165731 - He did the marriage contract with a woman; is it permissible for him to look at her mother and shake hands with her before consummation of the marriage?

the question

Is it permissible to see the wife’s mother without hijab after doing the marriage contract and before the consummation of marriage, and to interact with her by shaking hands? Please note that I interacted with her in this manner after the marriage contract, without realising that there some doubt about this issue. But someone told me that this free interaction comes only after consummation of the marriage and not after the marriage contract. Is there any sin in this interaction, and is it haram (forbidden) or makruh (disliked)?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

As soon as a man does the marriage contract with a woman, her mother becomes one of his mahrams and she becomes permanently forbidden for him to marry, even if he has not yet consummated the marriage with his wife.

Based on that, there is nothing wrong with shaking hands with her, being alone with her and travelling with her… And there is nothing wrong with her appearing before him with her hair uncovered, because he has become one of her mahrams.

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: When a man marries a woman, all her mothers and foremothers become haram for him to marry [meaning her mother and grandmother] as soon as the marriage contract is done. This was stated by Ahmad and it is the view of most of the scholars, including Ibn Mas‘ud, Ibn ‘Umar, Jabir, ‘Imran ibn Husayn and many of the Tabi‘in. It is also the view of Malik, ash-Shafa‘i and ashab ar-ra’y… That is because Allah, may He be exalted,

says (interpretation of the meaning): {Prohibited to you [for marriage] are … your wives' mothers,} [an-Nisa' 4:23], and the woman with whom a man has done a marriage contract is his wife, and her mother is included in the general meaning of the verse. Ibn 'Abbas said: Regard as general in application what the Qur'an stated in general terms, meaning apply the ruling in all cases, and do not differentiate between the one with whom the marriage has been consummated and the one with whom it has not."(A*l-Mughni* 7/85).

It says in *Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da'imah* (17/361):

A man proposed to a girl and has done the marriage contract with her. Is it permissible for him to look at the mother of his fiancée without hijab and shake hands with her, or is she still a stranger (non-mahram) to him until he consummates the marriage with the girl, after which the wife's mother becomes a mahram to him, and it becomes permissible for him to look at her and shake hands with her?

They replied:

Before the marriage contract is done with her daughter, the mother of the fiancée is still a stranger (non-mahram) to the suitor, and it is not permissible for her to appear without hijab before him or for him to look at her or shake hands with her. But after the marriage contract is done with her daughter, he becomes a mahram to her and it becomes permissible for her to appear without hijab before him and for him to shake hands with her. End quote.

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Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

If a man marries a woman and does the marriage contract with her, the wife's mother, and her mother's mother (grandmother), and her mother's mother's mother (great-grandmother), no matter how far the line of ascent reaches, become mahrams to him, for whom it is permissible to

appear without hijab before him, and it is permissible for him to shake hands with them, because the basic principle regarding this matter is that when the man does the marriage contract with a woman, he becomes a mahram to all her foremothers [mother, grandmother, etc]."(*Fatawa Nur ‘ala ad-Darb)*.

And Allah knows best.