Chapter: gifts which take the ruling of dowry

7

7. Farīdah:

Lit. An obligation

The dowry is a religious obligation, which Allah obligated upon a man for his wife.

Taken from the saying of Allah, **{give them their due compensation (i.e. dowry) as an obligation}** [04:24]

8. 'Uqur:

Lit. An indemnity as a form of security, protection or compensation.

If a man has no wealth, and the bride agrees to the marriage proposal.

In the case of a groom not possessing any wealth, the bride can stipulate an amount of dowry which the groom can delay until he is able to pay it, however it remains his responsibility to pay as and when he can afford to do so.

In essence there are three types of dowries:

1. Pre-paid dowry: This is stipulated and given to the bride before or at the time of the Nikāḥ.

2. Deferred dowry: The dowry is stipulated during the Nikāḥ, however its payment is deferred. It remains an obligation upon the husband even if time passes.

3. Unstipulated dowry: This is when no amount was specified as dowry, however the obligation remains unless the bride relinquishes her right to a dowry.

If the marriage contract is finalised and the dowry is neither stipulated nor relinquished, the groom must give an amount which is in line with the prevalent custom within their culture, or an amount similar to what her sisters and other female relatives were given.⁷

In cases of poverty, the teaching of the Qur'an or beneficial knowledge can also act as a form of dowry, i.e. stipulating this as dowry as it does not have an inherent monetary value.

When a woman came to the Prophet ﷺ in order to propose herself in marriage to him, the Prophet ﷺ did not desire marriage to her however another man did.

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In the case of a groom not possessing any wealth, the bride can stipulate an amount of dowry which the groom can delay until he is able to pay it...

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⁷ Narrated by Ibn Mas'ūd; Collected by Abu Dawūd (No. 2115) and Tirmidhī (No. 1145). A companion named Mi'qal Ibn Sinān Al-Ashja'ī married a woman, and then died without specifying an amount for dowry. The Prophet said: 'for her is the dowry similar to her female [relatives].

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The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Give her something [as dowry] even if it is an iron ring.'

He replied: 'I do not have one.'

He said: 'I marry her to you for what you know of the Qur'ān.'⁸ i.e. according to what you can teach her from the Qur'ān which you know.

Is the dowry a fixed amount?

The Sharī'ah provides us with a general framework of legislation, and often does not specify details. The wisdom behind this is that the legislation of Islam remains relevant and applicable to every time, culture and people as the needs and norms of civilisations change.

An example of this is the subject of our article, the dowry. Islām obligates a dowry; however, it does not restrict it to any set amount.

The bride can request any amount she pleases bearing in mind that the most blessed women are those with the simplest of dowries,⁹ and **'the most blessed of marriages is the simplest'**.¹⁰

Ibn Al-Qayyim said, "Being excessive in the dowry is disliked in marriage, and it is a source of diminished blessings and difficulties."¹¹

There is also a general prohibition from demanding exorbitant dowries, 'Umar (radiAllāhu 'anhu) used to say: "I warn you from demanding excessive dowries, if it was righteous or something honourable, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would have been the first to do it. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ did not marry any of his wives with anything more than 12 and a half Uwqiyyah."¹²

The prohibition of demanding excessive dowries is so that the groom is not burdened with what he is unable to bear, and to facilitate marriages by not making it overly expensive.

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The bride can request any amount she pleases bearing in mind that the most blessed women are those with the simplest of dowries, and 'the most blessed of marriages is the simplest'.

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8 Narrated by Sahl Ibn Sa'ad; Collected by al-Bukhārī (No. 5030) and Muslim (No. 1425)

9 Collected by Aḥmad (Vol. 6 p. 77 & p. 91)

10 Collected by Ibn Hibbān and authenticated as Saḥīḥ by Al-Albānī in Saḥīḥ Al-Jāmi'

11 Zād Al-Ma'ād by Ibn Qayyim (Vol. 5 p. 162)

12 Collected by the five and Aḥmad, authenticated as Saḥīḥ by Al-Albānī.

The amount of dowry is therefore known by way of a person's prevalent culture. Whatever is deemed appropriate and normal within a person's culture can be used as a general guideline for a dowry – as long as it does not conflict with Islam.

How much was the dowry of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ ?

According to the Ḥadīth of 'Ā'isha¹³ and the aforementioned narration of 'Umar, the combined dowry of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ was 12 and a half Uwqiyyah.

The narrations teach us that 1 Uwqiyyah is equal to 40 dirhams and obviously half of 1 Uwqiyyah is 20 dirhams.

Abu Salama b. 'Abd al-Rahman reported:

I asked 'Ā'isha, the wife of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ): What is the amount of dower of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)? She said: It was twelve 'uqiyas and one nash. She said: Do you know what is al-nash? I said: No. She said: It is half of uqiya, and it amounts to five hundred dirhams, and that was the dower given by Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) to his wives.¹⁴

Therefore, the combined dowry of his wives was equal to 500 dirhams.

12.5 * 40 dirhams = 500 dirhams. That's 12 Uqiyyah's and a half multiplied by 40 dirhams.

The dirham was a currency used during the time of the Prophet ﷺ that was equal to the value of silver.

It should be known that the value of silver in terms of Dirhams and weight used to be constant in the era of the Prophet ﷺ but in today's economic climate the value of silver is in constant fluctuation. The niṣāb (minimum threshold) for zakāt is 200 dirhams which is equal to 595 grams of silver or 20 dinārs which is equal to 85 grams of gold.¹⁵

13 Narrated by 'Ā'isha; Collected by Muslim (No. 1426)

14 Collected by Muslim 1426

15 Ibn 'Uthaymīn in Sharḥ Mumtī' [Vol. 6 p. 103-104]

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Whatever is deemed appropriate and normal within a person's culture can be used as a general guideline for a dowry – as long as it does not conflict with Islam.

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Based on this, we can calculate that 500 dirhams is equal to 1487.5 grams of silver.

$$500 / 200 = 2.5$$
$$2.5 * 595g = 1487.5g$$

Therefore, the dowry of the Prophet ﷺ for his wives was a combined total of 1487.5g of silver.

The value of silver in today's economy

As of Sept 19th 2019, 1 gram of silver with 99% purity is valued at £0.46 approximately.

So, if we convert 500 dirhams to pounds sterling without factoring in inflation and price changes over time, the dowry of all the wives of the Prophet ﷺ would be:

$$1487.5g \times £0.46 = £684.25$$

However, this is an inaccurate estimation because it does not factor in the consumer price index (cpi) which is a measure that examines the weighted average of the price of goods by calculating price changes over time, in line with inflation or deflation of currencies.

In addition to this, the above calculations would be more accurate if we used gold (dinār) as a measure - and then calculate it from gold to silver - instead of using silver as the measure, this is because the purchasing power of gold is more stable and constant than silver, especially in recent years wherein the value and purchasing power of silver has diminished significantly.¹⁶

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In addition to this, the above calculations would be more accurate if we used gold (dinār) as a measure - and then calculate it from gold to silver - instead of using silver as the measure...

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16 <https://commodityhq.com/education/a-brief-2000-year-history-of-silver-prices/>

What type of commodity could you purchase with 500 dirhams in the Prophetic period?

To demonstrate the effect of inflation, let us examine one popular commodity in the era of the Prophet ﷺ which was livestock. The price of one sheep at the time of the Prophet ﷺ was 1 Dinar.¹⁷

Dinar was a currency used during the time of the Prophet ﷺ valued to a set amount of gold; and 1 Dinar was equal to 12 Dirhams.¹⁸

This is known from the Ḥadīth of 'Āisha and Ibn 'Umar that the prescribed punishment of theft was carried out upon anyone who stole anything equal to or more than a quarter of a dinār or 3 dirhams.¹⁹ Therefore:

¼ dinār = 3 dirhams.

1 dinār = 4 * 3 dirhams i.e. 12 dirhams.

Based on the above, 500 dirhams (the collective dowry of the Prophet ﷺ to all his wives) is equal to 42 dinārs.

During the life of the Prophet ﷺ, the cost of a single sheep was 1 dinar.

Urwa narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) gave him one Dinar so as to buy a sheep for him. `Urwa bought two sheep for him with the money. Then he sold one of the sheep for one Dinar, and brought one Dinar and a sheep to the Prophet. On that, the Prophet (ﷺ) invoked Allah to bless him in his deals.²⁰

17 Narrated by 'Urwa; Collected by al-Bukhārī (No. 3643)

18 Prices of commodities were generally constant in the time of the Prophet ﷺ; The niṣāb of silver was 200 dirhams (595g), the niṣāb of gold was 20 dinars (85g), the niṣāb (minimum threshold) for Zakāh on camels was 5 camels; whoever possesses 5 camels must give 1 sheep in Zakāh.

As mentioned previously, at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, 1 sheep was worth 1 dinār (4.25g of gold); today, 1 sheep is worth £163 approximately.

The price of 1g of gold today (19 sept 2019) is £35.39, so if we multiply £35.39 x 4.25g = £150.

Therefore £150 was the price of 1 sheep in the time of the Prophet ﷺ whereas today it is £163 i.e. a relatively minimal difference of this commodity. This proves that gold has kept its value in the last 1400 years, hence the reason we shall use gold in our calculations.

19 Narrated by 'Āisha and Ibn 'Umar; Collected by al-Bukhārī (No. 6790)

20 Collected by Bukhari 3643

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This is known from the Ḥadīth of 'Āisha and Ibn 'Umar that the prescribed punishment of theft was carried out upon anyone who stole anything equal to or more than a quarter of a dinār or 3 dirhams.

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Therefore with 500 Dirhams a person living at the time of the Prophet ﷺ could purchase 42 sheep.

1 sheep = 1 dinār = 12 dirhams
500 / 12 = 42 (rounded to the nearest whole number)

Therefore, 500 dirhams would purchase 42 sheep.

The dowry of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ according to today's economy

In today's economy (2019), the price of a commercially bred sheep is approximately £163 (USD \$200).

The value of 500 dirhams was 42 Dinārs which is the price of 42 sheep so the formula we need to calculate the collective dowry of the Prophet's wives is as follows:

4.25grams x 42 x value of gold today = collective dowry of wives.

This is of course without inflation factored in because the purchasing power of gold – as mentioned earlier – is relatively constant. So, let us calculate and find the figure, the value of 1g of 22 carat gold today (19 Sept 2019) is £35.39.

4.25 x 42 x £35.39 = £6317.

Based on the above £6317 is the amount equal to 500 dirhams if you calculate using the value of gold.

Let us now calculate based on the price of sheep today and factor CPI and inflation:

42 (no. of sheep) x £163 (price of one sheep today) = £6846 (USD \$8,440)

According to the CPI we would need £6846 to be able to purchase 42 sheep in today's economy.

To summarise the aforementioned calculations, without factoring in CPI and only calculating based on the value of the ever-fluctuating silver, 500 dirhams in the time of the Prophet ﷺ is equivalent to £684.25. However, in terms of purchasing power (CPI) it is equal to £6846 approximately, but if we use the value of gold which is constant it is equal to £6317. As you can see there is £529 between the two figures.

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We will reconcile between the two figures by finding their average;

$$6846 + 6317 = 13163$$
$$13163 / 2 = \text{£}6581$$

We can now safely assume inshAllah that £6581 is the closest equivalent to 500 dirhams or 42 Dinārs at the time of the Prophet ﷺ.

The collective dowry of all the wives of the Prophet ﷺ in today's economy is equivalent to £6581.

The Prophet ﷺ had 11 wives but we have excluded Umm Habībah Ramla, daughter of Abu Sufyān - may Allāh be pleased with her - who was one of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ because her dowry was 400 Dinārs, this amount was a gift to the Prophet ﷺ from An-Najāshi, the ruler of Abyssinia at the time, in honour of the noble Messenger ﷺ.

This figure would be unrepresentative of the dowry that the Prophet ﷺ gave to his wives and is therefore outside the scope of our discussion. Our topic of research is the dowry given by the Prophet ﷺ to his wives and the dowry of Umm Habībah was paid for by An-Najāshi as explained by Imām An-Nawawi in his explanation of the Ḥadīth of Abu Salamah.²¹

We have also excluded Ṣafīyyah (may Allāh be pleased with her) from the equation because her dowry was her emancipation.²² She was the daughter of Ḥuyay ibn Akhdab from the progeny of Prophet Harūn, the brother of the Prophet Mūsa, she was the daughter of a Prophet and a wife of a Prophet - May Allāh be pleased with her.

It is also important to mention that – contrary to popular belief - Māria (may Allah be pleased with he), the mother of Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet ﷺ - who died in infancy - was a slave-woman whom the Prophet ﷺ emancipated, so she was not his wife.²³

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We have also excluded Ṣafīyyah (may Allāh be pleased with her) from the equation because her dowry was her emancipation.

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21 Explanation of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (Vol. 9 p. 556), in the explanation of Ḥadīth (No. 1426)

22 Collected by Al-Bukhārī (No. 5086) & Muslim (No. 1365).

23 Zād Al Ma'ād (Vol. 1 p.114)

This leaves us with nine wives.

Therefore, on average the dowry which was paid for each of his nine wives was: £731.22 (\$911) each.²⁴

£6581 / 9 = £731.22

This does not mean - of course - that he gave all of them an equal amount, however between nine wives the average dowry was 55 dirhams or the value of £731.22 with inflation factored in.

Summary

As mentioned previously, the Sharī'ah has not legislated a specific amount of dowry; a woman is free to request whatever she and her family feel is appropriate in line with the customs of her culture and without being excessive.

The above calculations of the Prophetic dowry is intended to contextualise for today's Muslims the simplicity of the dowry belonging to the mothers of the believers, the greatest and most noble women to ever walk on this earth - the wives of the Prophet ﷺ; these calculations are also meant to highlight the fact that the dowry is a symbolic gesture from the husband to the wife to show his commitment to her and her guardian. It is a goodwill gesture that is obligatory and cannot be taken lightly.

There is no obligation for a person to abide by the amount which was given by the Prophet ﷺ as this was not done as a form of Sunnah which people must follow, rather it is the prevalent culture - within reason - which acts as a guideline for the amount that should be given as a dowry.

An important issue which also needs addressing is that in some cultures, the custom and norm is for the groom to give gifts and gold to his new wife. Such gifts - which often outvalue the dowry - must be considered as part of the dowry if two conditions prevail:

1. The custom and tradition of that land is such that these gifts are considered part of the dowry.
2. These gifts are discussed, agreed upon and stipulated before or during the marriage contract.

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An important issue which also needs addressing is that in some cultures, the custom and norm is for the groom to give gifts and gold to his new wife.

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²⁴ Please refer to appendix one for an important clarification regarding this total.

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If these two conditions are not present, such 'wedding gifts' are not considered part of the dowry. The importance of this distinction is further highlighted in the case of a man who annuls the marriage contract or divorces before having sexual relations, he has the right to reclaim his dowry from her, including the gifts if the above two conditions are present.

It is called *Hibā'a* which is something given to the wife in addition to the dowry and it comes under the rulings of a *Mahr*.

Imām Abu Dawūd in his *Sunnan*, mentioned the chapter: What is attached to the dowry: gifts which take the ruling of dowry.

Al-Adhīmabādī explained this 'gift' as something which is given in addition to the dowry.²⁵

Final advice

In ending, we advise our brothers and sisters not to delay marriage particularly in this day and age. This advice is in accordance with the advice of the Prophet ﷺ if you are financially and physically able to marry, do so: **“O young men, whoever among you can afford it, let him get married, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding one's chastity. And whoever cannot afford it should fast, for it will be a shield for him.”**²⁶

In marriage there is not only the beautification and enjoyment of this life, but also a protection for a person, by which he/she is able to protect their chastity and dignity.

And we advise our Muslim sisters to be sympathetic and compassionate to brothers seeking marriage. In accordance with the advice of the Prophet ﷺ, to not seek excessive amounts of dowries and demands lest the blessings from a marriage are removed, as the Prophet ﷺ said: **“the most blessed of women, are those who are the simplest [in expenses]”**.²⁷

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In marriage there is not only the beautification and enjoyment of this life, but also a protection for a person, by which he/she is able to protect their chastity and dignity.

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25 Refer to Al-Awn Al-Ma'būd Sharḥ Sunnan Abee Dawūd (Vol. 5 p.13). Chapter: Gifts which take the ruling of dowry.

26 Narrated by Ibn Mas'ūd; Collected by Al-Bukhārī (No. 5066) & Muslim (No. 1400)

27 Collected by Ibn Hibbān and authenticated as Sahih by Al-Albāni in Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Jāmi'

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And we advise our elder brothers, the guardians of our sisters, to facilitate the marriage of those under their guardianship and not impede it. No doubt financial stability and responsibility is important in a marriage, but do not forsake the qualities which the Prophet ﷺ advised with.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, **“If someone proposes marriage to you whose religion and character satisfies you, then you should accept it. If you do not do so, there will be trials on the earth and the spread of corruption.”**²⁸

And Allāh knows best; may peace and salutations be upon our Prophet ﷺ, his pure wives, blessed household and companions.

Written by,

Abu Salma Muhammad Aydeed & Abul Abbaas Naveed Ayaz

Thursday, 6th Muḥarram 1441h
Corresponding to 5th September 2019.

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And we advise our elder brothers, the guardians of our sisters, to facilitate the marriage of those under their guardianship and not impede it.

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Appendix One

500 Dirhams was the combined dowry for all his wives

There is a discussion which could be had, and that is: the 500 dirhams which the Prophet ﷺ gave to his wives as dowry, is this a combined total for all his wives or did he give 500 dirhams to each wife?

It seems to us – and Allāh knows best – that the former is closer to the truth i.e. it was a combined total for all his wives and not what he gave to each of his wives.

We have included our reasoning for this as an appendix,

Imām Muslim (No. 1424) collected the Ḥadīth of Abu Hurayrah (Allāh be pleased with him) who said,

“A man came to Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ and said: ‘**I have contracted marriage with a woman of the Anṣār.**’

He replied: ‘**Did you cast a glance at her, for there is something in the eyes of the Anṣār?**’

He replied: ‘**I did cast a glance at her.**’

Whereupon he said: ‘**For what (dowry) did you marry her?**’

He replied: ‘**For four ‘uqiyas.**’

Thereupon the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: ‘**For four ‘uqiyas ! (in amazement); it seems as if you dig out silver from the side of this mountain.**’

Imām An-Nawawi said in his commentary of this Ḥadīth: “These words are in reference to his dislike of excessive dowries in relation to the circumstances of the husband.”

So, if the Prophet ﷺ considered four ‘uqiyas (160 dirhams) to be excessive, it would be highly unlikely to think that he gave 500 Dirhams on average to each of his wives on 9 separate occasions.

With this in mind, we have based our calculations on the assumption that he gave a combined dowry of 500 Dirhams to all his wives.

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Imām An-Nawawi said in his commentary of this Ḥadīth: “These words are in reference to his dislike of excessive dowries in relation to the circumstances of the husband.”

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This is further strengthened by 'Umar's warning against excessive dowries and the example he gave with the simplicity of the dowry of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

If the Prophet ﷺ gave 500 dirhams to each of his wives, 'Umar would not have been able to say what he said because 500 dirhams was a lot of money, and Allah knows best.

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If the Prophet ﷺ gave 500 dirhams to each of his wives, 'Umar would not have been able to say what he said because 500 dirhams was a lot of money

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