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HOMOSEXUALITY IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE: A LEGAL AND MORAL STUDY BASED ON IBN KATHIR'S THEMATIC INTERPRETATION

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ABSTRACT: Homosexuality is a contemporary issue that sparks debate from legal, social, and ethical perspectives, particularly within the framework of Islamic teachings. This article explores the phenomenon using a thematic interpretation approach (*tafsir mawdū'i*), focusing on the exegesis of Ibn Kathir regarding relevant Qur'anic verses. Employing a qualitative method and content analysis technique, the study examines how Ibn Kathir interprets verses related to homosexual behavior. The findings indicate that Ibn Kathir views homosexuality as a moral deviation that contradicts human nature and Islamic law. His interpretation strongly affirms the prohibition of such behavior and highlights its negative consequences, both spiritually and socially. From the perspective of Islamic moral values, homosexuality violates principles of purity, dignity, and the ideal family structure. Ibn Kathir classifies it as a major sin (*kabā'ir*) and considers it a threat to the moral fabric of society. This study emphasizes that, according to Ibn Kathir, homosexuality not only breaches divine law but also undermines ethical norms and social order upheld in Islam. Thus, the research reinforces the Islamic legal stance on the prohibition of homosexuality and underlines the importance of preserving moral values and family integrity based on Islamic teachings.



Keywords: Homosexuals, Islamic Law, Moral Values, Mawdlui, Tafsir Ibn Kathir.

ABSTRAK: Homoseksualitas merupakan isu kontemporer yang menimbulkan perdebatan dalam aspek hukum, sosial, dan etika, terutama dalam pandangan ajaran Islam. Artikel ini mengkaji fenomena tersebut melalui pendekatan tafsir tematik (*tafsir mawdū’i*), dengan fokus pada interpretasi Ibnu Katsir terhadap ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang berkaitan. Menggunakan metode kualitatif dan teknik analisis isi, penelitian ini menelaah bagaimana homoseksualitas dipahami dalam Tafsir Ibnu Katsir. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa Ibnu Katsir memandang homoseksualitas sebagai bentuk penyimpangan moral yang bertentangan dengan fitrah manusia dan hukum Islam. Ia menegaskan keharaman perilaku tersebut serta dampak negatifnya secara spiritual dan sosial. Dalam perspektif moral Islam, homoseksualitas dianggap melanggar prinsip kesucian, martabat, dan tatanan keluarga ideal. Ibnu Katsir mengklasifikasikan perilaku ini sebagai dosa besar (*kabā'ir*) dan ancaman terhadap stabilitas masyarakat. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa dalam pandangan Ibnu Katsir, homoseksualitas tidak hanya melanggar ketentuan syariat, tetapi juga bertentangan dengan nilai-nilai etis dan struktur sosial yang dijunjung dalam Islam. Dengan demikian, artikel ini memperkuat pandangan hukum Islam yang mengharamkan homoseksualitas dan menyuarakan urgensi menjaga norma moral serta struktur keluarga sesuai ajaran Islam.

Kata Kunci: Homosexual, Hukum Islam, Mawdlui, Nilai Moral, Tafsir Ibnu Katsir.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, homosexuality stands out as a significant social issue in global discussions, involving aspects of law, ethics, culture, and religion. It has become a point of contention in various circles due to its strong connection to individual identity, human rights, and established social norms. In the Indonesian context, while there is no explicit national legislation banning homosexuality, the LGBT community continues to face intense social and cultural pressure. As advocacy for sexual orientation-based individual rights grows stronger, opposing views have also intensified—mainly from groups that prioritize religious principles, particularly within Islamic communities. In Islam, discourse surrounding homosexuality is frequently linked to the narrative of the people of Prophet Lot (Lüt) as found in the Qur'an, which is traditionally interpreted as a strong denunciation of such acts. Renowned classical scholars, including Ibn Kathir, firmly regard homosexuality as a departure from innate human nature and classify it as a major sin (*kabā'ir*) that invokes divine punishment from Allah SWT.¹

The divergence between modern perspectives, which prioritize human rights, and traditional viewpoints rooted in religious exegesis illustrates a substantial conceptual tension that merits scholarly investigation. In light of this, the present study seeks to explore the topic of homosexuality through an Islamic lens by employing the thematic exegesis method (*tafsir mawdū’i*), with particular attention to Ibn Kathir's interpretation of pertinent Qur'anic verses. This research aspires to

¹ Al-Imam Abul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir Ad-Dimasyqi, *Tafsir Ibnu Katsir: Al-Baqarah 142 s.d. Al-Baqarah 252 - Juz 2*, 2000.



offer a more nuanced comprehension of Islam's position on homosexuality and to contribute meaningfully to the broader academic discourse on ethical and legal considerations within contemporary Muslim communities.

Within Islamic thought, the interpretation of Qur'anic verses regarding the people of Lot plays a pivotal role in shaping moral and spiritual perspectives on homosexuality. Diverse interpretative frameworks – ranging from traditional to modern – present varied insights into how Muslim communities should understand homosexual behavior from both theological and socio-cultural standpoint.² As societal conceptions of sexual orientation and individual rights continue to evolve in the contemporary era, there is a growing need for more context-sensitive readings of these scriptural passages. Nevertheless, traditional interpretations that categorically reject homosexuality remain firmly upheld by certain groups as immutable religious doctrines, even as public discourse becomes increasingly critical of such stances. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to examine the interpretation of the Lot narrative through a contextual hermeneutic lens and investigate its broader implications for how homosexuality is understood in modern times – where cultural shifts frequently challenge established religious and social conventions.³

Homosexuality has been a subject of interest in psychological research, particularly in relation to sexual identity and the formation of sexual orientation in individuals. Psychosexual theory defines sexual identity as an individual's recognition of their sexual orientation and its integration into their psychological growth. Sexual orientation, however, is often considered to result from a complex interplay of multiple influences, including social context, personal experiences, and biological factors that remain only partially understood. Freud suggested that homosexuality could emerge from unresolved stages of psychosexual development.⁴ He theorized that sexual orientation is shaped during early childhood, and disruptions or imbalances during developmental phases – such as the Oedipal stage – may contribute to same-sex attraction in adulthood. Importantly, Freud did not label homosexuality as pathological; instead, he saw it as one of the natural variations in human sexual development.⁵ Contemporary psychological perspectives on homosexuality vary widely, encompassing explanations rooted in early psychosexual development, as well as theories emphasizing the roles of genetics, cultural background, and social environment. Despite this diversity of viewpoints, a universally accepted explanation for the origins of sexual orientation has yet to be established.

² Siska Lis Sulistiani, "Hukum Homoseksual Perspektif Maqashid Syari'ah," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 4, no. 2 (2019): 267–82, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v4i2.813>.

³ Yuni Asih, "Homoseksual Menurut Buku 'Reading The Quran' Karya Ziauddin Sardar," *AL QUDS : Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis* 5, no. 2 (2021): 649, <https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v5i2.2563>.

⁴ Ainurrafiq Dawam, "Sigmund Freud Dan Homoseksual (Sebuah Tinjauan Wacana Keislaman)," *Musawa Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Islam* 2, no. 1 (2003): 41, <https://doi.org/10.14421/musawa.2003.21.41-60>.

⁵ Dawam.



In contemporary society, adopting an inclusive perspective toward homosexuality is essential, acknowledging sexual orientation as a natural aspect of human diversity that warrants respect. This topic frequently sparks debate across different regions, with Western societies generally demonstrating greater acceptance of varied sexual orientations, while more conservative attitudes prevail in many Eastern cultures.⁶ Conversely, the Islamic viewpoint provides a profound spiritual framework for interpreting the issue. The Qur'anic narrative of the people of Lot is traditionally viewed as a caution against homosexual conduct; nevertheless, modern exegeses call for a more nuanced and context-aware interpretation that takes into account present-day social and cultural realities.⁷ Islam emphasizes principles such as patience, self-discipline, and the maintenance of dignity in interpersonal relations, offering a compassionate and thoughtful approach to engaging with this complex topic.

In Islamic scholarship, the Qur'an and Hadith offer explicit directives regarding human conduct, especially actions that violate Sharia principles, such as homosexual behavior, which is illustrated through the narrative of the people of Lot found in Qur'anic passages including QS. Al-A'raf 80-81, QS. Al-Syuara' 165-166, QS. Al-Ankabut 28-29, and QS. Al-Naml 55. These scriptures recount how Allah punished the people of Lot for their transgressions. Such verses classify homosexual acts as major sins in Islam, seen as threats to the moral and social fabric of society.⁸ Nonetheless, modern Qur'anic commentators (mufassir) advocate for interpreting these verses within their historical and cultural contexts, urging a prudent and empathetic approach to this issue in today's world, with a focus on humanitarian and just principles. From this perspective, Islamic psychology provides further understanding by emphasizing the development of spiritual and emotional maturity as a way to confront moral and social challenges. This framework corresponds with Islamic doctrine, which considers homosexuality a deviation from the natural human disposition (fitrah), promoting a holistic approach that integrates psychological and spiritual therapies alongside self-discipline to assist individuals in refraining from harmful behaviors. Despite the clarity of Islamic teachings, many people continue to experience difficulties aligning their behavior with religious norms.⁹ Contemporary psychological research frequently neglects the spiritual aspect in its treatment of homosexuality,

⁶ Ralph Adolph, "Spirituality, Hope and Forgiveness Related to Experiences of Heterosexism and Internalized Homophobia Among Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual P" (2016).

⁷ Muh Nasruddin and Junaid Bin Junaid, "JOURNAL OF QUR'ĀN AND HADĪTH STUDIES Prohibisi Homoseksual Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Analisis Tafsir Maqāṣidī," *Office: Faculty of Ushuluddin UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta* 12, no. 2 (2023): 177-90, <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v12i2.34137>.

⁸ Tezar Alghifari Tubuon, "Dampak Perilaku Homoseksual Pada Kehidupan Keluarga Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam: Studi Kasus Pelaku Gay Di Kota Bitung The Impact of Homosexual Behavior on Family Life in the Perspective of Islamic Law: A Case Study of Gay Perpetrators in Bitung City," *SPECTRUM: Journal of Gender and Children Studies* 3, no. 2 (2023): 102-16, <http://journal.iain-manado.ac.id/index.php/SPECTRUM>.

⁹ Tubuon.



and Islamic psychological inquiry into this subject remains scarce. Consequently, there is a notable lack of comprehensive studies that blend psychological theories with practical applications relevant to modern life.

The study of homosexuality within the framework of Qur'anic exegesis – particularly concerning the story of the people of Lot – continues to develop through integrative methodologies that bridge Islamic principles with a contextual interpretation of homosexuality in contemporary society. A number of earlier works have significantly contributed to the discourse on homosexuality in Islam, including the research conducted by Rahma Juwita and colleagues titled "Homosexuality in the Perspective of Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim by Ibn Kathir and Tafsir al-Azhar by Buya Hamka: A Comparative Study of the Interpretation of QS. Al-A'raf Verses 80-84.¹⁰ This study examines the differing interpretations of Ibn Kathir and Buya Hamka on QS. Al-A'raf: 80-84, which recounts the episode involving the people of Prophet Lot. Buya Hamka characterizes homosexuality as a form of deviant behavior that surpasses the boundaries of human morality. As a respected Islamic scholar, he proposes preventative measures rooted in spiritual and ethical guidance. He underscores the necessity of constant remembrance of Allah, particularly in times of material abundance, arguing that unchecked wealth can diminish one's spiritual consciousness if not tempered by religious devotion.

A related study by Sisilia Dake et al., titled "Faktor-Faktor Yang Mempengaruhi Terjadinya Gay (Homoseksual) Kota Jayapura" (The Influencing Factors of Gay Incidence [Homosexuality] in Jayapura City).¹¹ explores the multifaceted nature of the factors contributing to homosexual behavior. The study concludes that such behavior cannot be ascribed to a single determinant, but rather results from a complex interplay of influences. One frequently identified factor is the occurrence of same-sex experiences during childhood, often involving interactions with individuals in the immediate social environment. These early encounters can potentially shape same-sex attractions later in life. Moreover, the study notes that some individuals who adopt homosexual or lesbian identities may have undergone adverse experiences in heterosexual relationships or within their family dynamics. Such negative experiences, including emotional trauma and dissatisfaction, can significantly impact the development of their sexual orientation.

A further study by Muh. Nasruddin and Junaid bin Junaid, entitled "The Prohibition of Homosexuality in the Qur'an: An Analytical Study of Maqasidic Interpretation."¹² emphasizes that the Qur'anic stance against homosexuality is grounded in several core objectives (maqāṣid) of Islamic law. These include the preservation of lineage (hifz al-nasl), the safeguarding of religion (hifz al-dīn), the protection of reason (hifz al-aql), and the preservation of life (hifz al-nafs). The study asserts that homosexual conduct is viewed as lacking constructive value or maṣlahah, and is instead associated with negative consequences (maḍarrah) for

¹⁰ Tafsir Al Qur et al., "Homoseksual Dalam Perspektif A'raf Ayat 80-84)," vol. 1, 2022.

¹¹ Sisilia Dake et al., "Terjadinya Gay (Homoseksual)" 7, no. April (2024): 476-88.

¹² Nasruddin and Bin Junaid, "Journal Of Qur'Ān And Hadīth Studies Prohibisi Homoseksual Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Analisis Tafsir Maqāṣidī."



both individuals and the broader community.

This research is of strategic importance in narrowing the gap in understanding homosexuality by examining Qur'anic verses related to the people of Lot. Through a contextual interpretation approach, it seeks to offer a fresh perspective on how Islamic teachings can serve as a response to the moral and social issues of the modern age. Positioned within the framework of combining classical tafsir methods with a contemporary lens, the study addresses the relevance of current social conditions in interpreting and engaging with the topic of homosexuality.¹³ In addition to delivering a theoretical interpretation of the verses, the study aspires to present a practical framework grounded in Islamic principles to confront the modern challenges associated with this issue.

This research goes beyond a discussion of legal rulings by delving into the moral and ethical framework within Ibn Kathir's interpretation of homosexuality. It presents a thorough and critical comparison between classical and modern exegeses. Additionally, it introduces a maqāṣid-oriented and contextual method that links traditional Qur'anic interpretation with today's social context. The topic is considered highly relevant for academic discourse, Islamic missionary efforts (da'wah), and educational policy, especially in offering a thoughtful response to contemporary sexual issues. By providing an in-depth analysis, the study aims to significantly contribute to the advancement of thematic Qur'anic exegesis that is both practical and relevant. It specifically highlights Ibn Kathir's views on homosexuality, bringing together legal, ethical, and societal perspectives in one cohesive framework. Moreover, the research contextualizes classical interpretations to confront modern-day challenges while maintaining the authenticity of the Qur'anic message.

METHOD

This research utilizes qualitative method with a thematic (mawdu'i) approach, which is particularly effective for deeply investigating moral and legal issues through religious texts. The study is classified as a literature review (library research).¹⁴ centering on the analysis of written materials, especially the Tafsir Ibn Kathir, to develop a thorough understanding of the legal and ethical perspectives on homosexuality. The main data source for this study is the Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azhim by Ibn Kathir. Additional secondary sources consist of other interpretive works, including books, journals, and pertinent articles that explore homosexuality from an Islamic viewpoint. The data is analyzed using thematic content analysis, focusing on identifying and examining Qur'anic verses related to homosexuality, namely QS. Al-A'raf verses 80-81, QS. Al-Syu'ara' verses 165-166, QS. Al-Ankabut verses 28-29, QS. An-Naml verse 55.

¹³ Ahmad Murtaza and Raisa Zuhra Salsabila Awaluddin, "Larangan Homoseksual Studi Analisis Tafsir Maqashidi Pada QS. Al-A'raf [7]: 80-81," *Jurnal Al-Fanar* 5, no. 1 (February 28, 2022): 17-28, <https://doi.org/10.33511/alfanar.v5n1.17-28>.

¹⁴ Fauzi Fauzi, "Penelitian Tafsir Dan Pendekatan Kualitatif," *TAFSE: Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2022): 125, <https://doi.org/10.22373/tafse.v4i2.12483>.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Homosexuality in the Context of the Qur'an

The word "homosexual" is derived from two components: "homo," meaning "same," and "sexual," which pertains to all matters related to sex, including biological, emotional, and social dimensions involving feelings, behaviors, or sexual drives. Homosexuality refers to individuals who consistently have sexual, romantic, and emotional attractions toward members of the same sex.¹⁵ As defined by the Indonesian Dictionary (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia - KBBI), the term "gay" is a noun used to describe a man who experiences sexual attraction or arousal toward other men.

The term bisexual is defined as an adjective describing sexual attraction to both males and females.¹⁶ Meanwhile, transgender is used as a verb referring to the process of changing one's gender identity, whether from male to female or vice versa. Kartono describes homosexuality as either sexual activity between people of the same sex or as emotional and romantic attraction toward individuals of the same gender.¹⁷ Within psychology, homosexuality is considered a type of sexual deviation addressed in the field of abnormal psychology. Homosexuality is a sexual orientation characterized by emotional and sexual attraction to people of the same sex.¹⁸

Homosexuality can be described in terms of an individual's internal sexual orientation, desires, and needs. For instance, a gay male often begins to show these tendencies during adolescence, demonstrating a lack of interest in females and experiencing attraction exclusively toward males. In certain cases, gay males might exhibit physical development that does not completely match traditional masculine traits, such as less developed genitalia or characteristics that are more feminine in nature. Their mannerisms may sometimes be softer than those typically observed in females. This sexual orientation usually remains consistent into adulthood, influencing their choice to have partners of the same sex.

Nonetheless, this term does not appear in Islamic texts. Instead, it is commonly linked to the term liwath (لِوَاط), which denotes homosexual orientation and conduct. This connection stems from the fact that the people of Prophet Lot were the earliest recorded group to practice such behavior, as noted by Imam al-

¹⁵ Manuel Waskito Prasetyo, "Homoseksualitas Dalam Pandangan Teologis," *Scripta: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pelayanan Kontekstual* 12, no. 2 (2021): 94-104, <http://ejurnal.stte.ac.id>.

¹⁶ Meity Marhaba, Cornelius Paat, and John Zakarias, "Jarak Sosial Masyarakat Dengan Kelompok Lesbian Gay Biseksual Dan Trangender (LGBT) Desa Salilama Kecamatan Mananggu Kabupaten Boalemo Provinsi Gotontalo," *Jurnal Ilmiah Society* 1, no. 1 (2021): 1-13.

¹⁷ Afreiza Octaguna A et al., "23-Moderasi-0101-464 (1)," 2023, 1-17, <https://doi.org/10.11111/nusantara.xxxxxxx>.

¹⁸ Freud, "Three Essays in Theory of Sexuality," *Journal of Nerv. and Ment. Dis. Publ. Co. (Monograph Series* 5, no. 7 (1920): 29-145.



Nawawi.¹⁹ Additionally, Rohmawati describes liwath as sexual relations between men.²⁰

Islam clearly prohibits homosexual acts, including same-sex marriage, as these are deemed incompatible with Shari law.²¹ While this punishment may not always appear as dramatically or disgracefully as it did for the people of Sodom, it can manifest in other serious and severe forms. From the viewpoint of Islamic jurisprudence, fiqh scholars unanimously consider homosexuality forbidden because it is viewed as an immoral act that goes against human nature (fitrah). This prohibition is intended to safeguard the continuation of future generations, which is a vital element in maintaining Islamic principles.

Imam al-Syaukani, in his tafsir, states that Prophet Lot, son of Harun bin Tarikh, was sent to the people known as the people of Sodom. Allah tasked Prophet Lot with denouncing the sinful acts practiced by them, particularly liwath, a behavior unprecedented among earlier communities. Their conduct was driven purely by irrational lust, even though Allah created women as the rightful partners to satisfy sexual desires appropriately.²² Ibn Kathir further explains that Allah appointed Prophet Lot to urge the people of Sodom to believe in Him, perform righteous deeds, and abandon their immoral behavior, specifically same-sex relations, which clearly exceeded Allah's prescribed boundaries.²³ Wahbah al-Zuhaili adds that the sinful acts of the Sodomites were self-invented, resulting in their transgression against natural human disposition. This deviation, substituting men for women, is regarded as both ignorant and reprehensible because it misplaces things from their proper order.²⁴

Relationships between individuals of the same sex are viewed as a type of unlawful sexual conduct (zina) and are sometimes linked to polytheism (shirk) because they contradict the divine design that intended men and women to be partners. These actions are seen as extreme, irrational, and motivated purely by lustful impulses. Within this framework, it is essential to grasp the evolving and adaptable messages of the Qur'an, which continue to hold significance across various eras and contexts. Furthermore, acknowledging the harmful consequences of such behaviors is important as a means of reinforcement, while maintaining the religious principles as the fundamental foundation.

¹⁹ Hamdan Arief Hanif and Indah Listyorini, "LGBT Dalam Perspektif Hukum Keluarga Islam" 5, no. 2 (2024): 13–24.

²⁰ Rohmawati Rohmawati, Abdulloh Chakim, and Lilik Rofiqoh, "Perkawinan Lgbt Perspektif Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Positif," *Istinbath* 17, no. 1 (2018): 88–114, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ijhi.v17i1.34>.

²¹ Syafi'in Mansur, "Homoseksual Dalam Perspektif Agama-Agama Di Indonesia," *Aqlania* 8, no. 1 (2017): 21, <https://doi.org/10.32678/aqlania.v8i01.1020>.

²² Nurhabibah Sormin, Fitri Kartika, and Habibah Lutfiah, "Manhaj Penafsiran Imam As-Syaukani Dalam Kitab Tafsir Fathul Qodir" 9 (2025): 6807–12.

²³ Ad-Dimasyqi, *Tafsir Ibnu Katsir: Al-Baqarah 142 s.d. Al-Baqarah 252 - Juz 2*.

²⁴ Hayuti Sukma Jelita and Dapit Amril, "Homoseksual Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Komparatif Penafsiran Wahbah Az-Zuhaili Dan Mahmud Yunus," *Lathaif: Literasi Tafsir, Hadis Dan Filologi* 2, no. 2 (2023): 104, <https://doi.org/10.31958/lathaif.v2i2.10921>.



Analysis of Verses About Homosexuality

1. Surah Al-A'raf verse 80-81

وَلُوطاً إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقُكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

Translation: "And [mention] Lot, when he said to his people, 'Do you commit such immorality as no one has preceded you with from among the worlds?'

إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ أَلْرِجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ الْأَنْسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُسْرِفُونَ

Translation: "Indeed, you approach men with desire, instead of women. Rather, you are a transgressing people."

In his commentary on Q.S. Al-A'raf verses 80-81, Ibn Kathir explains that the people of Prophet Lot were the first known group to openly practice same-sex relations. He characterizes this conduct as *fahisyah*, meaning a deeply immoral act and a major sin, as it goes against human nature. Ibn Kathir notes that this community deviated from the natural order by rejecting women—who are legally permitted partners—and instead channeling their desires toward men. This behavior marked a serious breach of religious teachings and the natural laws set by Allah. Furthermore, Ibn Kathir highlights that the actions of Prophet Lot's people were not only sinful but also a profound violation of ethical, religious, and human values. As a result, Allah sent Prophet Lot to warn them firmly and to guide them back to the correct path. Ibn Kathir stresses that homosexuality is a grave offense that may bring about divine punishment.²⁵

2. Surah Asy-Syu'ara verse 165-166

أَتَأْتُونَ الدُّكَانَ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

Translation: "Why do you approach men among the people (engage in homosexuality)?"

وَتَدْرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ

Translation: "Meanwhile, you abandon (women) who were created by God to be your wives? You are indeed a people who transgress the limits."

In his tafsir, Ibn Kathir describes this verse as a warning from Prophet Lot directed at his people who had engaged in homosexual acts, specifically same-sex relationships. Prophet Lot stresses that these behaviors go against human nature, which was created in two distinct forms—male and female—and violate divine legal commands. In Islamic jurisprudence, sexual relations between men are known as *liwāt*, while those between women are termed *sihāq*. Most scholars from the four major Sunni madhhabs agree that homosexuality is considered a major sin. Nonetheless, there are differing opinions among jurists regarding the earthly punishments (*hadd*) for homosexual acts: The Maliki and Hanbali schools equate it with *zina* (adultery/fornication), prescribing stoning for married offenders and flogging for unmarried ones. The Shafi'i school advocates the death penalty

²⁵ Ad-Dimasyqi Al-Imam Abul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir, "Tafsir Ibnu Kasir: Juz 8 - Al-An'am 111 Sd Al-A'raf 87," *Tafsir*, 2000, 1-420.



regardless of the marital status of the offender, drawing analogy from the punishment inflicted on the people of Lot. The Hanafi school does not set a fixed hadd penalty but suggests ta'zir (discretionary punishment) to be determined by the judge.²⁶

Verse 166 highlights that the people of Prophet Lot turned away from the women whom Allah had created as their lawful spouses. This reflects the Islamic view that morality is rooted in alignment with human nature, specifically through the male-female relationship. Homosexuality is considered harmful to both the family unit and societal harmony, as it neglects the essential biological and social purposes of marriage. In Islam, marriage is intended to build a family and ensure the continuation of offspring – objectives that cannot be achieved through same-sex unions. The phrase “transgressing beyond bounds” in this verse signifies that such behavior is not only a violation of Islamic law, but also breaches moral and ethical standards, going against decency, social norms, and virtuous conduct. It is seen as a departure from natural human disposition and a threat to social stability and Islamic ethical values.²⁷

3. Surah al Ankabut verse 28-29

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ ۝ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْثُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقُكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

Translation: “(Remember) when Lot said to his people, "Indeed, you commit such an immoral act (homosexuality) that no one in all the worlds has ever committed before you."

إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْثُونَ الرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ السَّيِّلَ ۝ وَتَأْثُونَ فِي نَادِيْكُمُ الْمُنْكَرِ فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ ۝
إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا اثْنَا بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

Translation: "Do you really approach men (to satisfy your desires), commit robbery, and engage in immoral acts in your gatherings?" But the only answer his people gave was, "Bring us the punishment of Allah, if you are indeed among the truthful!"

Based on Ibn Kathir's interpretation, Surah Al-'Ankabūt verses 28-29 emphasize several key points: Liwāt (homosexuality) is regarded as a grave sin and is strictly prohibited (ḥarām). Those who engage in such acts are subject to severe punishment, potentially including the death penalty. If left unchecked, this behavior can undermine and destroy the fabric of society. From a moral and ethical standpoint: Homosexuality is seen as a departure from the natural disposition (fitrah) of human beings. It leads to social corruption, fosters criminal activity, and promotes the normalization of immoral behaviors. The rejection of prophetic guidance by the people reflects a decline in moral integrity, spiritual consciousness, and ethical standards.²⁸

4. Surah al Naml verse 55

²⁶ Al-Imam Abul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir Ad-Dimasyqi, "Tafsir Ibnu Katsir Juz 18," n.d.

²⁷ Ad-Dimasyqi.

²⁸ Al-Imam Abul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir Ad-Dimasyqi, "Tafsir Ibnu Katsir Juz 19," 2010.



نَّكِنْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ إِنَّمَا قَوْمٌ يَجْهَلُونَ

Translation: "Why do you approach men with desire instead of women? Indeed, you are a people behaving ignorantly."

Based on Ibn Kathir's interpretation, Surah An-Naml verse 55 strongly condemns homosexual acts, labeling them as disgraceful and clearly prohibited in Islam. He links this verse to a prophetic hadith that mandates the death penalty for individuals involved in liwāt, considering it both a reinforcement of Islamic legal principles and a safeguard against the moral deterioration of society.

From an ethical standpoint, homosexuality is viewed as a serious deviation from the natural human disposition, signifying spiritual ignorance and a breakdown of core human values. The community of Prophet Lot is depicted as morally misguided for yielding to desires that oppose logic, the innate design of human creation, and divine guidance.²⁹

Islamic Law and Moral Values in Addressing Homosexuality

Homosexual and lesbian behavior is strictly prohibited (ḥarām) in Islam, regardless of whether it takes place within or outside a marital framework.³⁰ Islam deems all forms of homosexuality impermissible, as such behavior strays from the natural disposition (fitrah) of human beings and opposes the divine intention behind creation, which defines both the biological and societal functions of marriage. These acts are believed to disrupt social stability, conflict with the fundamental purposes of marriage, and potentially weaken the foundation of family values.

However, Islam also encourages treating those with differing sexual orientations with kindness, respect, and human dignity. Rather than marginalizing or discriminating against them, Islam upholds the principle that everyone should be given the chance to repent and realign their lives with the teachings of the religion.

Islam's prohibition of homosexuality and lesbianism is grounded not only in concerns over morality and human dignity but also in the serious health implications associated with such behaviors. Engaging in these acts significantly increases the risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and genital cancers. Furthermore, the marriage of a transgender person—who has undergone gender reassignment surgery—to a male is also classified as a form of homosexuality. This is because the biological essence of being male cannot be entirely altered by medical procedures, even if the individual has acquired female genitalia through surgery.

Islamic scholars hold differing views on the appropriate punishment for those who commit homosexual or lesbian acts. These opinions generally fall into two primary categories.

The first view advocates for capital punishment for those involved in homosexual acts. This stance is supported by some companions of the Prophet

²⁹ Ad-Dimasyqi, "Tafsir Ibnu Katsir Juz 18."

³⁰ Hanif and Listyorini, "LGBT Dalam Perspektif Hukum Keluarga Islam."



Muhammad (peace be upon him), including al-Nashir and Qasim bin Ibrahim, as well as by Imam al-Shafi'i in one of his reported opinions. This position is based on a hadith recorded by Ibn Majah and al-Nasa'i from Ibn Abbas, which says: "If you find anyone engaging in the behavior of the people of Lot, kill both the doer and the one with whom it is done." (HR. Ibn Majah)

The second view, also linked to Imam al-Shafi'i, prescribes stoning (rajm) as the punishment, regardless of the offender's marital status. This interpretation is upheld by scholars such as Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib, 'Ata' ibn Abi Rabah, Hasan Abu Qatadah, al-Nakha'i, Sufyan al-Thawri, Abdurrahman al-Awza'i, Abi Talib, Imam Yahya, and some within the Shafi'i school. According to them, homosexual acts—specifically liwāt (sodomy)—fall under the same category as zina (adultery or fornication), warranting flogging for unmarried offenders and stoning for those who are married.

According to Ibn Kathir, the Qur'anic account of Prophet Lot (Lüt) offers significant moral and legal insights regarding the major sin committed by his people—namely homosexuality (liwāt). The following points highlight the key lessons drawn from this narrative:

1. An Unprecedented Violation of Human Nature

The people of Lot were the first to engage in homosexual acts, a behavior described by Allah as a disgraceful (fāhishah) and unnatural deed that contradicts the innate disposition (fitrah) of human beings. This act strays from the divine purpose of creating men and women as natural partners in life.

2. Widespread and Shameless Immorality

In addition to engaging in homosexuality, the people of Lot were involved in other openly indecent acts, including using vulgar language, harassing passersby, and committing immoral acts in public. These behaviors signified their deep moral decline.

3. Persistent Defiance and Denial of Prophetic Warnings

Despite Prophet Lot's consistent admonitions, his people remained obstinate and defiant. They mockingly demanded that he hasten Allah's punishment and even threatened to expel him and his family. This attitude reflects their rejection of divine truth and guidance.

4. Lot's Wife as a Cautionary Example

Although she did not commit the act herself, Lot's wife was punished alongside the people for her sympathies toward their wrongdoing. Her story illustrates that even passive support of evil can result in accountability.

5. Divine Retribution and Justice

Due to their persistent transgressions, Allah sent a catastrophic punishment upon Lot's people—a rain of blazing stones. This event demonstrates Allah's ultimate justice and serves as a warning to those who defy His commandments despite repeated warnings.



6. Moral Vigilance and Collective Responsibility

The story emphasizes the need for communities to stay alert and actively oppose moral corruption. It warns against allowing deviant behavior to become normalized or socially accepted.

While the Qur'an strongly denounces homosexual acts, it also encourages Muslims to deliver the message of truth with compassion and respect. Islam distinguishes between condemning the sinful behavior and showing hatred toward the person. As such, efforts in *da'wah* (religious outreach) should be conducted with wisdom, empathy, and dignity – never with hostility or humiliation.

CONCLUSION

Homosexuality refers to emotional and sexual attraction toward individuals of the same gender. While the specific term "homosexuality" does not appear in classical Islamic texts, the concept corresponds to *liwāt*, which primarily denotes male same-sex relations. In contemporary discourse, this discussion extends to include bisexual and transgender identities. From an Islamic perspective, homosexuality is considered a major sin (*ḥarām*), prohibited based on evidence from the Qur'an, the Prophetic traditions, and the consensus (*ijmā'*) of scholars. The Qur'anic narrative of Prophet Lüt's people – featured in Surah Al-A'rāf, Ash-Shu'arā', Al-'Ankabūt, and An-Naml – serves as a central reference, illustrating the moral and legal condemnation of such acts. Homosexual behavior is viewed as a deviation from the natural human disposition (*fitrah*) and a transgression against divine law.

Islamic jurists have historically prescribed severe penalties for *liwāt*, with the aim of safeguarding moral order and social stability. The prohibition is grounded not only in theological doctrine but also in considerations of public welfare, human dignity, and generational continuity. Thus, the Islamic stance on homosexuality reflects a holistic moral framework that seeks to uphold ethical integrity while guiding society toward what is perceived as spiritual and social well-being.

However, this study has certain limitations. It focuses primarily on classical jurisprudential views and gives limited attention to contemporary scholarly debates or the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ Muslims. It also emphasizes male homosexuality while underexploring issues related to lesbianism (*sīḥāq*), bisexuality, and gender identity. Future research should incorporate broader interdisciplinary approaches, including contemporary Islamic ethics, sociology of religion, and perspectives from within LGBTQ+ Muslim communities. Comparative theological studies and engagement with human rights discourse may also contribute to a more inclusive and contextually grounded understanding, helping to navigate the balance between scriptural fidelity and human compassion.



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