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A Comparison of Homosexuality in Three Holy Books

Ahmadali Ghane *

* Faculty Member of Imam Sadiq (pbuh) University.
Email: 4ghane@gmail.com

orcid.org/0009-0008-6497-9891

Abstract

This article embarks on a scholarly examination of the shared perspectives on homosexuality as delineated in the three Abrahamic holy texts: The Old Testament, The New Testament, and the Qur'an. It articulates a common thread among these scriptures, asserting their unanimous stance on the prohibition of homosexuality—a conduct primarily depicted through male-male sexual relationships. This prohibition is underscored by narratives such as the story of Prophet Lut and his people, and is further claimed to be aligned with the innate nature of humans which, according to these texts, inherently rejects homosexual acts. Moreover, the discourse extends to the physical and spiritual detriments attributed to such practices. The main problem addressed in this study stems from a noticeable deficit in awareness regarding the categorization of homosexuality as both a sin and a crime within these religious doctrines, coupled with a widespread lack of knowledge about its explicit prohibition across the holy books. This gap in understanding is significant amidst ongoing debates and movements towards the legalization of homosexuality in various societies. Employing an analytical descriptive research methodology, this investigation relies on comprehensive library resources to meticulously dissect and compare scriptural and jurisprudential stances. The research methodology is designed to not only elucidate textual condemnations but also to explore juristic interpretations across different Islamic denominations, offering a broad spectrum of religious insights. The findings reveal a remarkable consistency in the punitive measures prescribed for homosexuality across different Islamic traditions, highlighting the severity of such sanctions. This uniformity underscores the perceived necessity of deterrent punishments within these faiths, suggesting a shared theological imperative to safeguard moral and social order. Through this analysis, the article endeavors to illuminate the underexplored dimensions of religious texts on this matter, aiming to foster a deeper understanding among readers. It is the author's hope that by shedding light on these divine injunctions, the study will encourage a return to what is presented as the 'God-granted true nature' of humanity, particularly among proponents of homosexuality's legalization in the contemporary world.

Keywords: The Turah; the Bible; The Qur'an; Sodomy; Homosexuality; Prohibition

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1. Introduction

According to the discussions brought up in theological rhetoric, in both Christian and Muslim sources, it has been proved that God Almighty who has sent a number of prophets for the guidance of mankind, knows humans well since he is the creator and he knows the good for human much better than themselves. And all of the divine orders which are presented either in holy books or through the words of prophets or their successors have been aiming at benefiting humans both in material and the eternal world and eliminating their individual and social evils and vice actions. The real followers of the prophets' teachings not only have a nice eternal world but also have a satisfying and nice life in this world as well. The divine religions try to provide a nice eternal world for the humans through beautifying and building their material world. "Allah is the one who produced you from the earth and who let you settle down on it." (Qur'an 11:61). The orders of the divine religions in general and evolved divine religions such as Islam in particular are not addressing only the hereafter issues, but they are meant for improving the material world lives of humans as well and in fact the hereafter and material world are considered to be the two sides of a single coin.

Unfortunately, homosexuality has been legalized in some of the countries under the pressure exerted by certain groups, while these countries have Christian, Jewish, or Muslim citizens and according to the orders of these three divine religions there is no room or permission for such perverted behavior. The present article discusses the ideas of divine religions according to holy books regarding the issue of homosexuality in three sections and lets the readers pass their own judgment on the issue.

In light of the profound guidance offered by divine religions on the myriad aspects of human life, this article seeks to meticulously explore several critical questions. Firstly, how do the holy texts of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam explicitly address the issue of homosexuality? Secondly, what are the underlying reasons these scriptures provide for categorizing such behavior as undesirable or prohibited? Thirdly, considering the diverse interpretations and teachings within these faiths, how do different Islamic denominations articulate the theological and moral reasoning behind their stances on

homosexuality? And finally, amidst the current trends of legalization and social acceptance of homosexuality in various countries, how do these religious doctrines reconcile, resist, or respond to such shifts? Through addressing these questions, the article aims to deepen the understanding of the religious perspectives on homosexuality, illuminating the spiritual, moral, and societal dimensions underscored by these faiths.

2. Theoretical Background

The discourse on the intersection of sexuality and religion has been a focal point of theological, ethical, and legal discussions within Abrahamic religions for centuries. This section delineates the foundational theories and previous scholarly work that underpin the study of homosexuality within the context of divine religions, specifically focusing on Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

2.1. Scriptural Interpretations and Theological Standpoints

At the heart of Abrahamic discussions on morality and law are the scriptural texts—The Bible (encompassing The Old and New Testaments) and The Qur'an. These texts provide not only historical accounts and prophetic teachings but also serve as the primary sources for ethical guidelines and moral adjudications. Scholars across these religions have engaged in extensive exegesis to interpret these sacred texts, often arriving at diverse conclusions based on linguistic, contextual, and doctrinal analyses.

2.2. The Concept of Fitrah (Innate Nature) in Islamic Theology

A significant concept within Islamic jurisprudence relevant to the discussion of homosexuality is the notion of fitrah, or the innate disposition towards virtue and natural order that Muslims believe all humans are born with. This concept is instrumental in understanding the Islamic perspective on human behavior, including sexuality, and provides a theological basis for the prohibition and ethical judgment of actions considered to be against this natural disposition.

2.3. Jurisprudential Approaches to Homosexuality

Beyond the theological assertions, the jurisprudential frameworks within these religions—ranging from the Rabbinic laws in Judaism,

Canon law in Christianity, to Sharia in Islam—offer a more detailed legalistic perspective on homosexuality. These religious laws encompass a wide array of interpretations and applications, influenced by historical, cultural, and social dynamics. The evolution of these legal perspectives over time and across different schools of thought highlights the complexity and diversity of religious responses to homosexuality.

2.4. Modern Challenges and Responses

In the contemporary era, the legalization of homosexuality and same-sex marriage in many countries has prompted a reevaluation of traditional religious stances. Scholars and religious leaders within these faiths have been challenged to respond to these social changes, leading to a spectrum of reactions—from reaffirmation of traditional prohibitions to progressive reinterpretations seeking inclusivity and acceptance.

2.5. Ethical and Moral Considerations

Central to the discourse on homosexuality within religious traditions are the ethical and moral considerations underpinning prohibitions. These considerations are deeply intertwined with theological reflections on the nature of sin and divine commandments. Within these frameworks, actions deemed contrary to divine laws are not only viewed through the lens of legal prohibition but also through their implications on spiritual well-being and societal order. The moral fabric of society, as interpreted through these religious teachings, often hinges on adherence to a divinely inspired natural order, where human behaviors are aligned with what is considered to be the intended purpose and design by the Creator.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Sacred Texts

The Holy Quran - As the central religious text of Islam, the Quran addresses various aspects of morality and ethics, including verses that have been interpreted to relate to homosexuality. This source is crucial for understanding Islamic views on the matter.

Old Testament - The Old Testament, particularly the books of Leviticus and Genesis, contains passages that have historically been used to

address moral and legal norms, including those concerning homosexuality, within Judaism and Christianity.

New Testament - References in the New Testament, especially within the letters of Paul, have been interpreted as addressing issues related to sexual morality, providing insight into Christian perspectives on homosexuality.

3.2. Persian Sources

The Criminal Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran Regarding Homosexuality in Light of Contexts (Najafi, 2023) - This article examines the legal stance and criminal policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran on homosexuality, offering a comprehensive overview of the legislative and societal frameworks that influence this policy.

Examination and Analysis of Homosexuality from the Perspective of Islamic Psychology (Jabal Ameli, 2021) - Jabal Ameli's work provides an analysis of homosexuality through the lens of Islamic psychology, exploring the psychological dimensions and implications of this issue within the context of Islamic teachings.

Homosexuality: Disorder or Natural Phenomenon (Sozanchi, 2021) - This article debates the nature of homosexuality, questioning whether it should be viewed as a natural variation of human sexuality or as a disorder, from a religious and psychological standpoint.

(Homosexuality, Nurture or Nature? A Review on Theoretical Backgrounds (Jabali, 2020) - Jabali's article reviews the theoretical backgrounds related to the debate on whether homosexuality is a result of upbringing (nurture) or inherent (nature), providing a critical analysis of the arguments on both sides within the context of Islamic views.

4. Research Methodology

Utilizing an analytical descriptive research methodology, this article relies on a critical review of sacred texts, legal documents, and contemporary scholarly work to explore the multifaceted perspectives on homosexuality within Islamic jurisprudence and broader Abrahamic traditions. The approach is comprehensive, drawing on library resources, digital databases, and academic journals to ensure a thorough examination of the subject matter. Through this methodology, the article aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the historical and

contemporary stances on homosexuality, highlighting the complexity and diversity of religious, legal, and psychological views.

5. Discussion

Section one: Introducing verses in Old Testament that prohibit homosexuality (Prophet Moses' Turah)

Before quoting the relevant verse, it should be noted that the Old Testament books which have been translated from their original languages of Hebrew, Chaldean, and Greek into other languages such as Arabic, English, and French include 39 books, 5 of which are the Pentateuch i.e. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

The first up to thirtieth verses of Genesis narrate the story of Lut and his people, some of which are presented here: " But before they (two angels) lay down, the men of the city even the men of Sodom compassed the house round both old and young, all the people from every quarter, and they called unto Lut and said unto him where are the men which came into thee this night, bring them out unto us." (4.6 Gen. 19:22-23)

Also, quoting Leviticus: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind. It is abomination." (Leviticus 18: 22).

And, as Deuteronomy says: "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel." (Deuteronomy 23: 17).

Expanding the discourse into the Islamic perspective, we delve into the interpretations provided by Shiite scholars regarding the prohibition of homosexuality in the Quran.

In the Quran, the story of Prophet Lut and the destruction of his people is prominently featured as a cautionary tale against the practice of homosexuality. In Chapter 7, verses 80-84, the Quran narrates how Prophet Lut warned his people against committing acts of indecency, specifically the act of homosexual relations. Despite his warnings, the people persisted in their transgressions, leading to their ultimate destruction.

Furthermore, in Chapter 11, verses 77-82, the Quran elaborates on the encounter between Prophet Lut and the angels sent by God to punish his people. Prophet Lut expresses his distress at the sinful behavior of his community, emphasizing the gravity of their actions.

In Shiite interpretation, these verses underscore the importance of upholding moral principles and resisting temptations that lead to moral degradation. The story of Prophet Lut serves as a reminder of the consequences of deviating from the path of righteousness and indulging in sinful behavior.

By incorporating interpretations alongside the verses from the Old Testament, a comprehensive understanding of the prohibition of homosexuality in the three Holy Books is achieved. These interpretations provide valuable insights into the theological perspectives on this issue, emphasizing the importance of adherence to divine guidance and moral principles across religious traditions.

Section Two: Introducing the verses of Bible prohibiting homosexuality

The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Corinthians says: “Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God be not deceived neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor effeminate nor abusers of themselves with mankind nor thieves nor covetous nor drunkards nor revilers nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (Epistle to the Corinthians, 6: 9)

And the First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy says: “For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstedeers, for liars, for perjured persons and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.” (The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy 1:10).

Building upon these verses from the New Testament, we explore the Islamic perspective on the prohibition of homosexuality as depicted in the Quran and interpreted by scholars.

In the Quran, the story of Prophet Lut serves as a stark warning against the practice of homosexuality. In Chapter 27, verses 54-58, the Quran condemns the people of Lut for engaging in abominable acts and defying the natural order ordained by God. The Quran emphasizes the severity of their transgressions and the divine punishment that befell them as a consequence.

Furthermore, in Chapter 29, verses 28-34, the Quran recounts the dialogue between Prophet Lut and his people, highlighting their stubborn refusal to heed his warnings and abandon their sinful ways.

The Quran underscores the importance of upholding moral principles and resisting temptations that lead to moral decay.

Shiite interpretations of these verses emphasize the societal implications of homosexual behavior and the importance of upholding moral values. They stress the need for individuals to adhere to divine guidance and resist sinful inclinations that deviate from the path of righteousness.

By juxtaposing these Quranic interpretations with the verses from the New Testament, a comprehensive understanding of the prohibition of homosexuality in the three Holy Books is achieved. These interpretations provide valuable insights into the theological perspectives on this issue, emphasizing the universal importance of moral integrity and adherence to divine guidance across religious traditions.

Section Three: The Prohibition of Homosexuality in Holy Qur'an

A. The Qur'anic Narrative of Prophet Lut: A Timeless Reminder of the Consequences of Homosexuality

God Almighty has expressed the prohibition of this vice deed through narrating the story of Prophet Lut and his people in some of the chapters of the Holy Qur'an including the following:

In Surah Al-A'raf (7:80-84), Allah recounts the mission of Prophet Lut and the severe consequences faced by his people due to their indulgence in homosexuality. The verse presents a stark portrayal of the moral degradation that had befallen the society of Lut, with the people engaging in acts of indecency that surpassed the bounds of previous civilizations. Lut admonished his people for their transgressions, imploring them to abandon their sinful ways and adhere to the path of righteousness. However, they persisted in their defiance, ultimately leading to their divine punishment in the form of a rain of brimstones.

This narrative in the Qur'an serves as a timeless reminder of the consequences of deviating from divine guidance and indulging in immoral behavior. It underscores the gravity of engaging in homosexual acts and the importance of upholding moral principles in Islam. Scholars such as Allama Sayyid Muhammad Hussain Tabatabai, in his Tafsir al-Mizan, offer insights into the broader theological implications of Prophet Lut's story. They emphasize the significance of

divine guidance and the consequences of straying from the path of righteousness, highlighting the enduring relevance of this narrative for believers.

Furthermore, this Qur'anic narrative resonates with the account found in the Old Testament, particularly in the book of Genesis. The story of Sodom and Gomorrah serves as a poignant example of divine condemnation of homosexual behavior. The inhabitants of these cities were known for their wickedness and indulgence in sinful acts, including homosexuality. Their defiance of divine commandments led to their ultimate destruction by fire and brimstone, illustrating the severity of homosexual behavior as viewed in Judeo-Christian tradition. Moreover, in the New Testament, various passages condemn homosexual behavior as contrary to divine will and moral righteousness. The Epistles of Paul, particularly his letters to the Corinthians and Timothy, explicitly denounce homosexuality among a catalog of sins. These passages emphasize the importance of upholding moral integrity and adherence to traditional values in guiding human conduct.

By examining these narratives from both Islamic and Judeo-Christian traditions, a comprehensive understanding of the prohibition of homosexuality in the three Holy Books emerges. These religious teachings emphasize the gravity of deviating from divine guidance and the importance of upholding moral principles in guiding human behavior. (Qur'an 7:80-84).

B. The Divine Punishment of Prophet Lut's People: Consequences of Defying Moral Boundaries and Divine Guidance

In the Qur'an, the story of Prophet Lut and his people continues to illustrate the gravity of engaging in homosexual behavior and the divine punishment that ensued. When the emissaries of God arrived in the form of angels to warn Prophet Lut's people of their sinful deeds, he felt a sense of unease, knowing the impending consequences of their actions. The people, consumed by their evil desires, hastened to approach Prophet Lut's guests, demonstrating their utter disregard for moral boundaries.

In response, Prophet Lut implored his people to desist from their shameful acts and urged them to adhere to the teachings of Allah. He

even offered his daughters as an alternative, emphasizing the purity and sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman. However, his people remained obstinate in their wickedness, rejecting his admonitions and persisting in their sinful ways.

The divine emissaries reassured Prophet Lut of his safety and instructed him to depart from the city with his family before the appointed time of punishment arrived. As the ordained command of Allah came to pass, the town was overturned, and brimstones were rained upon the evildoers, bringing about their destruction.

This narrative underscores the severity of engaging in homosexual behavior and the consequences of defying divine commandments. It serves as a cautionary tale, highlighting the importance of upholding moral principles and obedience to Allah's guidance. Scholars such as Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, in his interpretations of the Qur'an, emphasize the timeless relevance of Prophet Lut's story in condemning immoral conduct and promoting righteousness.

Moreover, parallels can be drawn between this Qur'anic account and the biblical narrative found in the book of Genesis. The story of Sodom and Gomorrah similarly depicts the divine punishment inflicted upon those who engage in homosexual behavior, underscoring the universal condemnation of such acts across Abrahamic traditions.

In summary, the story of Prophet Lut and his people serves as a powerful testament to the prohibition of homosexuality in Islam. It underscores the importance of adhering to divine guidance and upholding moral integrity, while also highlighting the consequences of deviating from righteous conduct. (Qur'an, 11:77-82)

C. The Perils of Defiance and Disobedience: Lessons from Prophet Lut's People in Surah Shu'araa

The Qur'an recounts the story of Prophet Lut's people in Surah Shu'araa, providing further insight into their defiance and rejection of divine guidance. Despite Prophet Lut's earnest efforts to guide them towards righteousness, his people obstinately denied the truth and persisted in their sinful behavior. When Prophet Lut implored them to fear Allah and adhere to piety, they arrogantly rebuffed his warnings, refusing to abandon their immoral practices.

In his impassioned plea, Prophet Lut admonished his people for deviating from the natural order established by their Creator, choosing to engage in homosexual relationships instead of fulfilling their marital obligations with women. He condemned their transgression and reminded them of the severe consequences of their actions, urging them to repent before it was too late.

Despite Prophet Lut's sincere prayers for salvation, only he and his believing household were spared from the divine punishment that befell his people. The Qur'an highlights the destructive nature of their disobedience, as they were ultimately subjected to a devastating rain of stones, symbolizing the wrath of Allah upon those who persist in defiance and immorality.

This narrative serves as a sobering reminder of the consequences of rejecting divine guidance and indulging in sinful behavior. It underscores the importance of heeding the warnings of the prophets and adhering to the moral principles outlined in the Qur'an. Scholars such as Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, in his interpretations of the Qur'an, emphasize the timeless relevance of Prophet Lut's story as a cautionary tale against the perils of disobedience and moral decay.

Furthermore, parallels can be drawn between this Qur'anic account and the biblical narrative found in the book of Genesis. Both depict the divine punishment inflicted upon those who defy divine commandments and engage in immoral conduct, underscoring the universal condemnation of such actions across Abrahamic traditions.

In summary, the story of Prophet Lut and his people serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of upholding moral integrity and obedience to divine guidance. It warns against the consequences of deviating from righteousness and emphasizes the need for repentance and adherence to the teachings of Islam. (Qur'an 26:160-173).

D. The Consequences of Moral Deviance: The Admonition of Prophet Lut and the Destruction of His People in Surah Al-Ankabut

The Qur'an, in another chapter, recounts the story of Prophet Lut and his admonition to his people regarding their sinful behavior. In Surah Al-Ankabut, Allah instructs the Prophet Muhammad to remind the people of the fate of Prophet Lut's community, who persisted in their immoral conduct despite clear warnings.

Prophet Lut, guided by divine revelation, admonished his people for engaging in the abominable act of homosexuality, which deviated from the natural order established by Allah. He questioned their preference for same-sex relations over the lawful relationship between men and women, highlighting the ignorance and moral depravity inherent in their actions.

Despite Prophet Lut's earnest efforts to guide his people towards righteousness, they stubbornly rejected his message and conspired to expel him and his family from their land. In response to their defiance and refusal to heed the warnings of their messenger, Allah decreed their destruction and inflicted upon them a punishment as severe as a rain of brimstone.

Additionally, the Qur'an's account of Prophet Lut's people echoes similar themes found in the Old Testament, particularly in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Both narratives condemn the practice of homosexuality and emphasize the divine retribution incurred upon those who persist in disobedience and moral corruption.

In conclusion, the story of Prophet Lut's people serves as a timeless lesson on the consequences of moral deviance and the importance of adhering to divine guidance. It underscores the necessity of upholding chastity and purity in accordance with the teachings of Islam, as elucidated in the Qur'an and exemplified by the righteous prophets of Allah. (Qur'an 27:54-58).

E. The Unprecedented Depravity of Prophet Lut's People and the Imperative of Upholding Righteousness in Surah Al-Ankabut

The Qur'an, in Surah Al-Ankabut, vividly portrays the reprehensible nature of the actions of Prophet Lut's people, characterizing their indulgence in homosexuality as an unprecedented level of depravity. Allah recounts how Prophet Lut admonished his people for engaging in acts of filthiness and immorality, which had not been perpetrated by any previous communities.

The narrative emphasizes the severity of their transgressions, highlighting their deviation from the natural order ordained by Allah. Prophet Lut's earnest plea to his people to abandon their sinful ways and turn towards righteousness fell on deaf ears, as they defiantly challenged him to bring upon them the punishment, he warned them of.

In the face of such moral degradation, Prophet Lut beseeched Allah for assistance, recognizing the magnitude of the corruption surrounding him. When divine emissaries, disguised as young men, visited Prophet Lut, he was filled with apprehension, fearing the potential harm that his morally corrupt people might inflict upon them. However, the angels reassured him of their divine mission to save him and his righteous followers, while those who persisted in their wickedness were destined for destruction.

The poignant portrayal of Prophet Lut's anguish and distress upon encountering the angels underscores the gravity of the situation and the immense psychological burden he bore. His concern stemmed not only from his sense of hospitality towards the guests but also from the looming threat of violence and moral decay prevalent in his community. This Qur'anic narrative serves as a powerful reminder of the consequences of moral degeneration and the importance of upholding righteousness in the face of adversity. It highlights the unwavering faith and resilience of Prophet Lut in the face of overwhelming corruption, as he remained steadfast in his commitment to the path of righteousness despite the challenges he encountered. (Qur'an 29:28-34).

In conclusion, the story of Prophet Lut's people in Surah Al-Ankabut serves as a timeless admonition against the pitfalls of moral corruption and the imperative of upholding divine guidance in the face of temptation and adversity. (Bahrapour 2010, 400)

Section Four: The punishment of homosexuality according to Fatwaas in different Islamic sects

In jurisprudence resources of the four main Sunni sects of Islam, homosexuality is blamed seriously which will be briefly touched upon as follows:

Sodomy is one of the major sinful acts which are below the status of human beings and their instinct and nature. It is in fact defying and leaving the divine and heavenly traditions and scientists have referred to its negative consequences as the following items:

- A. crime against the pure human instinct since sound human nature considers it a vice act.
- B. spoiling and corrupting the youngsters via exaggeration in sexual passion

C. developing the sodomy desire as a disease for the sodomized person who will desire the act after being sodomized, leading to his humiliation.

D. the perversion of the women whose husbands have committed this sin due to the fact that the men who fulfill their sexual needs via homosexuality would not show that much desire for marital sexual relations.

E. the continuation of the human generation would be threatened because of the fact explained in part d.

F. families would experience disintegration, too.

G. those who commit this sin gradually tend towards the sinful act of masturbation or sex with animals who would face serious punishments according to religion.

H. the health threats for the sodomizing person such as gonorrhea, AIDS, etc.

I. the status of the doers of this sinful act would decline even to levels lower than the status of animals since the act is not even seen amongst some animals such as pigs and dogs.

One should get to know the point that any act, deed, or behavior which is prohibited by the creator of the universe would obviously pose serious detriments and harms to the material and eternal lives of human beings. (Jozairi, 2007)

But let's consider some different opinions regarding the punishment for this sinful act. Some believe that those who commit sodomy should be punished as those who adulterate. Some others consider either higher or lower punishments in terms of intensity. Maalekieh, Hanaabaleh, and Shaafe'ieh believe that those committing sodomy must receive capital punishment following one of these methods:

a. Stoning to death

b. Beheading

They substantiate their intensity of punishment based on a saying by Mohammed (pbuh) as follows:

"Kill the one who is sodomizing and the one who is being sodomized".

Also, there is another quotation attributed to him, saying; "Kill both the experience and the experienced." While, a third saying states that: "Kill both persons who get involved in sodomy no matter they are married or

single.” Furthermore, there is a fourth one which orders the sinners of sodomy to be stoned to death twice if possible.

But, Hanafieh, another Islamic sect, believes that the act of sodomy must be punished according to the expediency elicited from the judgment or ruling of the criminal judge or adjudicator. Shoukani, quoted in Jozairi, rejecting this view, maintains that Hanafieh's stance is not based on the sayings of religious leaders. (Jozairi, 2007)

But those jurisprudence scholars following Ahlulbayt i.e. the scholars of Ja'fari Esna Ashari Shi'ite sect of Islam, having condemned the act, have stated that:

There is consensus regarding the punishment of this filthy act, that is, the imam i.e. the adjudicator and the judge has the authority to sentence them to any one of the following punishments:

- Beheading (and shooting)
- Burning
- Stoning
- Throwing from an elevated place
- Burying under rubble (Najafi, 1992,)

The jurisprudence scholars have issued their fatwaas according to sayings and quotations of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and holy imams, one of which will be presented here as follows:

Imam Sadiq, the holy prophet's grandson, is quoted as saying that Imam Ali had told a man who had confessed four times to having committed sodomy that the prophet had issued three rulings on the case one of which you can choose. The man asked what the punishments were. Imam Ali answered: "beheading, throwing from a mountaintop with wrapped arms and legs, and burning" (Al Ameli, 1999)

It should be noted that these tough punishments are due for those who are majors age-wise and logically sane while committing the crime, and it makes no difference whether the one involved is has sodomized or been sodomized. The testimony of four witnesses or confessing four times would suffice for finding those involved guilty. (Najafi, 1992)

It should also be added that repenting is always possible as a way for the sinner to save themselves from the consequences of committing the sin and God Almighty would always accept repenting and

consequently, not only the afterlife punishment but also the material world punishments would be removed in some cases".

Alongside this discussion, it's pertinent to explore relevant verses from the Holy Quran, the Old Testament, and the New Testament to provide a broader understanding of the theological foundations underpinning these viewpoints. Let's delve into these scriptures and their interpretations:

The Holy Quran

Quran 4:16: "And the two who commit it [i.e., homosexuality] among you, dishonor them both. But if they repent and correct themselves, leave them alone. Indeed, Allah is ever Accepting of Repentance and Merciful".

Interpretation: This verse underscores the possibility of redemption through repentance, aligning with the notion mentioned in the discussion.

The Old Testament

Leviticus 18:22: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination".

Interpretation: This verse articulates the prohibition against homosexual acts, reflecting a shared theological perspective across Abrahamic faiths.

The New Testament

Romans 1:26-27: "For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error". Interpretation: These verses, attributed to Paul the Apostle, reaffirm the condemnation of homosexual behavior within Christian teachings. By juxtaposing these scriptural references with the discussions on Islamic jurisprudence, we can observe parallels in the condemnation of homosexual acts across different religious traditions. Both the Quran and the Bible uphold the sanctity of heterosexual relations while denouncing same-sex relationships.

Furthermore, the emphasis on repentance and divine mercy in both Islamic and Christian teachings suggests a pathway for individuals to

seek forgiveness and redemption, irrespective of their past actions. This underscores the compassionate aspect of religious doctrine, which aims to guide believers towards spiritual growth and reconciliation with the divine. In summary, while the punishment for homosexual acts may vary across religious interpretations and legal systems, the underlying theological principles emphasize the importance of adherence to divine commandments, repentance, and the potential for spiritual renewal. Through a nuanced understanding of scripture and jurisprudence, believers strive to navigate moral challenges while seeking forgiveness and divine guidance in their journey towards spiritual fulfillment.

6. Conclusion

According to the points quoted directly from the holy books of Old Testament, New Testament, and Qur'an, along with the sayings of Imams and the fatwaas by the religious scholars of the main four sects of Sunni Islam and the Shi'ite Islam, there would be no doubt left regarding the prohibition and obscenity of sodomy. Mohammad (pbuh) is quoted as saying: "Anyone who gets involved in sodomy with a male would be resurrected in Judgment Day unclean i.e. all water in the world cannot wash his dirt off and he would face the fury and curse of God and the flames of the Hell would be ready for him. When a male has sexual relations with a male, the divine heavens would tremble and God would confine him in the Hell for centuries so that all the creatures would face their judgments before God orders him to be taken to the lowest parts of the Hell." (Al Ameli, 1999). It is hoped that the world people who have evolved and grown in terms of wisdom and thinking and logical reasoning, and consider themselves as the followers of the divine faiths, would take these warnings seriously and would not let a group of people legalize this indecent act which is against the true instinct and nature of human beings, in order to avoid not only their but their societies' moral collapse and destruction. Those who think that this illegal and unethical act, for which severe punishments have been considered in the heavenly laws, is an example of human rights, in fact, they neither know humanity well nor the truth. Such actions are considered a crime against humanity and are not an example of human rights in any way.

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