

## Marriage in Islam

A Module Prepared by The Rishta Nata Department



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# The Shura Proposal

In 2024, the Shura body of Jamaat USA deliberated on the following proposal:

“90% of the world’s population lives in countries where marriage rates are declining. Marriage rates in the USA have declined about 60% since the 1970s. Our community is also witnessing several challenges to the institution of marriage. These include difficulties in finding matches, delaying marriages, the slight upward trend in both early and middle-age divorces and, of course, marriages outside the Jama’at. Communities need to foresee challenges and prepare themselves for the future. It is humbly suggested that the Shura body deliberate on the challenges faced by the institution of marriage in our Jama’at. Have an open dialogue and identify areas of concern and ways and means to address them over the next few years.”

## Why A Module on Marriage?

To combat the declining rates of marriage along with the increased rate of divorce, the Rishta Nata and Tarbiyyat departments were tasked with creating a course on the true concept of marriage in Islam that all Ahmadi boys and girls could benefit from upon reaching the age of 18. This course would highlight the fundamental aspects of marriage as well as emphasize the significance of this bond in Islam.

## Marriage in Islam

As Muslims, we first and foremost turn to the Holy Quran for Guidance. Allah has said in the Quran,

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ  
بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“And *one* of His Signs is that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect.” (30:22)

Marriage in Islam is a sacred and profound institution that serves as both a legal contract and a spiritual bond between a husband and wife. It plays a crucial role in the personal, social, and spiritual lives of Muslims, providing a framework for intimate relationships within the confines of Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) has said,

النَّكَاحُ مِنْ سُنَّتِي فَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْمَلْ بِسُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي

“Marriage is my precept and my practice. Those who do not follow my practice are not of me” (Sunan Ibn Majah, The Chapters on Marriage). Therefore, it is incumbent on every capable Muslim to marry a suitable companion in their life.

## The Purpose of Marriage

The Promised Messiah highlights three purposes for Marriage. He says,

“One of the purposes of matrimony is that righteous servants of God may be born who remember Him. Another Divine purpose is that husband and wife may safeguard themselves against illicit looks and conduct. There is a third purpose, which is that, because of their mutual attachment, they should spare themselves the pangs of loneliness.” Chashma-e-Ma’rifat, Ruhani Khaza’in, vol. 23, pp. 292-293

**In summary, the three purposes of marriage are:**

1. To enable a man and a woman to live together and experience love and happiness, within Islamic law.
2. To produce children and provide a stable and righteous environment for their upbringing.
3. To provide a legal union which safeguards society from moral and social degradation.

Islam regards marriage as the means by which a person's natural urges and needs, both physical and emotional, are controlled and satisfied at the same time.

## What to Look for in a Partner

The Holy Prophet (saw) has given great advice when it comes to searching for a partner. He says,

تُنْكَحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسَبِهَا وَجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِينِهَا، فَاظْفَرْ بِذَاتِ  
الدِّينِ

“A woman is married for four things: her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So, you should marry a religious woman...” (Bukhārī, Kitābun-Nikāḥ)

Coming from an Islamic perspective, marrying someone for their piety is a given however it sometimes, wrongfully, becomes a deterrent for some. This uneasiness may stem from what piety entails. The Promised Messiah (as) has elaborated on the qualities of righteousness and said,

"To become truly righteous, it is necessary that a person abandoning utterly such outstanding vices as adultery, theft, trespass, hypocrisy, self-esteem, scorn of fellow

beings, miserliness, should eschew all low morals and should make progress in high moral values. He should behave towards his fellow beings with politeness, courtesy and sympathy and should cultivate true fidelity and sincerity towards God Almighty...”

Malfuzat, Vol IV, pg 400-401

Simply put, a pious person is someone who doesn't speak ill of others or makes a fuss about someone's caste or background. Rather they're an individual that looks to be the best they can be for the sake of Allah.

## Compatibility

Compatibility is one of the most important factors when it comes to finding a spouse. Compatibility doesn't just apply to how religious an individual, but it also considers other factors as well. Hazrat Musleh Maud(rah) has said,

“Parity/compatibility means a person matching one's own living standard, way of life, morals, and, of course, piety and righteousness.” (Blessings of Khilafat, p 98)

Compatibility isn't the observance of a single metric, such as a person's financial status, their ethnicity, cast, tribe, or skin color, but a combination of multiple factors which, together would make a person a good spouse. For example, Hazrat Khadijah (rah) and the Holy Prophet (saw) had an extremely successful and happy marriage despite their difference in wealth and age.

When it comes to finding someone compatible, Hazrat Musleh Maud (rah) has said it is important for us to consider our own standing first. While it is beneficial to find a pious spouse, if we ourselves are not at a certain standard and the differences are intolerable it will only cause complications to arise in the future. A relationship can succeed only when both the man and woman share some commonalities.

# The Process of Finding a Spouse in Islam

Islam and the Jamaat have not outlined one single means as the best or most appropriate way to go about finding a spouse. Any method is fine as long as an individual operates within the boundaries Islam has established.

## Premarital Relationships and the Matchmaking Process

“How can we marry someone if we don’t get to know them first?”

When it comes to finding a partner, the question on premarital relationships is often voiced. As such, dating, one of the more common methods of finding a spouse, is often brought up. The Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet (saw) have made themselves clear on this matter. The Holy Prophet (saw) has said,

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلَا يَخْلُونَ بِأَمْرَةِ لَيْسَ مَعَهَا ذُو  
مَحْرَمٍ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّ ثَالِثَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ

“Whoever has faith in Allah and the Last Day, let him not be secluded with an unrelated woman without her guardian lest Satan be the third of them” (Musnad Ahmad)

The Islamic teachings only forbid being secluded with a non-mahram without a guardian, fearing that some foul play could come out of it. You are allowed to sit with your potential spouse, eat together, and get to know one another, as long as there's a chaperone - a guardian around for the safety of both the woman and the man.

## Some Tips for Matchmaking

1. Prayer
  - a. Even if you feel you are not ready to find a partner, prayer begins to lay the groundwork for your future.
2. Communicate with your parents.

- a. Parents often play an important role when looking for potential suitors.  
Have a frank and open discussion about what type of partner you're looking for. If your parents are unfamiliar with your preferences, it will be much harder and take longer for them to help find you a suitable match
- 3. Ask your family and trustworthy friends to help you in the search for a spouse.  
Hazrat Ayesha (ra) was married when someone proposed her name to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw)
- 4. Seek help from Imams/Missionaries and elders of your Jama'at.
  - a. They're often familiar with those who come to the mosque regularly and have a general idea of what the individual and their family is like.
- 5. Sign up with the Rishta Nata department and explore options on the Rishta Nata database.
  - a. The Rishta Nata Department was established by the Promised Messiah(as) to help members of the Jamaat find other potential matches within the Jamaat.