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Research Article

Interfaith Marriage in Judaism and Christianity: Jewish-Christian Matrimonial Unions

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Abstract. Interfaith marriage between individuals of Jewish and Christian faiths presents unique challenges and opportunities for religious coexistence and shared values. This study examines Jewish-Christian matrimonial unions, exploring the complexities and dynamics of such relationships. By analyzing the historical, theological, and social aspects of Judaism and Christianity, this study sheds light on the varying perspectives, traditions, and concerns surrounding interfaith marriages within

these faith communities. Additionally, it investigates the impact of interfaith unions on religious identity, family dynamics, and the upbringing of children. By delving into the experiences and narratives of individuals in Jewish-Christian marriages, this study provides insights into the negotiation of religious differences, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the potential for mutual understanding and respect in interfaith relationships.

Keywords: Christianity, Judaism, Marriage, Interfaith marriage, Jewish-Christian

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a socially acceptable and legally recognized union between two people that frequently entails a formal ceremony, a legally binding contract, and the establishment of a lifelong relationship. It is a cultural institution that differs among civilizations and has different connotations and expectations based on the social, political, and religious contexts in which it is practiced. A marriage involving people from various religious backgrounds or spiritual traditions is referred to as an interfaith marriage. A marital partnership when partners from different religious backgrounds come together and navigate the opportunities and challenges brought on by their different religious views and practices" (Scott 2019). A comprehensive set of moral principles, practices, and rituals that are based on the concept of the existence of a higher powers and the search for spiritual significance can be referred to as religion. It frequently involves ideas like belief, worship, prayer, and commitment to religious doctrines or scriptures. A sophisticated system of beliefs, practices, rituals, and moral standards is based on the idea that there is a higher power and that people are on a journey for spiritual significance (Bowker 2020). The earliest of the Abrahamic religions, Judaism, is monotheistic and dates back to circa 2000 BCE in ancient Canaan (modern-day Israel and Palestine). It includes a broad range of intricate customs, rituals, and behaviors that have developed over countless years. The life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ serve as the foundation of the monotheistic Abrahamic religion known as Christianity. With billions of adherents worldwide, it is one of the major faiths. The Trinity, Jesus' divinity, and humanity's salvation via his atoning death and resurrection are among the central doctrines of Christianity. Jewish tradition regards marriage as a holy covenant between a man and a woman. It includes a number of components, including the marriage contract, the wedding canopy, the betrothal ritual, and the recital of blessings. Jewish law also places a strong emphasis on the necessity of marital responsibilities and intimacy. Although it is acknowledged, divorce is viewed as a last resort (Waxman 2000). Christianity views marriage as a holy and eternal bond that is based on love, fidelity, and the desire to have a large and godly family. It is viewed as a partnership where both individuals try to support and encourage one another in their spiritual journeys by imitating the values that Jesus Christ preached. In Judaism, an interfaith marriage is a union between a Jew and a spouse who practices a different religion. The Jewish community has different viewpoints on this subject. Traditional Judaism places a strong emphasis on preserving Jewish continuity and identity, which discourages interfaith unions. Modern Jewish movements, on the other hand, are

more tolerant, and some of them even support interfaith unions as a means of fostering openness and acceptance. Interfaith marriage is ultimately a personal and social choice that frequently involves questions about religious commitment, family relationships, and the future of Jewish heritage. A Christian and a member of another religion getting married is referred to as an interfaith marriage in Christianity. Christian faiths differ in their attitudes about interfaith marriage, with some being more tolerant and others forbidding it. Couples should take into account factors like shared values, a dedication to the Christian faith, and open communication when navigating the difficulties that may result from having different religious beliefs. Jewish-Christian marriages uphold the shared ideals of faith, love, and respect, promoting harmony and understanding across the various religions. These unions serve as a beautiful example of variety by giving people of all religious backgrounds the chance to coexist peacefully and in harmony. Understanding the complexities, difficulties, and opportunities within Christian-Jewish interfaith marriages is crucial for doing effective research. It clarifies the processes used to resolve religious disputes, has an effect on religious identity and continuity, encourages interfaith conversation, fosters social integration, tackles the legal and religious ramifications, and offers insights into individual experiences. This study adds to broader issues of interfaith harmony, religious diversity, and inclusive society.

Judaism Unveiled: Tracing the Path of the Jewish Faith through History, Marriage, Practices, and the Status of Women

1. Promoter of religion

Jews consider Moses (A.S.) to be the prophet of Judaism (Lierman 2004). From Hazrat Yaqub's (A.S) descendants to Moses (A.S) to Hazrat Dawood (A.S), they were the Bani Israel (Kamoonpuri 2001). They were Jews because Hazrat Dawood (A.S.) was the ruler of Canaan and the Sumerian empire prior to Hazrat Jesus (A.S.) (Sawma 2006). At the time of Prophet Jesus (A.S.), they denied his prophethood and claimed to be Jews (Maccoby 1973; Cohen 1983; Greenspahn 1989; Sommer 1996). In actuality, no one was a prophet of Yehudi; instead, every Muslim prophet from Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S.) through Hazrat Jesus (A.S.) was a prophet of Islam (Zaki 2006). Allah says: Moses said, O my people! If you had believed in Allah and surrendered, then you would have relied on Him¹. Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian; he was a sincere surrendered, and he was not of the polytheists.² Another name of the son Yaqub (A.S.) of Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S.), the father of the Muslim nation, was Israel (Abdullah and Ishak 2011). That is why his descendants are called Bani Israel. The word Israel means servants of God. The royal priest at the court of the Babylonian emperor Nimrod was Hazrat Ibrahim's (A.S.) father (Hislop 1959). Ibrahim (A.S.) vehemently denounced shirk despite being the son of such a guy. He was consequently cast into the fire, but Almighty Allah's boundless kindness spared him (Zwemer 2010). Then he left his homeland, Iraq, and went to different parts of Arabia to preach Islam. One of his children was named Ishaq (A.S.). The son of Hazrat Ishaq (A.S) is Hazrat Yakub (A.S). His other name is Israel (Auliya 2022). The descendants of Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S.) Bani Israel ruled the world for a long time as a blessing from Almighty Allah. A branch of Bani Israel later identified themselves as Jews. A child of

Hazrat Yakub was also named Yahuda, and from here comes the origin of the Jewish nation.

2. Jewish scriptures and History

There are a total of three scriptures in this religion: the Torah, the Talmud, and the Protocols (Case and Chavez 2017). The most notable aspect of the Jewish people and Judaism throughout its nearly 1,500-year history has been its adaptation and continuity (Jackson 2004). From ancient Egypt or the Babylonian Empire, Judaism has had to deal with modern Western Christian populations and modern secular groups (Joseph 2000; Scheindlin 2000). A number of things from each group and ideology have been added to the Jewish socio-religious structure, but their ancient traditions have never been undermined. Thus, on the one hand, the religion has adapted and, on the other, has kept its original traditions intact. For this reason, the Jewish tradition of any period appears as a synthesis of all the Jewish traditions that preceded it. No matter how many innovations or evolutions come in any one era, the Yehudi's have always maintained their antiquity in terms of tradition. The core teachings of Judaism have almost always revolved around monotheism (Nikiprowetzky 1975, Stark 2003; Ali et al. 2005; Fynn 2009). Although there are many classes and sub-classes among the Jews, no one disagrees on this one point. All accept only one God in one sentence. Monotheism actually implies a universal religion, although there is some particularism associated with it (Werblowsky 1971; Moberg 2002; Roccas 2005). In ancient Israel, this individualism took the form of elections. Election refers to God's choosing someone from among the people as his representative. Since then, the Jews have believed that there must be a pre-planned covenant between God and man. Everyone must abide by this covenant or face severe punishment in the Hereafter. Messianism blended beautifully with this Jewish mindset. The history of plots, conspiracies, and misdeeds of the Jews as a nation in the heart of the world is well known (Zukier 1987; Goldberg 2004; Wood and Finlay 2008; Fekete 2012). In the Qur'an, they are identified as a cursed and humiliated nation (Holtzman & Schlossberg 2006; Dan 2009; Spencer 2009; Firestone 2019). They also have an identity as usurers and moneylenders (Lewison 1999; Feinstein 2006). People have long harbored animosity toward this country due to its atheism, blasphemy, and terrible activities (Bell 2001; Yuval 2008). Being very clever and cunning by birth, this race adopts various tricks to subjugate people. Through this, they have sustained their own existence over the ages. The Great Allah said they were subjected to insults and ostracism. They wandered under the light of Allah. This is because they disbelieved in the law of Allah and persecuted the prophets unjustly (Kraemer 1997; Peters 2009; Reynolds 2012; Hayati & Putra 2022). Because they disobeyed and violated the law. Almighty Allah says: "And when you said, O Moses! We will never endure the same diet. So pray to your Lord for us—that He produce for us vegetables, watermelon, wheat, lentils, and onions. Moses said, "Do you want to exchange better things for worse things?" But land in a city. Everything you want is there.³ They were humiliated and impoverished, and they fell under the spell of Allah. This is because they denied the revelations of Allah and killed the prophets unjustly. This was their fate for disobedience and transgression'. The Jewish people caused the

most suffering for Hazrat Musa (A.S.) (Mainiyo & Abdullahi 2017). At the beginning of Surah Baqarah, there is a description of Allah's mercy on the Jewish nation and about 12 evils and their peace from Allah. When Musa (A.S.) traveled to Mount Tur to receive the Torah from Allah after Allah had delivered them from the Egyptian pharaoh, they began to worship the calf of the cow (Sikumbang et al. 2022). After Allah forgives them with his peace, they again sit earnestly to see Allah with their own eyes. They received a warning for this by having angels raise the mountain of Tur as punishment (Tabatabai 1981). They were ungrateful and refused to eat natural food after the dua of Musa (A.S.). Musa (A.S.) is occasionally accused of wicked deeds and adultery. So Hazrat Musa (A.S.) endured their suffering for all of his life. Hazrat Dawood (A.S.) used to read Zabur from the Book of Allah every Saturday. At that time, by the sea, even the fish used to come to the bank and listen to his recitation (Aminati 2015; Ritonga et al. 2020). But at that time, Jews were known for fishing. They employed their cunning to follow Allah's law even though fishing was prohibited on that particular day. They approached the fish on Saturday and captured it on Sunday. Allah turned some of them into monkeys as punishment. After three days, the group of monkeys all died.⁴ After the death of Hazrat Sulaiman (A.S.), the Jewish nation resorted to mutual disunity, heresy, and evil. Even if some prophet came and warned the Jews about the dire consequences of such activities on the command of Allah, they disobeyed his words and instead rebelled against the prophet. Then, in the wrath of God, an Egyptian king attacked them and did extensive damage and plunder. After that, they did fairly well for some time, but their material evil did not allow them to stay well. They started worshiping idols out of blasphemy (Fredriksen 1991; Levy 1995; Schiffman 1997; Marcus 2006; York 2010; Borgen 2021). Hazrat Ilyas (A.S.) started a movement against Jewish idolatry. Not only was he persecuted by the Jews, but they were proud of him. Eventually, an Egyptian king would attack them again and plunder them. Then the situation improved slightly. After that, if they were involved in misdeeds, the Babylonian emperor Bakhte Nasar would punish them (Kidwai 2011). The emperor attacked Baitul Maqdis and destroyed the Aqsa Mosque. Killings and theft destroyed the city. Then the Jews were exiled from Baitul Maqdis and migrated to Babylon (Deus 2016). There, he spent 70 years in extreme humiliation and misery (Volkan 2018). Then there was an Iranian emperor who grabbed Babel, and he took mercy on the Jews and sent them back to Syria. At this time, they built the Aqsa Mosque again. Then 170 years before the birth of Jesus (A.S.), when they indulged in sin again, the emperor of Antakya attacked them and made 40 thousand and imprisoned 40 thousand. The emperor also insulted Aqsa in the mosque. When the Roman emperor captured Baitul Maqdis many years later, he supported the Jews (Abrahamson and Katz 2004). Eight years after this, Isa (AS) was born. In this way, the condition of the Jewish kingdom reached a deplorable level, but they continued to disobey God. When the prophets warned them, they began to persecute those prophets. When Hazrat Yahya (A.S.) objected to the Jews' lewd behavior, they chopped him in half and killed him. According to Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Masud (RA), the Bani Israel have murdered 300 prophets of Allah. They were angry with Hazrat Isa (A.S.), who became the target of their wrath, was falsely accused of a crime, and received a hanging warrant. However, Allah delivered Hazrat Jesus (A.S.) from their

grasp by raising him to heaven (Mahmud 2019). After the ascension of Hazrat Jesus (AS), the religion of Jesus (AS) fell. After that, a radical Jew created a new religion in the name of Christianity by killing the companions of Jesus (A.S.) (Heschel 1998). His name was Saul. Later, he changed his name to Paul (Harrer 1940). This Jew named Paul was the worst enemy of Jesus (A.S.). Because of this, he disguised himself among Christians and distorted Christianity (Schoeps 2002). Christians fall into his trap, and he succeeds 100% (Wright 2014). It can be said that the current Christianity is not the Christianity left by Jesus (A.S.), but rather the religion of Paul.

3. Marriage in Judaism

Marriage is the pinnacle of a Jew's life. Marriage in Biblical terms: "Consequently a man shall leave his mother and his father and hold fast to his wife, and they shall be one flesh.⁵ The family is formed through marriage, and the family is the foundation of Judaism (Weisberg 2009). Also, the increase of the number of Israelites through marriage is always considered. Judaism does not allow a Jew to have a non-Jewish husband or wife (Schwartz 2007). There were no rules of marriage among the Jews. Polygamy was practiced even as they married as many wives as they wished without fixing the number of wives (Nasimiya 2005). Dawood (A.S.) had a large number of spouses. The narration cannot be said to be completely authentic because the Jews told numerous lies about their prophets. However, these descriptions bear witness to multiple marriages. Unmarried maidservants and even indentured servitude were legal (Bilder 1995). But under this religion, a widowed lady was not permitted to remarry. According to the Jews, being a mother was the 'root of all the sufferings of the human race (Cohen and Eisen 2000). This wrong concept permeates all aspects of Jewish life. As a result, there was not much to say about the status of women in their society. The Bible says about marriage, 'The Lord God made a woman out of the man's rib. Then the Lord God brought forth the man, and the man said, finally, there is one like me. His bones are from my ribs, and his body is from my body.' It will be classified as female since a male generated it. For this, the man leaves his parents and unites with his wife, and thus the two become one. A sati (virtuous) wife is the source of her husband's joy and pride. An unappreciative wife, however, is intolerable, like a sickness in her husband's bones." People inherit houses and wealth from their parents. A good woman, however, is a gift from God. If one finds a virtuous wife, he has received a good gift from the Lord. That wife will be pleased with her husband.

4. Jewish Marriage Practices

The main wedding ceremony usually takes place inside the synagogue (Gans 1994). However, the Jews of Ashkenazi' (Central Europe) mainly hold ceremonies on the tree covering of the synagogue square (Robinson 2016). No priest or rabbi is required to perform the religious ceremony of the marriage ceremony (Greenberg 2004). Marriage Ordinance - Knowing specific verses of law and scripture that one can perform in the priesthood at a marriage ceremony. But only for this reason—the rabbi and the cantor, the synagogue's principal singer—are given the job of officiating at the wedding since they are more knowledgeable about the faith (Shiloah 1995). The

marriage contract is solemnized after the signature of the husband and wife on the marriage certificate in the presence of two witnesses. The rings of the bride and groom are exchanged. God's prayer is sung at the union of two souls. As a token of their goodwill, the guests give the newlyweds special glasses of wine (Heath 2000). In the final euphoria of the ceremony, the bridegroom broke the wine glass in his hand by throwing it under his right foot. The shattering of the glass represents the sorrow over the Romans' desecration of Jerusalem and its Second Temple in 70 AD (McCall & Levitt 1982).

5. Marriage prayer in Judaism

The marriage prayer in Judaism is written below the line.

"May Zion who has been barren rejoice and exult at the speedy joyful regathering of her children within her. Blessed are Thou, Lord who causes Zion to rejoice in her children."

"Mayest art, Thou delight this loving couple as of old Thou didst rejoice Thy handiwork in the garden of delight. Blessed art Thou, Lord who gives joy to bridegroom and bride."

"Blessed art Thou, lord our God, Ruler of the universe, creator of bridegroom and bride, of gladness and joy, happiness and rapture, companionship, fellowship, harmony and love. Lord our God, may there soon be heard in the cities of Judah and streets of Jerusalem the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of wedding jubilation, bridegrooms in there festivities and youth in there festal song. Blessed art thou, Lord who rejoices the bridegroom with the bride and who blessed their welfare".

"Give thanks unto the Lord or He is good, for His mercy endures forever". May sorrows depart from Israel and rejoicings increase among us."

Divorce is socially and religiously discouraged as much as possible in Jewish society. However, if divorce is inevitable, neither party can enter into a new marriage before the religious court approves the divorce. In Judaism, a civil court order for divorce must be approved by a religious court. Note that caring for parents is the fifth commandment of the Ten Commandments in Judaism (Goldberg 2008). As part of the religious law, children in Jewish families keep their parents under their care, especially in adulthood. Socially, there are old-age homes too, where there are all kinds of opportunities to spend the last days of life well.

6. Patterns of inter-faith marriages

Interfaith marriages of non-Christians with Jews cannot take place in synagogues. The parents of the Jewish side of an interfaith marriage call the marriage a family disaster (Khatun and Islam 2023). However, the number of such interfaith marriages is increasing in the Western world. A non-Jewish bride or groom in an interfaith marriage must obtain approval from the parents and community of the Jewish party, if through conversion. Orthodox Jews do not consider conversion to Judaism by marriage a valid reason for conversion, nor do they look favorably on it.

7. Status of women in Judaism

Even though Judaism is a religion of God, women are treated poorly in it. In this religion, women are considered sinners and the result of sin. Additionally, the

male has come to represent valor and virility. The dignity of women is lost in this religion. Women have been described as inferior. Such comments are not acceptable. Because it entails maintaining women's subordination and controlling them. Jews consider daughters to be equivalent to maidservants. The father can sell him. If there is no son, the daughter inherits the father's property. He has to be satisfied with the property that his father gives him during his lifetime. It is said in the Torah, "There was no other woman in the world like Job. Their father gave them a share of the inheritance. In Judaism, if the brother was one, the sister was disinherited from the father's property. Then, at the time of marriage, the sister would get a one-time, half-equal amount of alimony and dowry from the brother. If the father had left land, then he would have given him some land. However, no matter how much property the father left behind, the sister would not have received a single euro from the brother if he had left behind immovable property. No daughter of Yehudi's father could inherit from her father. But there was a catch: the girl couldn't marry someone from a different tribe. Moreover, his obligation was that he could not transfer the property to anyone. The Jews had a bad idea about women. They considered women a curse. According to them, it was the woman who led Adam astray. It is said in the Torah that women are more dangerous than death. He is righteous in the sight of Allah (Jehovah) and protects himself from women. One such man is found in every thousand. But not one sincere woman can be discovered in a thousand.

Unveiling Christianity: A Historical Exploration of the Christian Faith, Marriage Traditions, Religious Practices, and the Status of Women

1. Christian and history

Christianity is a monotheistic religion (Kubarev 2019). This religion developed around the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth (Batstone 1991; Johnson 1997; Norman 2003; Higton 2008; Stedman 2012). Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah and call him Jesus Christ (Moore 1921; Dunn 1996; Beyers & Mphahlele 2009; O'Collins & Jones 2010). The teachings of Christianity are recorded in the New Testament, or the New Bible (Harris 1988; Brown 2015; Bruce). These religions are known as Christians. They believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Johnson 1995). According to 2001 data, there are 2.1 billion followers of Christianity worldwide⁶. As such, it is currently the largest religion in the world. Christianity is the dominant religion in Europe, North and South America, sub-Saharan Africa, the Philippine Islands, and Oceania (Montgomery 1991; Jenkins 2011; Bellofatto & Johnson 2013). The religion emerged as a Jewish sect in the first century. For good reason, many of the religious books and histories of Judaism have been adopted into this religion. The Jewish scripture Tanakh or Hebrew Bible, is what Christians call the Old Bible (Levenson 1993; Sandmel 2004; Green 2005). Like Judaism and Islam, Christianity is also Abrahamic (Robinson 1991; Dodds 2009; Meladze & Brown 2015; Inhorn et al. 2020). Christianity originated in the 1st century AD based on the life and teachings of Jesus in the historic Galilee region of the Middle East (Reed 2002; Gleaves 2015; Timothy 2020). This religion is called Christianity, and its followers are called Christians after the title 'Christ' given to Jesus. The whole of the Christian scriptures is called the Bible. Christians believe in one God. They also believe that Jesus is the

Son of God and the Savior of mankind, whose coming was foretold in the Old Testament and repeated in the New Testament (Woodhead 2004). There are about 2.4 billion followers of Christianity worldwide, which is one-third of the world's population (Caulton 2002). Christianity is the majority religion in two-thirds of the world's countries (Butcher 2007). Christianity today is divided into several branches or congregations. The four main branches are the Roman Catholic Church (1.3 billion followers), the Protestant Church (920 million followers), the Eastern Orthodox Church (260 million followers), and the Eastern Traditional Gems (86 million followers) (Tiano 2006; Gaetan 2013; Peter 2018; Lawton 2019). The religion originated in the 12th century AD based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, a Jewish religious leader from the city of Nazareth in the historic Galilee region of the Middle East (located in the northern part of the present-day state of Israel) (Dumper 2007). Historically, Jesus of Nazareth was a missionary and moral teacher who lived in the 1st century AD province of Judea (the mountainous southern part of historic Palestine) in the ancient Roman Empire (Bruce 2000). Jesus' foster father, Joseph, was a carpenter (Fish 2012). But as Christians, those who follow Jesus hold that he is the only begotten son of God. According to stories told in Christian scriptures, he could heal incurable diseases and even revive the dead. After performing these miracles, Jesus was claimed as the King of the Jews. The Jewish authorities detained Jesus in Jerusalem for claiming to be the Son of God and using this title. He was tried in the highest court of the Jews, and the Jews petitioned Pontius Pilate, the local Roman governor of Judea, to sentence Jesus to death (Winter 2014). Pilate at first considered Jesus innocent, but later, at the instigation of the priests, executed Jesus by crucifixion to satisfy the wishes of the maddened Jewish mob (Visi 2023).

2. Scriptures

Adherents of the various religions follow a religious scripture, collectively known as the Bible. The Old Testament and the New Testament are the two principal divisions of the Bible's literature (Brown 2015). Christians consider the Old and New Testaments of the Bible to be the Word of God. The Old Testament consists of the Hebrew Bible, or Tanakh, and a number of religious texts written by Abraham's sons, the descendants of Israel (Carr 2010). According to the authorized bibliography of the Catholic branch, the most popular branch of religion, there are 46 separate Old Testament sections of the Bible (Levenson 1993). These books were written mainly in Hebrew over many centuries, from the 8th century BC to the 2nd century BC (Coogan 2006). The second part of the Bible is called the New Testament, which consists of 27 books (Elliott 1997). These books record the lives, teachings, and stories of Jesus' followers in the 1st century. The various parts of the New Testament were written in the Greek language that was prevalent in the Eastern Mediterranean region in the 1st century AD, then in the 4th century AD, and in 397 AD, the religious leaders of the Catholic Church approved and formulated an accurate list of the books of the New Testament at a conference held in the city of Carthage in North Africa (Brown 2012). The first four books of the New Testament are collectively called the Gospels; they tell the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (Beasley 1987). The Bible as it is today is a collection of four books: Luke, Mark, Matthew, and John (Aune 2010).

The main scripture of Christianity is called the Bible. The gospel was revealed to Jesus (A.S.), who was born to convert the Hebrew Bani Israel Jews who had strayed from the Torah and Zabur. As a result, Torah and Zabur are known as the Old Testament, or Old Covenant, and Injeel, the New Testament, or Gospels (Khan 2015). The combined name of both the New and Old Testaments is the Bible.

3. Christian faith

Christians believe that one God is the creator of gold and all things visible and invisible. Fatherly God loves every person as a child and wants to have a relationship with him. However, due to Adam's original sin and the subsequent original sin of all humans, every human being is born with a propensity for sin. Because of all these small and big sins, a distance is created between man and God, the Father of the world. Christians believe that the God of Divinity is a second form; He is the only true Son of God. Another third form of God is the Holy Spirit (Daniel 1980). The Holy Spirit communicated with mankind through various prophets and missionaries. God in the form of the Holy Spirit gave birth to God in the form of a son, namely Jesus Christ, in the womb of the human maid Mary, thanks to which Jesus Christ took the form of a man of flesh and blood and came down from heaven to earth (Ward 2002). By the grace of God in the form of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, as the Son, performed many miracles on earth. In the end, Jesus atoned for the sins of all mankind by suffering and dying on the cross (McGrath 2006). He overcame death, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, where he was seated at the right side of the Father three days later. God can forgive everyone as a gift. At the end of time, Jesus will return to earth and judge all mankind (dead or alive) at the Last Judgement. Those who believe in Jesus Christ and accept God's forgiveness will be saved on the future judgement day and will have eternal life in heaven. Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah or Savior mentioned in the books of the Old Testament. They regard Jesus as a moral teacher, role model, and revealer of the true God.

4. Development and expansion

Christianity first began as a subset of Judaism in the eastern Mediterranean region (Robinson 2016). After Christ's death, his original twelve disciples spread out from Jerusalem (Munck 1949). Within a few decades, the number of followers who believed in Christ increased greatly. Among the early preachers of the Christian message outside of the twelve disciples, Saint Paul (5 BC–AD–67 AD) is particularly notable. He wrote 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament of the Bible (Hu 2013). All twelve disciples died in the 1st century AD (Word 2020). Then, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, theologians who succeeded the twelve Disciples of Christ continued to develop and propagate the doctrine of Christianity. Parts of their writings are included in the New Testament. During this time, Christianity became an important non-Jewish religion in the Roman Empire and was able to establish itself. At the same time, the religion spread to large parts of the Middle East, Ethiopia (the Aksum Empire), Transcaucasia, and parts of Asia (Power 2012). The Aksum Empire was the first empire to adopt Christianity as its state religion (Michels 2005). In the 4th century, the Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, and in 313 AD,

he outlawed Christianity by the Royal Decree of Milan (Gilliard 1984; Salzman 1993). As a result, it became the main religion of the entire Roman Empire. A synopsis of Christian beliefs was first drawn up in AD 325 at the Council of Emperor Constantine at Ahut Nicaea (present-day Iznik, Turkey) (Wilson 2022). It accepts the Trinitarian concept that God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit are three forms of the same God described in the Bible. Today, the majority of Christian congregations believe in the trinity of God. However, many smaller congregations that are not part of the mainstream do not adhere to it. In the 5th century, the leading ecclesiastics of Christianity completed the process of compiling the entire Bible. The remainder of Europe was likewise converted to Christianity during the middle Ages. In those days, Christians were a minority in the Middle East, North Africa, and certain regions of India (McManners 2001). After the Age of Discovery, Christianity spread to sub-Saharan Africa, North and South America, Australia, and other parts of the world (such as East Asia, especially the Philippines) thanks to colonization and vigorous proselytizing (Anderson 2013). Today, Christianity is the world's most widely practiced major religion.

5. Marriage in Christianity

Early Christians practiced multiple marriages. They were revered by rulers and clergy at the dawn of Christianity despite having several wives. Multiple marriages were also considered valid in special places and in emergency situations. On several occasions, Martin Luther and Millington acknowledged polygamy and asserted that God's command never forbade it. The traditions and customs of ancient Greece dominated their marriage system. But modesty was not given any weight when the woman was enjoying her sexual privileges. Rather, Saint Paul does not recognize marriage as a sacred bond. He does not consider it honorable and pleasant in social and daily life but allows it as a necessary sin⁷.

6. Marriage rules

In Christianity, after the bride and groom are chosen, both families must inform a priest or father of the church. The father announced in front of everyone present that the marriage of such and such a bride was going to be completed. After this announcement, the bride traveled to the said church for three weeks, and if there were no complaints during the three weeks, the marriage was organized in the fourth week with the support of all. The priest of a particular church officiates at the wedding by reading from the Holy Bible on the designated day. Christian marriages are performed with a combination of local customs and religious rituals. The bride and groom share their biographies with each other before the wedding. They swear by the Holy Bible that they are keeping nothing unknown to each other and must make a formal declaration that they are aware of their duties and responsibilities towards each other. Evidence must be presented in favor of being baptized or initiated into Christianity before marriage (Kavanagh 1991). On the wedding day, the bride and groom customarily host a banquet. The groom waits at the church with the groom and sends a vehicle for the bride to bring the bride to the church. When the bride arrives at the entrance gate of the church, the best man of the guests in the wedding

ceremony goes forward, greets the bride with a kiss on both cheeks and a bouquet of flowers in his hand, and brings her to the wedding altar. After that, the priest of the church welcomed the bride and groom and informed them about the sanctity of marriage and the duties, responsibilities, and rights of the husband and wife by referring to the chapters of Ephesians 5:22–28 and 31–33 of the Holy Bible (Hunter 2001). The Holy Bible mentions that 'brides are devoted to their husbands as they are to the Lord'. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church. He is the sanctity of his body, and as the congregation is loyal to the Trinity, so should brides be loyal to their husbands in all respects. Husbands, love your wife in the same way, purifying her with the word of water to sanctify her, so that she may now appear before the congregation in glory. One who has no blemish, wrinkle, or any other kind of defect but is pure and spotless. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as if they were their own bodies. For he who loved his wife loved himself. A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great, but I am pointing the finger at Christ and the church. But you also respect one another as you do one another, and the wife loves her husband. In this quotation from the Holy Bible, it is mentioned that the relationship of husband and wife in conjugal life is founded on Christ the bridegroom and the bride on the church. Quoting from Corinthians 7:1–7 and 10–11 of the Holy Bible, the priest again said that "it is better not to marry, because there is danger of sexual corruption (Martin 2006). All men should have their own wives, and all wives should have their own husbands. The husband obeys the demands of his wife. Nik. Similarly, the wife should accept the demands of her husband. The body of the wife does not belong to the wife but to her husband. Likewise, the body of the husband does not belong to the wife. Do not avoid mutual intercourse. The woman and husband shouldn't be split apart. In the event of separation, she should not marry again. Alternately, let the couple reunite and forgo divorcing the wife. Then the priest asks both of them if they have come willingly and willingly to enter into this marriage, and by holding each other's right hand, they should accept God and the church as witnesses of this marriage. Gives the declaration of consent. The priest blesses the wedding band and asks them to put their hands on each other. The priest leads all present in prayer to God for the happiness and prosperity of the newlyweds. Then the bread and wine, which are declared to be the body and blood of Jesus, are served to all. The marriage is recorded with the church registrar. The procession leading the newlyweds into the church brings the marriage ceremony to a close.

7. Christian marriage rules in Bangladesh

By taking into account regional traditions, culture, and societal norms, Christian weddings in Bangladesh have taken on an attractive and joyful form. According to Kadar Mintu Lawrence Palma, judicial vicar of Tejgaon Church, when it comes to Christian marriage, the bride is typically chosen by the groom first, who is aware of her traits, flaws, and family history (Khatun et al. 2022). On an auspicious day, the groom goes to the bride's house with a relative and informs her of the purpose. If the bride agrees, the engagement ceremony is arranged. Pan Supari, an odd number of fish, is carried on the occasion of an engagement. Having arranged

everything in advance, the groom's party goes to the bride's house, and the groom attends the ceremony and receives the blessings of everyone. Three weeks before the wedding, the bride and groom register their names with the priest. By Ban Prakash In this ceremony, the bride and groom make the final decision about marriage. According to the rules of the church, at this time, the compulsory class of marriage has to be done. From registration to marriage, the bride and groom have to live a very restrained life. A rosary mala, or Japa mala, should be worn around the neck to ward off evil spirits. On the night before the wedding, the hallow ceremony is performed, the same as in the Christian religion, called Dhvani. Bride On the morning of the wedding, the bridegroom's relatives go to fetch the bride with a band, and while the money is given to the bride, the bride throws it into the house. Then, at the entrance of the church, the priest blesses the bride, and the two exchange garlands. And walk up to the house while holding each other's small fingers.

8. Status of women in Christianity

The status of women in Christianity is very low. He was considered a sinner. Women were considered to be the source of all sins. The widespread immorality, adultery, and moral decay in Christian culture appalled the early Christian emperors. For this, they blame women alone. That is why they declare that marriage is an unclean act and that the unmarried person is more honorable in the eyes of Allah than the married. According to them, women are the entrance to Satan. About women's own beauty should be ashamed. Christianity uses women's beauty to seduce and mislead men. That is why men should stay away from the company of women. Then he can protect himself from sin. According to them, Satan enters men through women. In the book called Tertullian, it is said, "Woman is the gateway to the human heart." Women are transgressors of Allah's law and forgetful of appearance'. They think women are a horror. A ruler called Jestan said, 'Women are an inevitable and tempting disaster. Disaster for families and women. She is horror wrapped in charm'. The followers of Christianity believe that women's abode in the afterlife is in heaven. In the fifth century, an academy called Macon continued to study women and said that no other woman except Mary would be released from Hell. A conference was held in France in 1587. In that convention, women are considered human beings (Boyle 2014). But it is asserted that their responsibility is to serve men. There were no human rights at that time. Women were bought and sold in different parts of the world. England also had a system of buying and selling women. It was banned in 1805 (D'Cruze and Jackson 2009). Women were also bought and sold in France. However, it increased throughout the French Revolution. French women were disenfranchised until 1938 (Bertocchi 2011). Women did not have the right to vote in England. They were given the right to vote in 1972 (Alexander 1991). Women have the right to marry in Christianity. Divorce, remarriage, or widow marriage are allowed there. However, Christianity recognizes male dominance. The Bible says, "The Lord of every man is Jesus, and the Lord of every woman is her husband." In Christianity, women have the right to education. However, there are some limitations in this regard. The Bible says, 'Woman shall be taught in silence in full subjection. I do not give women the right to rule over men'. In Christianity, women had the right to property. The sons and

daughters of the deceased will inherit his estate. If there is no son or daughter, his brothers will get the property. If there is no brother, the uncle will get the property. However, the deceased's wife, mother, and sister do not inherit the estate.

CONCLUSION

In Judaism and Christianity, interfaith marriage has its own set of difficulties and opportunities. It can promote better tolerance and understanding among religious groups, but it also brings up significant theological, cultural, and practical issues. Jewish-Christian marriages involve open and honest communication, respect for one another, and a readiness to work through theological differences. The preservation of Jewish identity, the passing on of Jewish customs and values to future generations, and potential conflicts over religious observances and practices are all issues that interfaith marriage brings to Judaism. On the other hand, Christianity frequently highlights the virtue of religious unity and the common ideals of love and acceptance. In these situations, navigating the difficulties of interfaith marriage calls for a careful balancing of allegiance to one's own religious traditions and a willingness to make compromises. Couples must maintain open communication, seek advice from religious authorities, and foster a welcoming environment for their families.

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End Notes:

¹ Surah Younus, Ayaat: 84.

² Surah al Imran, Ayaat: 67.

³ Surah al Bakarah, Ayaat: 61.

⁴ Surah al bakarah, ayaat: 49-73.

⁵ Genesis, 2: 24.

⁶<https://foreignpolicy.com/2007/05/14/the-list-the-worlds-fastest-growing-religions/>

⁷ Bible 1 Corinthians 7: 1, 26, 28, 29, 32, 35.