SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENT

To Marriage Module (Rishta Nata USA)

Rishta Nata
United States of America

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Quranic Verses

Verses of Nikah

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَ بَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيْرًا وَّنِسَآءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِىْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيْبًا

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا

يُّصْلِحْ لَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيْمًا

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ

O ye people! fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women; and fear Allah, in Whose name you appeal to one another, and *fear Him particularly respecting* ties of relationship. Verily, Allah watches over you. (4:2)

O ye who believe! fear Allah, and say the right word. He will bless your works for you and forgive you your sins. And whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger, shall surely attain a might success. (33:71-72)

O ye who believe! fear Allah; and let *every* soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allah; verily Allah is Well-Aware of what you do. (59:19)

They are Peace and Comfort For You

هُوَ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ اِلَيْهَا

He it is Who has created you from a single soul, and made therefrom its mate, that he might find comfort in her. (7:190)

وَمِنۡ اٰيٰتِهٖۤ اَنۡ خَلَقَ لَكُمۡ مِّنۡ اَنۡفُسِكُمۡ اَزۡوَاجًا لِّتَسۡكُنُوۡۤا اِلَيۡهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيۡنَكُمۡ مَّوَدَّةً وَّرَحۡمَةً ؕ اِنَّ فِىۡ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوۡمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُوۡنَ

And *one* of His Signs *is this*, 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)

They Are a Garment For You

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمۡ وَاَنۡتُمۡ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ

They are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them. (2:188)

"…You may dislike a thing while it is good for you…"

وَعَسٰۤى اَنۡ تَكۡرَهُوۡا شَيۡـًٔا وَّهُوَ خَيۡرٌ لَّكُمۡ ۚ وَعَسٰۤى اَنۡ تُحِبُّوۡا شَيۡـًٔا وَّهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمۡ

وَاللّٰهُ يَعۡلَمُ وَاَنۡتُمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ

… but it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you like a thing while it is bad for you. Allah knows *all things*, and you know not. (2:217)

Prayer For Wife and Righteous Progeny

وَالَّذِيۡنَ يَقُوۡلُوۡنَ رَبَّنَا هَبۡ لَنَا مِنۡ اَزۡوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ اَعۡيُنٍ وَّاجۡعَلۡنَا لِلۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ اِمَامًا

And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes, and make us a model for the righteous. (25:75)

Give Dowry Willingly

وَاٰتُوا النِّسَآءَ صَدُقٰتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ؕ فَاِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَیْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوْهُ هَنِیْٓـًٔا مَّرِیْٓـًٔا

And give the women their dowries willingly. But if they, of their own pleasure, remit to you a part thereof, then enjoy it as something pleasant and wholesome. (4:5)

وَّالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ النِّسَآءِ اِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ اَیْمَانُكُمْ ۚ كِتٰبَ اللّٰهِ عَلَیْكُمْ ۚ وَاُحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَّا وَرَآءَ ذٰلِكُمْ اَنْ تَبْتَغُوْا بِاَمْوَالِكُمْ مُّحْصِنِیْنَ غَیْرَ مُسٰفِحِیْنَ ؕ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهٖ مِنْهُنَّ فَاٰتُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ فَرِیْضَةً ؕ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَیْكُمْ فِیْمَا تَرٰضَیْتُمْ بِهٖ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ الْفَرِیْضَةِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِیْمًا حَكِیْمًا

And *forbidden to you are* married women, except such as your right hands possess. This has Allah enjoined on you. And allowed to you are those beyond that, that you seek *them* by means of your property, marrying them properly and not committing fornication. And for the benefit you receive from them, give them their dowries, as fixed, and there shall be no sin for you in anything you mutually agree upon, after the fixing *of the dowry*. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, Wise. (4:25)

Give Dowries According to What is Fair

فَانْكِحُوْهُنَّ بِاِذْنِ اَهْلِهِنَّ وَاٰتُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ مُحْصَنٰتٍ غَیْرَ مُسٰفِحٰتٍ وَّلَا مُتَّخِذٰتِ اَخْدَانٍ

…so marry them with the leave of their masters and give them their dowries according to what is fair, they being chaste, not committing fornication, nor taking secret paramours… (4:26)

Women of The Book Are Lawful for You

وَالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الَّذِیْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ اِذَاۤ اٰتَیْتُمُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِیْنَ غَیْرَ مُسٰفِحِیْنَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِیْۤ اَخْدَانٍ

And *lawful for you are* chaste believing women and chaste women from among those who were given the Book before you, when you give them their dowries, contracting valid marriage and not committing fornication nor taking secret paramours. (5:6)

Justice Towards Wives

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيْعُوْٓا اَنْ تَعْدِلُوْا بَيْنَ النِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيْلُوْا كُلَّ ا
فَتَذَرُوْهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ ۭ وَاِنْ تُصْلِحُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُ لَمَيْلِ
وْرًا رَّحِيْمًا

And you cannot keep perfect balance between wives, however much you may desire it. But incline not wholly *to one* so that you leave the other like a thing suspended. And if you amend and act righteously, surely Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. (4:130)

Ahadith

Istikharah Prayer

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلاَ أَقْدِرُ وَتَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي ـ أَوْ قَالَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ ـ فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي ـ أَوْ قَالَ فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ ـ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْدُرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ

O Allah, I seek good from Thee out of Thy knowledge and seek power from Thee out of Thy power and I beg of Thee out of Thy boundless Grace, for Thou hast power and I have no power, and Thou hast knowledge and I have no knowledge, and Thy knowledge encompasses the unseen. O Allah! If it be within Thy knowledge that this task is for my good, both materially and spiritually, and in respect of my ultimate end, then make it possible for me and bless me therein, but if it be within Thy knowledge that it is harmful for me in my spiritual and material life and in respect of my ultimate end, then turn me away therefrom, and enable me to attain good wherever it may be and cause me to be blessed therewith. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Prayer at Night, Chapter: What is recited in the two Rak'a of the Fajr)

A Woman is Married for Four Things…

تُنْكَحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لأَرْبَعٍ لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسَبِهَا وَجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِينِهَا، فَاظْفَرْ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ تَرِبَتْ يَدَاكَ

A woman is married for four things, i.e., her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should marry the religious woman (otherwise) you will be a losers. (Sahih al-Bukhair, Book on Marriage, Chapter: Husband and Wife Should have the same religion)

Best Provision is a Righteous Wife

إِنَّمَا الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَلَيْسَ مِنْ مَتَاعِ الدُّنْيَا شَىْءٌ أَفْضَلَ مِنَ الْمَرْأَةِ الصَّالِحَةِ

This world is but provisions, and there is no provision in this world better than a righteous wife. (Sunan Ibn Majah, The Chapters on Marriage, Chapter: The best of women)

The Best of You is The One Who is Best to His Wife

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لأَهْلِي

The best of you is the one who is best to his wife, and I am the best of you to my wives(Sunan Ibn Majah, The Chapters on Marriage, Chapter: Good Treatment of Women)

Permissibility to See the Girl Before Marriage

إِذَا خَطَبَ أَحَدُكُمُ الْمَرْأَةَ فَإِنِ اسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَا يَدْعُوهُ إِلَى نِكَاحِهَا فَلْيَفْعَلْ

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: When one of you asked a woman in marriage, if he is able to look at what will induce him to marry her, he should do so. He (Jabir) said: I asked a girl in marriage, I used to look at her secretly, until I looked at what induced me to marry her. I, therefore, married her. (Sunan Abi Dawud, Kitab Al-Nikah, Chapter: a Person looks at a woman whom he desires to marry)

أَنَّ الْمُغِيرَةَ بْنَ شُعْبَةَ، أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَزَوَّجَ، امْرَأَةً فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ ـ صلى الله عليه وسلم ـ اذْهَبْ فَانْظُرْ إِلَيْهَا فَإِنَّهُ أَحْرَى أَنْ يُؤْدَمَ بَيْنَكُمَا

Mughirah bin Shubah wanted to marry a woman. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to him: “Go and look at her, for that is more likely to create love between you.” So he did that, and married her, and mentioned how well he got along with her. (Sunan Ibn Majah, The Chapters on Marriage, Chapter: Looking at a Woman to Marry Her)

Marriage Without Consent of a Wali

أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٍ نَكَحَتْ بِغَيْرِ إِذْنِ مَوَالِيهَا فَنِكَاحُهَا بَاطِلٌ

The marriage of a woman who marries without the consent of her guardians is void. (Sunan Abi Dawud, Kitab Al-Nikah, Chapter: Regarding the Guardian)

لاَ نِكَاحَ إِلاَّ بِوَلِيٍّ

There is no marriage without the permission of a guardian. (ibid)

A Widow Has More Right to Decide Than Wali

الأَيِّمُ أَوْلَى بِنَفْسِهَا مِنْ وَلِيِّهَا

A widow has more right (to decide) concerning herself than her guardian… (Sunan Ibn Majah, The Chapters on Marriage, Chapter: Seeking the consent of virgins and previously-married women)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Istikhārah?

Istikhārah is "to desire good from God." The Holy Prophet (saw) once instructed Muslims, saying,

إِذَا هَمَّ أَحَدُكُمْ بِالأَمْرِ فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكْعَتَيْنِ مِنْ غَيْرِ الْفَرِيضَةِ

"When any of you decides on pursuing any matter, he should offer a two rak'at prayer aside from the compulsory ones." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab-ut-Tahajjad)

The Holy Prophet (saw) taught Muslims to offer this prayer to seek guidance from Allah before making any decisions such as embarking on a journey, matters of marriage, business, etc.

The General and Specific Istikhārah

There are two types of Istikhārah; one is the General Istikhārah, and the other is the Specific Istikhārah. The General Istikhārah is done first, followed by the Specific Istikhārah. Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud (ra) stated:

The General Istikhārah is that a person prays without thinking of anyone specific that, "O Allah, grant me a spouse with whose soul I have affinity." Secondly, the Specific Istikhārah should be observed when an opportunity arises. One should pray while taking the name of the person with whom there is a proposal. In this way, the General Istikhārah safeguards the Specific Istikhārah. Some people observe the first Istikhārah and do not observe the second Istikhārah, and some people observe the second Istikharah and do not observe the first Istikhārah. Both should be

observed and then the result ends up being correct. (Khutbāt-e-Mahmud, vol. 3, Khutbāt-e-Nikah, p. 435)

How to Perform Istikhārah

1. Perform Wudu (ablution)- Ensure you are in a state of cleanliness.
2. Offer Two Rak'at of Prayer
    a. In the first recite Surah Al-Kafiroon (Chapter 109 of the Holy Quran)
    b. In the second Rak'at, recite Surah Al-Ikhlas (Chapter 112 of the Holy Qur'an).
3. Recite the Istikhara Dua: After completing the two Rak'at, sit in the position of Jilsah (sitting position), after reciting Tashahhud, Darood Sharif and other prayers, recite the supplication of Istikhārah in Arabic if possible, or in your language if necessary. The prayer asks for guidance and seeking what is best according to Allah's knowledge and power.
4. Sleep with Trust in Allah: After the prayer, go to sleep with the intention of seeking a sign or feeling from Allah regarding your decision.

How Do I Know My Prayer Was Answered?

When observing Istikhārah, it is important to remain unbiased. Hazrat Musleh Maudra has said,

"Some people are first fond of a certain woman, and then they observe Istikhārah. In such an Istikhārah, generally, the inclination of the person affects the outcome, and they start thinking that the result of the Istikhārah was good. However, if they were not inclined to the proposal, then according to their inclination they think the Istikhārah went against the proposal. However, the Istikhārah did not go in favor of or against the proposal. Rather, it was their inclination that went in favor of or against the proposal, from which they come to the wrong conclusion." (Khutbāt-e-Mahmud, vol. 3, Khutbat-e-Nikah, p. 435)

"It is not necessary to see dreams after praying the Istikhārah prayer. Istikhārah is, in fact, a prayer. After seeking good through Istikhārah, whatever one feels in their heart towards that particular matter, they should do. If God grants one contentment and certainty of mind towards that matter, one should do it. If there is hesitancy or an internal block in wanting to proceed, then one shouldn't do it.. Many a time, in the silence of your Master lies your answer." (Khutbāt-e-Mahmood)

Do I Have to Marry an Ahmadi?

While the Quran gives permission for a Muslim to marry a non-Muslim, it does not give blanket permission for an individual to pursue someone any way they see fit. As long as matchmaking is done within the boundaries established by Islam, then there should be no issue Islamically. As Ahmadi Muslims, we accepted the Imam of the time and have done bait of the Khalifa. Therefore, if someone seeks to marry someone who is non-Ahmadi, permission must be sought from the Khalifa of the time.

It is important to keep in mind that marriage to a non-Ahmadi does come with its own challenges. Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) has said,

"If someone is religious-minded, find a partner for them who is just as religious in the same way. Some degree of difference is acceptable and does not become a source of difficulty, but if there are significant differences, they create a highly challenging situation… (and) their children are also destroyed". (Excerpt from Friday Sermon, February 14th, 1986)

Does the Khalifa Give Permission to Marry a Non-Ahmadi?

Whether an individual is given permission or not lies entirely with the Khalifa of the time. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad(aba) has said,

"…whether an Ahmadi man or a woman is allowed to marry a non-Ahmadi or a non-Muslim is a matter for the discretion of the caliph of the time [*Khalifa-e-Waqt*]. Nobody else has this authority. The *Khalifa-e-Waqt* decides in each case according to the circumstances." (Response to a letter dated 29 February 2020)

Is Dating Allowed in Islam?

Answered in main document.

Am I allowed to See Someone Before Marrying Them?

Islam does not encourage going into a marriage blindly. The Holy Prophet (saw) has said,

عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ بْنِ شُعْبَةَ، أَنَّهُ خَطَبَ امْرَأَةً فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم انْظُرْ إِلَيْهَا فَإِنَّهُ أَحْرَى أَنْ يُؤْدَمَ بَيْنَكُمَا

Al-Mughirah bin Shu'bah proposed to a woman, so the Prophet said: "Look at her, for indeed that is more likely to make things better between the two of you." (Tirmidhi, Book on Marriage)

Elaborating on this Hadith, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) has said,

“Nowadays this permission is interpreted in the wrong way by society. It is being interpreted as allowing the boy and girl to be alone together or go out together so that they can develop a relationship. Even going together to a different city or sitting together alone for hours in the home is considered to be permissible, but this is not right. The reason for making this allowance is that seeing each other face to face makes it easier to form an opinion of each other. Some characteristics become apparent while talking to someone and thus there is no harm in sitting together with the family for a meal. Many traits and behaviors become noticeable during the sharing of a meal. In case there is some behavior which a person may dislike, it is better to find out before marriage rather than have problems afterwards. If good qualities are seen, then a better understanding and liking can develop for that proposal and sometimes a bond with the proposed person can develop before the wedding.” (Friday Sermon, December 24, 2004)

The Rishta Nata Department

What is the Rishta Nata Department

The Rishta Nata Department was established by the Promised Messiah (as). He stated,

“I have made arrangements that in future a ledger must stay with me with complete secrecy and total confidentiality, wherein the names of girls and boys of the Jama’at are entered. And if the parents of the girl are unable to find a boy in their family who is from the Jama’at, bears good moral character, and is at the level of their satisfaction; or in case of a boy, they are similarly unable to find a girl; in such cases, it is imperative upon them to allow us to find someone from the Jama’at. And every one must feel confident that we shall with true sincerity and sympathy for the parents try to find a suitable match for their boys or girls.” (Aajmooa Ishtiharat, Vol. 3, p 50-51)

How Does the Rishta Nata Department Work?

1. Once you've reached the age of 18 years, you can sign up and created a profile on the Rishta Nata database at https://rishtanata.ahmadiyya.us/. It is best that you create this profile yourself so you can put accurate information in the system and be clear on what you are looking for. Help from parents may also be helpful when needed.
2. Creating a profile entails inputting your personal and family information in the database. Things such as names, current jamaat, education, personal interests, spouse preferences, etc. Majority of this information is not seen by others in the database to protect your privacy and sensitive information.
3. After completing your profile, the department assigns you a facilitator to help navigate the database and find you a suitable match. Your newly assigned facilitator will reach out and schedule a meeting with you to get to know you better and introduce themselves to you. You have the freedom to change your facilitator any time.
4. Facilitators nationwide meet every 2 weeks to discuss potential matches; a lot of time and effort is put into this, but the process, like all other important and valuable processes in our lives, takes time to get the right person for you. Your patients would be greatly helpful.
5. If a match is found, the facilitators will contact both families before exchanging details. The only details shared with the other party would be the ones you've given permission to share; this includes photos.
6. No one is obligated to accept any proposed matches; you have the right to pursue or decline any proposal sent your way by the Rishta Nata team.
7. Once both sides start communicating, the facilitators take the back seat and allow both families to move on.

The Nikah Process

What steps must the new couple take before the Nikah to ensure the Nikah takes place?

1. Complete the Nikah Forms (contact nikah@ahmadiyya.us for help)
2. File for Civil Marriage and obtain a Marriage License
3. Undergo Premarital Counseling with a Jama'at Premarital Counselor
4. Agree upon an appropriate Dower amount (Haq Mehr)
5. Complete and sign the "Binding Arbitration Agreement"

Is a Civil Marriage required before the Nikah?

In the United States, "civil marriage" is required for a marriage license, and this constitutes legal marriage. Therefore, the Jama'at requires that the civil marriage is done prior to the Nikah and the marriage certificate is produced at the time of Nikah. If civil marriage cannot be performed before the Nikah, then written approval from Amir USA is required that the Nikah can be performed without the civil marriage. This approval note should be submitted with the completed Nikah Forms to the National Headquarters.

To become legally married, both the prospective bride and groom must appear in person at the local city or town Marriage License Bureau or office of the County Clerk and apply for a marriage license. Marriage by proxy – through a third party who attends and acts on behalf of the bride or groom – is not allowed in most states. The couple should plan ahead and submit the application well in advance of the marriage/Nikah date since there may be a waiting period before they can marry.