



Dr. Karen Bauer

Marriage in the Qur'ān: A Historical-Contextual Approach to a Misunderstood Subject

ABSTRACT:

Marriage and the household are major subjects in the Qur'ān, which has been completely unrecognised by the major introductions to the text. This is perhaps because scholars fail to recognise the fundamental importance of the household as a locus of pious action; the consequences of this omission have been grave. It is common to misunderstand the very nature of Qur'ānic addresses and the audience being addressed. This paper explores the place of marriage and the household in Qur'ānic eschatology and piety. It examines why men are so often addressed and nuances the picture of the society of seventh-century Arabia. Such a historical contextualisation is vitally important for understanding the picture of marriage and the household in the Qur'ān, but it is also important for understanding the Qur'ān's entire approach to eschatology and piety, which balances inequalities in the world with the possibility of equality in the Hereafter.



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BIO:

Dr. Karen Bauer (PhD, Princeton) is a Senior Research Associate in the Qur'ānic Studies Unit at the Institute of Ismaili Studies. Dr. Bauer's research centres on the Qur'ān and its reception history, the history of emotions in Islam, and gender in Islamic history and thought. She has published on subjects as diverse as the history of Qur'ānic interpretation and the audiences for works of *tafsīr*, women's right to be judges in Islamic law, the audiences of *tafsīr*, and emotional rhetoric in the Qur'ān. Along with Feras Hamza, she recently published "*An Anthology of Qur'ānic Commentaries, Volume 2: On Women*" (Oxford University Press, 2021), which comprises annotated translations of Qur'ānic commentaries and extensive introductory materials, including a chapter on women in the Qur'ān. This latter forms the basis for her current project, also with Feras Hamza, a critical introduction to women in the Qur'ān. Dr. Bauer serves on the board and the nominating committee of the International Qur'ānic Studies Association (IQSA).