

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Homosexuality and the Biological Argument

Question

How should we respond to people who say that there is a biological basis for homosexuality?

Answer

Allah Ta'aala says in the Qur'aan:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

Today I have perfected your deen for you, completed my favour to you and chosen Islam as a religion for you.

(Surah Al-Ma'idah, Aayah 3)

Being a Muslim demands belief that the Qur'aan and the shari'ah are perfect and fulfil all of man's existential needs in this world. The Qur'aanic prohibition of an action is thus an indication that such an action is not essential for man's existence in this world. Were it essential for even some people, it would not have been prohibited. We therefore conclude that homosexuality is not an essential for even some people. In short, it has no biological justification.

Moreover, believing that there is a biological basis for an action prohibited in the Qur'aan is tantamount to saying that the Qur'aan is imperfect and that it does not cater for everyone's needs. This is rejection of the above mentioned aayah. Remember that rejection of a single aayah of the Qur'aan results in loss of imaan.

Being a Muslim also entails believing that Allah is perfect and free from all faults and defects. One of Allah's exalted names is As-Subbooh (pure from all defects). The meaning of subhanallah is 'I declare Allah's

purity'. Now, because Allah is most pure, another one of His sublime names is Al-'Adl (The Just). Since Allah is absolutely pure and perfect, He cannot be unjust. Having said that, remember that the nation of Nabi Lut (as) were punished for homosexuality. Were there a biological basis for homosexuality, would that not mean that Allah treated the people of Lut (as) unfairly? Would that in turn not mean that Allah is not As-Subbooh and Al-'Adl? In short, believing that there is a biological basis for homosexuality results in rejection of these lofty attributes of Allah and the many aayaat of the Qur'an in which Allah tells us that He does not commit the slightest amount of injustice.

Muslims also believe that Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam's character was most perfect. In fact, we believe that Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam was ma'soom (infallible). Hence, we regard it extremely blasphemous to accuse Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam of a single act of injustice. There is a hadith in which Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said, 'Who will be just if I am unjust?' Yet there are ahaadith from Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam regarding the punishment for those who engage in homosexual activity. Therefore, believing in a biological basis for homosexuality contradicts our belief in the infallibility of Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam and the impeccability of his character.

Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said that his ummah would never agree on anything that is incorrect. Thus, consensus of the ummah is the third most important source of the shari'ah. From the first generation of Muslims till present nobody ever claimed that there is a biological basis for homosexuality. Hence, believing this argument is tantamount to saying that the entire Muslim ummah was in error for fourteen hundred years. How do defenders of homosexuality explain this in view of the hadith that the ummah will never agree on something incorrect?

In the closing aayah of Surah Baqarah Allah says that He does not task a soul with more than it can manage. The Arabic text reads:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

The crux of the argument that there is a biological basis for homosexuality is that such behaviour is beyond the homosexual's control. *He cannot help it. He is created like that.* However, the Qur'aan and Hadith prohibit homosexuality. Hence, if the biological argument is considered, would that not mean that Allah and His Rasul commanded homosexuals to refrain from something that is beyond their control and ability? Would this not be in conflict with the above mentioned aayah?

In Surahs A'raaf and 'Ankaboot we read that when Lut (as) reprimanded his people (the people of Sodom) for their homosexual behaviour, he emphasised to them that their behaviour was 'indecenty that was not committed by anybody before them'. Hence, had there been any validity in the biological argument, why did such behaviour not exist before the people of Lut (as)?

The biological basis referred to is nothing more than carnal desire. Is this carnal desire not the root cause of rape? So if homosexuality has to be condoned for biological reasons, would that not mean that rape too has to be condoned? And if that is the case, then what about zina? The problem does not stop here. If biological basis is worthy of any consideration, it would even be cited by some people to permit incest. The shari'ah prohibits intercourse with one's menstruating wife. Again, if the biological argument is valid, this action too would be condoned by some people. Do you see to what extent the shari'ah

would be violated and distorted were we to accept such a baseless argument?

Finally, remember that one of the primary reasons for man's creation is to test him.

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

'He who created life and death to test you (and see) who among you has the best actions.'¹

Desire and attraction form a major part of this test. So Islam does not deny that man will experience desire and attraction. However, Islam commands man to fight all impermissible desire and attraction. Failure to fight such desires results in Allah's wrath. Persistently fighting such desires results in great reward and lofty stages in the Hereafter. We conclude this discussion with the aayah:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

The one who fears standing in front of his Rabb and contrains his nafs from fulfilling its (impermissible) desires, then Jannah is his abode.²

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¹ Surah Mulk, Aayah 2

² Surah Naazi'aat, Aayah 40-41