

## AL-ISLAM FATWA BANK - (Marital issues)

<b>Title of Fatwa</b>	<b>What Islam Says on Lesbianism</b>
Topic Of Fatwa	Sexual Practices
Question of Fatwa	As-Salamu `alaykum! I am aware that Islam clearly states the penalty for sodomy, which is death. But I'm not very clear on exact penalty for lesbianism. Is there any hadith or verse in the Qur'an related to the subject?
Name of Mufti	A Group of Islamic Researchers
Content of Reply	<p>Wa `alaykum As-Salamu wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.</p> <p>In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.</p> <p>All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.</p> <p>Dear brother in Islam, we are very pleased for the great confidence you repose in us and we really commend your apparent interest in having a better understanding of the teachings of Islam and the rulings of this great religion in all matters. In fact, Islam is a religion that encompasses all aspects of life and secures guidance and light for all mankind.</p> <p>We should know that in regulating the sexual drive Islam has prohibited not only illicit sexual relations and all what leads to them, but also the sexual deviation known as homosexuality. Islam considers homosexuality as a sexual deviation leading to a perverted act which goes against the natural order Allah intended for mankind. It is corruption of human being's sexuality and a crime against the opposite sex. Therefore, the Islamic Shari`ah strictly prohibits the practice of this perverted act.</p> <p>In fact, the spread of this depraved practice in a society disrupts its natural life pattern and makes those who practice it slaves to their lusts, depriving them of decent taste, decent morals, and decent manners of living.</p> <p>Islam teaches that homosexual acts are sinful and punishable. Allah tells us in the Glorious Qur'an how He punished the people of Lot for their homosexual behavior; as they were addicted to this shameless depravity (sodomy), abandoning natural, pure, and lawful relations with women in the pursuit of this unnatural, foul and illicit practice. That is why their Prophet Lot (peace and blessings be upon him) told them, "What! Of all creatures, do you approach males and leave the spouses whom your Lord has created for you? Indeed,</p>

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	<p>you are people transgressing (all limits)!" (Ash-Shu`ara': 165-166)</p> <p>The aberration of these peoples, lack of guidance, depravity of morals reached peak when they misbehaved towards the guests of Prophet Lot (peace and blessings be upon him); these guests were angels of punishment in human form sent by Allah to try these people and to expose their perversity. The Qur'an narrates the story thus: "And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was grieved on their account and did not know how to protect them. He said, 'This is a day of distress.' And his people, who had long since been practicing abominations, came rushing toward him. He said, 'O my people, here are my daughters. They are purer for you, so fear Allah and do not disgrace me in front of my guests. Is there not a single upright man among you?' They said, 'You know well that we have no right to your daughters, and certainly you know what we want.' He said, 'If only I had strength to resist you or had some powerful support!' Said (the angels) 'O Lot, truly, we are messengers of your Lord; they shall not reach you..." (Hud: 77-81)</p> <p>From these passages we learn that Allah saved Lot and the righteous ones of his family, and rained on the rest a shower of brimstone, so they were utterly destroyed. This is mentioned in the Qur'an not only for the sake of information, but mainly to serve as a warning to anyone who dares to repeat such acts.</p> <p>This ruling applies also to lesbianism. Just as illicit sexual relations can occur between men, they can also occur between women. This act is called <i>sihaq</i> (lesbianism) in <i>Fiqh</i> (Islamic jurisprudence). (See <i>Al-Mufassal fi Ahkam al-Mar'ah</i> by Zaydan, 5/450)</p> <p>As for the punishment of lesbianism, there is no specific punishment given in the Qur'an for lesbianism; however, Muslim jurists state that it is a punishable offence and that the punishment is a form of discipline. The punishment is to be set by the Muslim ruler according to the circumstances of the crime and the one who commits it. The lesbian's testimony is unacceptable because she is an evildoer. (See <i>Al-Mawsu'ah Al-Fiqhiyyah</i>, 24/253)</p> <p>Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) states: "If two women masturbate one another, then they are cursed fornicators". (See <i>Al-Mughni</i>, 10/162)</p>
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	<p>Some scholars, like Al-`Izz Ibn `Abd As-Salam, say that a lesbian is not permitted to look at a Muslim woman, and that a Muslim woman is not permitted to uncover (take off her <i>Hijab</i>) in front of a lesbian, because she is an evildoer who cannot be trusted not to describe her attitude towards others.</p>
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