

ADULTERY, FORNICATION, & PORNOGRAPHY (PART 1 OF 2)

Rating: 4.0

Description: Today, a large portion of people cohabit with their girlfriends, have casual sex, or watch porn. These lessons will teach a new Muslim what Islam teaches about a topic that directly effects the hearts.

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Objective:

- To understand how prevalent fornication and pornography are in modern society.
- To learn the clear ruling of Islam on *zina*, how it effects faith, and what punishment it can bring.
- To learn about the *zina* of the eyes, tongue, and mind.
- To learn what to do if one has committed *zina*.

Arabic Terms:

- Zina* - Adultery or fornication involving vaginal and anal intercourse, but also refers to other types of inappropriate sexual behavior.
- Haram* - Forbidden or prohibited.
- Imaan* - faith, belief or conviction.
- Kabeerah* - Major sin.
- Shirk* - a word that implies ascribing partners to Allah, or ascribing divine attributes to other than Allah, or believing that the source of power, harm and blessings comes from another besides Allah.
- Barzakh* - intermediate stage between this life and resurrection.

Adultery or fornication, known as *zina* in Arabic, is considered a sin in all religions. The seventh commandment of the Bible says “Thou shall not commit adultery.” The Bible decrees the death sentence for both the adulterer and the adulteress (Lev. 20:10). Adultery is a criminal offense in 23 states of the US^[1], with punishments ranging from a \$10 fine in Maryland to life imprisonment in Michigan.



Nevertheless, this sin has been committed throughout history and opportunities for adultery abound in today’s culture. While tabloid stories report affairs of politicians, millionaires, and movie stars, many movies promote adultery.

How prevalent is adultery? The Janus Report on Sexual Behavior estimates that “More than one-third of men and one-quarter of women admit having had at least one extramarital sexual experience.”^[2]

Fornication is a Sin in Islam

In Islam, Allah has laid rules for sex. *Zina* is forbidden and one of the most serious major sins (*kabeerah*) after *shirk* and murder. *Zina* destroys *imaan*, takes away the quality of faith from a person, and exposes him to punishment and humiliation unless he repents. Allah says:

“And those who do not invoke with Allah another deity or kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever should do that will meet a penalty. Multiplied for him is the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein humiliated - Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful..” (Quran 25:68-70)

“And do not come close to zina. Verily, it is a great sin, and an evil way (that leads one to Hell unless Allah forgives him).” (Quran 17:32)

Scholars point out that in this verse Allah does not say, “don’t commit *zina*,” but “do not (even) come **close** to *zina*.”

Scholars explain: don’t do any deed that may get you close to *zina* or lead to it. An example would be if a person remains alone with someone from the opposite sex in uninterrupted privacy, touching, looking, going to promiscuous places such as bars and nightclubs, speaking in a seductive manner to a woman, and thinking about and planning immoral acts. This includes cyber sinning and virtual adultery. This would also indicate that one must stay away from pornography on the web, movies, magazines, and phone sex.

How harmful is *zina* to one's faith? The Prophet, may Allah praise him, said: **“No adulterer is a (true) believer at the time when he is committing adultery; no thief is a (true) believer at the time when he is stealing; no drinker of wine is a (true) believer at the time when he is drinking it.”**^[3]

Zina of the Eyes, Tongue, and Mind

Islam does not give the name of *zina* only to vaginal intercourse outside of marriage, which is just one of its many types. Pornography is perhaps the most prevalent form of *zina* today.

Of people who use the Internet, 43% visit pornographic websites. Some 40 million Americans are regular visitors to pornographic sites, with pornographic downloads at 35% of all Internet downloads. Of the 40 million regular visitors, 33% are woman, while 70% of men aged 18-24 visit pornographic sites monthly. It's not just adults. “Sex” and “porn” are among the top 5 most frequently searched terms for children under 18.^[4] The revenue produced by the pornographic industry is bigger than all the major technology companies combined. It is the number one topic for Internet searches. On average, a child of age 11 is exposed to it.^[5]

The Prophet said, “Allah has decreed for the son of Adam his share of zina which will inevitably catch up with him. The zina of the eye is looking and the zina of the tongue is speaking. The heart wishes and longs and the private part confirms that or denies it.”^[6]

Watching pornography is *zina* of the eyes. Sex talk is *zina* of the tongue. Fantasizing about sex with a stranger is *zina* of the mind.

Punishment of Zina in the Hereafter

The punishment of those who die without repenting from *zina* begins in their grave. In a long hadith, Allah's Messenger related a dream in which he saw Jibreel and Maalik accompanying him in the form of men, showing him how a number of sinners were being punished in the *Barzakh*.

The Prophet said: “...We proceeded until we came across a hole in the ground that resembled a baking pit, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom. Babbling and voices were coming from it. We saw in it naked men and women. Underneath the pit was a raging fire; whenever it flared up, the men and women screamed and rose with it until they almost fell out of the pit. As it subsided, they returned to the bottom. I said: ‘Who are these?’ They said: ‘... they are men and women who indulge in zina...’”^[7]

In a similar narration Allah's Prophet said: “We moved on until I saw people who were awfully swollen, and had the most awful smell, their stench was like that of the sewers. I asked: ‘Who are these?’ They replied: ‘Those are the male and female adulterers.’”^[8]

What To Do If One Has Committed *Zina*?

1. Recognize that Allah forgives all sins. Therefore, the person should sincerely repent to Allah.^[9] The Prophet said, **“Whoever repents, before the sun rises from it’s setting (the west), Allah will forgive him.”**^[10]
2. The person should conceal his sin and not casually announce it to others. One must consult with a knowledgeable scholar what to do in case of marriage as STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) might be involved.

Footnotes:

[1] (<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/us/adultery-an-ancient-crime-still-on-many-books.html>)

[2] Samuel Janus and Cynthia Janus, *The Janus Report on Sexual Behavior* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1993), 169

[3] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

[4] (<http://www.onlineeducation.net/porn>)

[5] (http://www.familysafemedia.com/pornography_statistics.html)

[6] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim*

[7] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

[8] *Ibn Khuzaymah & Ibn Hibban*

[9] To learn more about repentance, please see: (<http://www.newmuslims.com/lessons/7/>) [3 parts]

[10] *Saheeh Muslim*

