

**THE QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE LIMITS OF SEEING ONE'S FIANCÉE?
IS IT PERMISSIBLE FOR THE SUITOR TO CALL HER BY PHONE?
ONCE THE SITTING IN WHICH HE SEES HER IS HELD, IS IT PERMISSIBLE
FOR HIM TO SIT WITH HER IN THE PRESENCE OF A MAHRAM?
AND ONCE THE CONTRACT IS CONCLUDED, CAN HE PUT HER THE
ENGAGEMENT RING?**

PLEASE, GIVE US A FATWA MAY ALLAH REWARD YOU.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon whom Allah sent as a mercy to the Worlds, upon his Family, his Companions and his Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

Allah ﷻ allowed the suitor to see the woman he wants to get married with before marriage if he could, and this, in order to see what could invite him to have her in marriage,

as the Prophet ﷺ said:

انظُرْ إِلَيْهَا فَإِنَّهُ أَحْرَى أَنْ يُؤَدِمَ بَيْنَكُمَا

"See her, for this is more likely to bring about agreement between you"²,

and the saying of the Prophet ﷺ :

إِذَا خَطَبَ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَرْأَةَ فَإِنْ اسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَا يَدْعُوهُ إِلَى نِكَاحِهَا فَلْيَفْعَلْ
"When one of you asks a woman in marriage, then if he is able that he should look into what invites him to have her in marriage, he should do it"³,

and in the narration of Muslim: that a man told the Prophet ﷺ that he asked a woman in marriage, hereupon, the Prophet ﷺ said to him: **أَنْظَرْتَ إِلَيْهَا؟** "Did you see her?" He answered in the negative. Upon this he (the Prophet ﷺ) said to him:

اذهب فانظر إليها "Then, go and see her"⁴.

The reason for seeing the fiancée lies in the fact that seeing each other is more likely to make a good choice and is safer for one's end.

¹ Mahram: Anyone whom a Muslim woman is not allowed to marry, as the father, grandfather, brother, son, and so on.

² Reported by At-Tirmidhi, chapter of "Marriage" concerning what has been reported about seeing the fiancée (1110), An-Nassâ'i, chapter of "Marriage" concerning the permission to see a woman with the intention of marriage (1939), Ad-Dârimi, chapter of "Marriage" concerning the permission to see the woman during engagement (2227), Ahmad (4/144) from the hadith of Al-Mughîra Ibn Shu'ba رضي الله عنه. This hadith is judged authentic by Al-Albâni in "As-Silsila As-Sahîha" (1/1/198) number (96).

³ Reported by Abu Dâwûd, chapter of "Marriage" concerning a man seeing a woman and wants to get her married (2084, Ahmad (3/334 and 360) and others, from the hadith of Jâbir رضي الله عنه. This hadith is judged authentic by Al-Albâni in "As-Silsila As-Sahîha" (1/1/204) number (96).

⁴ Reported by Muslim, chapter of "Marriage" (3550), from the hadith of Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه.

As for calling the fiancée by phone; if this comes under the agreement which is related to the conclusion of the marriage contract in order to prepare it, after the approval is given, there is no matter to do it if this is done within the bare minimum and on condition that temptation be avoided. In fact, this would be better to be done by the guardian; this is more preventive for her and far from doubt and suspicion.

However, phone calls made in another context, which is different from that aforesaid, such as for acquaintance and to bring closer each other, are religiously forbidden, because the women should not make foreign men to listen to her voice except in need and by using common words which include decency, in order to avoid temptation and suspicion, because Allah ﷻ said:

(فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا)
[الأحزاب: 32]

The meaning of the verse: “...then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease (of hypocrisy, or evil desire for adultery) should be moved with desire, but speak in an honorable manner” [Al-Ahzâb (The Confederates): 32].

For this reason, a *Mubrim*⁵ woman in hajj or in `Umra makes *Talbiya*⁶ and does not rise her voice.

The sharia ordered her also to clap her hands and not saying *Tasbîh*⁷ in the prayer, all this in order to avoid temptation and avoid falling into sin.

Moreover, it is forbidden for a suitor to seat, speak and go out with his fiancée, even with the presence of a *Mabram*, because this stimulates the desire often, and feeling a sexual desire toward others except one's wife or slave girl is forbidden, because it leads to sin, and all that leads to sin is prohibited.

As for putting the engagement ring, whether for man or woman, it has not evidence from the Sharia. It is one of the things we are ordered to not imitate Jews and Christians. For this reason, one should not put it, especially when it is of gold for men; the prohibition is stronger then, because the Prophet ﷺ forbade men gold and forbade them gold ring.

The perfect knowledge belongs to Allah. Our last prayer is all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon our Prophet ﷺ, his Family, his Companions and Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

Algiers, Sha`bân 7th, 1423 H.

Corresponding to: October 14th, 2002

⁵ *Mubrim*: one who makes *Ibrâm* in hajj or in `Umra.

⁶ *Talbiya*: is to say in hajj or in `Umra “Labbayk Allahumma Labbayk, Labbayk La Sharîka Laka Labbayk, Innal Hamda Wan Ni`mata Laka Wal Mulk, La Sharîka Lak (here I am at Your service O Lord, here I am, here I am. There is no partner to you. Here I am. Truly, the praise and favor is yours, and the dominion. There is no partner to you).

⁷ *Tasbîh*: saying “Subhâna Allah” in prayer in order to correct the imam.