27176 - He wants to repent from homosexuality and needs help

the question

I am a very serious muslim who reverted to islam many years ago. i was sexually abused as a child and after that, i am attracted to males as well as females. it is something that i hate within myself, but i don't know how to change it. i don't commit the actual sin often, but i do it sometime. after i do it, i hate it as i know ALLAH hates such perversion. the problem is that i am unable to help myself. i try and try to change, but i am unable to change. i beg and continue to beg ALLAH for help. i have also confessed in front of muslims seeking help, and i have been in therapy. the main thing is that i love ALLAH and the sunnah, and everything else in my life reflects this love. i am constantly striving for the pleasure and nearness of ALLAH. please please please help me. since i am plagued with this sickness, i understand why the sharia mandates that death is the punishment for homosexuality. i am potentially big and serious problem within the ummah. as long as i am alive, i may commit this perversive act. all of my friends are ,uslim and all of them are serious muslims like me. the shaitan may whisper to us and use me to detroy me and a friend's iman. please help me. i am ready to go anywhere i need to go so that i can be subjected to the beautiful and complete sharia of ALLAH. i don't want to commit this sin anymore, and i don't want to be a threat to any of ALLAH's servants. please help me soon. i don't know where else to turn.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We will discuss four points with you and no more than that, and we hope that you will read them carefully. These four points are: the abhorrent nature of the sin of homosexuality; the damaging effects it has on health; the greatness of Allah’s mercy to those who repent; and ways of dealing with this problem.

1 – The abhorrent nature of the sin of homosexuality

Ibn al-Qayyim said concerning the people of Loot:

Those who support the first view – who are the majority of the ummah, and more than one narrated that there was consensus among the Sahaabah on this point – said that there is no sin that causes more corruption than the sin of homosexuality. It is second only to the sin of kufr, and may be greater than the sin of murder, as we shall see below in sha Allah.

They said: Allah did not test anyone with this major sin before the people of Loot, and He punished them with a punishment that he did not send upon any other nation. He sent upon them various kinds of punishment: they were destroyed, their houses were turned upside down, the earth swallowed them up, they were pelted with stones from the sky, their eyes were blinded, they were tormented and their torment was made ongoing. So they were punished severely in a way that no other nation was punished, and that was because of the evilness of this crime which almost causes the earth to shake when it is done on it; and the angels flee to the ends of the heavens and the earth when they witness it, fearing that the punishment may come upon its people and strike them too; and the earth cries out to its Lord, and the mountains almost collapse.

Killing the one to whom it is done would be better for him than having intercourse with him, for if a man has intercourse with him he corrupts him in such a way that life is no longer worth living, unlike killing him in a real sense, in which case he would be a martyr who had been wronged, which may be of benefit to him in the Hereafter.

And he said:

The companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) agreed unanimously that he should be put to death, and none of them disagreed about that. Rather they differed with regard to the manner in which he should be put to death. Some of the people thought that the difference of opinion had to do with whether [the homosexual] should be executed, and they narrated it as being a point of dispute among the Sahaabah, whereas in fact it was a matter on which there was consensus.

Whoever ponders the verse in which Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And come not near to unlawful sex. Verily, it is a Faahishah (i.e. anything that transgresses its limits: a great sin, and an evil way that leads one to hell unless Allah Forgives him)”

[al-Isra’ 17:32]

And the verse in which He says concerning homosexuality (interpretation of the meaning):

“And (remember) Loot (Lot), when he said to his people: “Do you commit the worst sin such as none preceding you has committed in the ‘Aalameen (mankind and jinn)?”

[al-A’raaf 7:80]

will see a difference between the two. For Allah mentioned zina without the definite article, indicating it is a kind of evil action, but He mentioned homosexuality (liwaat) with the definite article al-, which means that it encompasses all aspects of faahishah or evil.

Then Allah confirms that and states that no one in the ‘aalameen (mankind and jinn) ever did this before them, as He says, “such as none preceding you has committed in the ‘Aalameen (mankind and jinn)”. Then He emphasizes that even further by mentioning it a blunt manner that demonstrates the abhorrent nature of this action, which is a man having intercourse with a man as a man has intercourse with a woman, and He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, you practise your lusts on men instead of women”

[al-A’raaf 7:81]

Then Allah confirms how abhorrent that is by stating that the homosexuals distort the nature with which Allah has created men, which is to desire women rather than men. They have twisted the natural order and they approach men with desire rather than women. Hence Allah turned their houses upside down and their hearts likewise, and they were turned upside down, as a punishment.

Then Allah reiterated the abhorrence of their actions by judging them to have transgressed all bounds as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Nay, but you are a people transgressing beyond bounds (by committing great sins)”

[al-A’raaf 7:81]

Think about this: was this, or anything similar, said concerning adultery? And Allah reiterated the abhorrent nature of their action when He said (interpretation of the meaning):

“and We saved him from the town (folk) who practised Al-Khabaa’ith (evil, wicked and filthy deeds)”

[al-Anbiya’ 21:74]

Then Allah the All-Knowing condemned them further by describing them as being extremely evil, as He said (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, they were a people given to evil, and were Faasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allah)”

[al-Anbiya’ 21:74]

And He described them as mufsidoon (evildoers etc), as He said (interpretation of the meaning):

“My Lord! Give me victory over the people who are Mufsidoon (those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corrupters).”
[al-‘Ankaboot 29:30]

And He called them zaalimoon (wrongdoers), in the words that the angels said to Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, we are going to destroy the people of this [Loot (Lot’s)] town (i.e. the town of Sodom in Palestine); truly, its people have been Zaalimoon [wrongdoers, polytheists disobedient to Allah, and belied their Messenger Loot (Lot)]”

[al-‘Ankaboot 29:31]

Think about those who have been punished in these ways, and whom Allah has condemned in such terms.

And he said:

Pleasure ceased and was followed with loss; desires ended and led to misery; they enjoyed themselves for a little while, but will be punished for a long time. They grazed on filth, and they suffer a painful torment. They were intoxicated with those desires, but they have awoken in the abode of the tormented. They feel the greatest regret, by Allah, at the time when regret is to no avail. They weep for what they did before, with tears of blood. If only you could see the highest and lowest of this group, with fire coming out from their faces and bodies when they are in the depths of Hell, drinking cups of boiling water instead of delightful drinks, being told as they are being dragged on their faces, “Taste of that which you used to earn.”

“Taste you therein its heat and whether you are patient of it or impatient of it, it is all the same. You are only being requited for what you used to do”

[al-Toor 52:16 – interpretation of the meaning]

Adapted from al-Jawaab al-Kaafi, pp. 240-245.

2 – The damaging effects it has on health:

Dr Mahmoud al-Hijaazi said in his book al-Amraad al-Jinsiyyah wa’l-Tanaasuliyyah (Sexual and genital diseases), when discussing some of the dangers to health caused by committing sodomy:

The diseases which are transmitted by way of sexual perversion (homosexuality) are:

1.AIDS, which causes loss of acquired immunity and usually leads to death.

2.Viral inflammation of the liver

3.Syphilis

4.Gonorrhea

5.Herpes

6.Bacterial inflammation of the anus

7.Typhoid

8.Amoebiasis

9.Intestinal worms

10. Anal warts

11. Scabies

12. Pubic lice (“crabs”)

13. Cytomegalovirus that may lead to anal cancer

14. Genital-lymphatic pustules

3 – The greatness of Allah’s mercy to those who repent

From the above it is clear that this immoral action is seriously wrong and abhorrent, and leads to harmful consequences. Nevertheless the door is open for sinners to repent, and Allah rejoices at their repentance.

Think about what Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those who invoke not any other ilaah (god) along with Allah, nor kill such person as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse and whoever does this shall receive the punishment.

The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace;

Except those who repent and believe (in Islamic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds; for those, Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”

[al-Furqaan 25:68-70]

By thinking about the words, “Allah will change their sins into good deeds”, you will see how great is the bounty of Allah the Almighty.

The scholars said that there are two meanings of the word “change”:

(i)Bad attributes will be turned into good attributes, such as their shirk being turned into faith, their adultery into chastity, their lying into honesty, their treachery into trustworthiness, and so on.

(ii) The bad deeds that they have done will be turned into good deeds on the Day of Resurrection.

So what you must do is repent to Allah and know that your coming back to Him is better for you and your family and your brothers and the entire society.

Remember that life is short, and that the Hereafter is better and more lasting. Do not forget that Allah destroyed the people of Loot in a way that He did not destroy any other nation.

4 – Ways of dealing with this problem

(i)Keeping away from the things that make it easy for you to fall into this sin and remind you of it, such as:

-Letting your gaze wander and looking at women or movies

-Being alone with any man or woman

(ii) Always keeping yourself busy with things that will benefit you in your religious or worldly affairs, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So when you have finished (your occupation), devote yourself for Allah’s worship”

[al-Sharh 94:7]

So when you have finished with some worldly task, then strive to do something that will benefit you in the Hereafter, such as remembering Allah (dhikr), reading Qur'aan, seeking knowledge, listening to useful tapes, etc.

When you finish one act of worship then start another, and if you finish one worldly task then start another… and so on, because if you do not keep your nafs (self) busy with good things, it will keep you busy with bad things. So do not give your nafs any opportunity or spare time to think about this evil action.

(iii) Compare the pleasure you feel when committing this sin with the regret, anxiety and confusion that follow it and stay with you for a long time, and then the torment that awaits the one who does that in the Hereafter. Do you think that any wise man would give precedence to this pleasure which vanishes after an hour over the regret and torment that follow? You can become more convinced of this if you read the book by Ibn al-Qayyim, al-Jawaab al-Kaafi li man sa'ala 'an al-Dawa' al-Shaafi. He wrote it for people in a situation like yours. May Allah make things easy for us and for you.

(iv) The wise man does not give up a thing that he loves except for something that he loves more, or for fear of something he dislikes. This evil action will cause you to lose the blessings of this world and the Hereafter, to lose Allah's love for you, and will incur the anger, wrath and punishment of Allah.

Compare the good you will lose and the evil that will come to you because of this evil action. The wise man will see which should take precedence.

(v) More important than all of the above is making du'aa' and seeking the help of Allah to ward off this evil from you. Make the most of the times and situations in which prayers are answered, such as sujood (prostration), before the tasleem at the end of prayer, the last third of the night, when it is raining, when travelling, when fasting, and when breaking the fast.

We ask Allah to guide you and to accept your repentance, and to help you to avoid bad deeds and bad attitudes.

And Allah knows best.