212478 - She got to know a man through the Internet and she wants to carry on talking to him and getting to know him because she wants to marry him

the question

I am a Muslim woman and I want to get married to one of the brothers whom I have met on the Internet. He is a convert to Islam and he lives abroad, and he has good character, but he does not have a job, but he will find one soon –– in sha Allah.

As for me, I am in my final year of university, and my parents will not let me get married until after I have finished my studies; in other words, we have six months to wait. During this time we want to get to know one another better, so that each of us will know how compatible they are with the other, because we cannot introduce the topic to my guardian like that, without details about the person I want to marry, and I want to be certain that he is suitable to be a father in the future and able to spend on the family's maintenance, and so on. In other words, I do not want to give my family any chance, even if it is slight, to reject this man. I have prayed istikhaarah, and it seems that what I have learned about him up till now is good.

What do you suggest with regard to ways of communicating with him, within the bounds of modesty, moderation and Islamic teachings?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Ascertaining that a suitor is qualified in terms of character and religious commitment is one of the two foundations of a successful marriage; the other foundation is emotional compatibility and inclination of the heart. The first foundation is the more important, because character and religious commitment form the basis of every successful relationship and happy household, even if it is

devoid of complete love and emotional harmony.

Hence attention should be paid to this foundation as much as is possible, and help should be sought from Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, to choose one who is religiously committed and of good character. We have previously stated in fatwa no. 105728 some of the means that will help to achieve this aim.

With regard to conversations between a man and a woman who are not mahrams via chat programs, the basic principle concerning this is that it is not allowed, because it opens the door to evil and fitnah. How often have such conversations brought evil and calamity to the participants, and even caused them to become infatuated, and has led to some of them committing immoral actions and sins. The Shaytaan may cause each party to see in the other characteristics that cause them to become infatuated, which has a negative impact on their worldly and religious affairs.

Islam closes all the doors that may lead to fitnah. Hence it forbids speaking in a soft voice, shaking hands with a non-mahram woman, looking at her and being alone with her. These private conversations are one of the causes of fitnah, as is well known.

Shaykh Ibn Jibreen (may Allah preserve him) was asked: What is the ruling on correspondence between young men and women, so long as this correspondence is free of immoral matters, infatuation and so on?

He replied:

It is not permissible for any man to correspond with a woman who is not his mahram, because of the fitnah to which that leads. The man may think that there is no fitnah, but the Shaytaan will keep trying to tempt him and tempt her. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed the one who hears of the Dajjaal to keep far away from him, and he said that a man may come to him as a believer, but the Dajjaal will keep trying to influence him until he confuses him.

Correspondence between young men and young women is a great fitnah and poses a grave

danger; it should be strictly avoided, even if the questioner says that he is not infatuated with her.

End quote from Fataawa al-Mar'ah, compiled by Muhammad al-Musnad, p. 96

Undoubtedly talking via chat has a greater impact and poses a greater danger than corresponding by mail. So fear Allah and refrain from talking to this man. That is safer for your religious commitment and is purer for your heart. You should understand that marriage to a righteous man is a blessing from Allah, may He be exalted, and a blessing cannot be attained by means of sin.

If this man wants to marry you, then let him approach the matter properly and correspond with your guardian in order to propose marriage to you. Then after that, the matter of ascertaining his religious commitment and character may be done by means that are Islamically acceptable, which we have explained in the fatwa referred to above.

Moreover, this matter is in fact the responsibility of the guardian. One of his most important roles is being in charge of the marriage contract. He should examine the situation of the suitor and find out about him to see whether he is compatible, qualified, and able to fulfill the duties of marriage. The woman is not able to decide about these matters in an objective and correct manner.

If you can inform him of what he must do before he comes to propose marriage to you, then when he has the financial means and is compatible, he must approach the matter properly, and he should approach your father and get to know your family.

And Allah knows best.