

Prophet Lut (a.s.) and *Bal* بل :

The Nahida S. Nisa Tafsir

as understood by Mehedi A. Ali

Introduction and Methodology

Nahida S. Nisa, writer and exegete, uncovered through a ready acceptance of the invitation from the Qur'an itself to study it that Lut (a.s.) clarifies homosexuality was not the sin of his townsfolk first and foremost in explicit Qur'an verses. This Qur'an-centric argument, staying true to Arabic grammar as its primary strength, is fortified by supporting context, and tested for consistency with all other remaining verses of the scripture through a semantic and thematic analysis. It was veiled only to those who did not allow the Qur'an to speak for itself but permitted egregious and excessive insertions unscreened by relevant verses, subthemes, and the entire Book. As a result, revisionist theories and misguided interpretation were forced into the verses.

Because the message of Lut (a.s.) can be applied to real world events, such events can be referenced for better understanding. I aim to minimize this here because the focus is to stay Qur'an-centric, so examples are brief. Links for further reading are provided to the reader to pursue at their own discretion. Classical and modern Arabic dictionaries and popular English translations are used to *study* the verses, not to introduce bold, non-Qur'anic details of the narrative.

Ironically, there might be a litany of accusations of “twisting verses to suit desires,” a common agitated projection by deniers, as opposed to sincere disagreement. Again, this presentation of the Nahida S. Nisa tafsir does not lean on such unwarranted insertions for such accusations. The argument and methodology is presented; now Allah SWT allows the understanding of it to those sincere.

“bal” بل

بل “Bal” is a retractive particle of digression; traditional scholars have glossed over it when interpreting the three pairs of verses (26:165-166), (27:54-55), and (7:80-81) which traditional scholars claim as solid proof that homosexuality is a sin. The role of this word—“bal”—is extremely crucial and its significance cannot be understated in those three pairs, and throughout the Qur'an in other verses beyond Prophet Lut (a.s.). It is critical that this is established.

We find later, that only in 29:28-29 the *charge* of “committing an immorality no nation preceding you has done” along with the descriptors of an “immorality,” “transgression,” and “exceeding” behavior referenced repeatedly is finally described in detail and associated with that charge and its characterizations. This place in the verse is the only time Lut’s (a.s.) townsfolk’s reply is provided. We address the role of بَل “bal” in the first three pairs, followed by 29:28-29. A few examples solidifying its function in other places in the Qur’an are also provided. This is to illustrate the role it plays outside of Lut’s (a.s.) story and to confirm dictionary definitions. It consistently performs the exact same role over one hundred times in the Book. It is highly recommended that one become familiar with verses regarding Lut’s (a.s.) story for better context before continuing. They can be accessed at the [Alphabetical Index of the Holy Qur’an](#) by Syed Ammar Shah.¹

I am not affiliated with any references in this argument and may not share the views of the sources.

1. Role of *Bal* and the Two-Part Format: To Clarify Misconceptions

Edward Lane Lexicon

Lane defines بَل “bal” as a particle of digression in great length. We see it is used in the Qur’an for **pairs** of opposing verses, or a verse with two **opposing** thoughts, to negate or amend the preceding misconception or false idea presented in the first part, and then correcting it in the second part. The Book is replete with numerous examples that follow this basic structure:

- 1) The first part features a misconception, or an incorrect thought, or idea.
- 2) It is then followed with a contrasting statement, affirmed by بَل “bal”, which disavows and amends the preceding erroneous idea.

Lane, Penrise and Omar provide very helpful and detailed entries in their respective works by defining its role rather than just providing synonyms. Their definitions are confirmed repeatedly (six more times) in other, more concise works cited. Edward Lane’s work is by far the grandest endeavor undertaken, and his full, detail-rich entry of the word can be found in a cleaner text version in the Appendices. The works of Penrise, Omar, Wright, Wehr, Wortabet, Haywood, Steingass, and the *Al-Manwrid* displayed throughout are all immense in their own right as well. Any highlights, underlines, italicize, and bolding of dictionary entries and

بَل is a particle of digression : (Mughnee, K :) or, accord. to Mbr, it denotes emendation, wherever it occurs, in the case of a negation or an affirmation : (T, TA :) or it is a word of emendation, and denoting digression from that which precedes ; as also بَلْ, in which the ن is a substitute for the ل, because بَل is of frequent occurrence, and بَلْ is rare ; or, as IJ says, the latter may be an independent dial. var. (M.) When it is followed by a proposition, the meaning of the digression is either the cancelling of what precedes, as in وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَانَهُ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ [And they said, “The Compassionate hath gotten offspring :” extolled be his freedom from that which is derogatory from his glory ! nay, or nay rather, or nay but, they are honoured servants (Kur xxi. 26)], or transition from one object of discourse to another, as in قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى

¹ <https://www.al-islam.org/alphabetical-index-holy-qur'an/prophet-lut>

English translations of the Qur'an is of my emphasis for illustrative purposes only unless noted otherwise. Translations will either be blue text, or have a blue main heading for sections with many translations within the body .

Penrise

بَلْ A particle which affirms that which follows it, but contradicts or corrects that which went before ; thus it may be translated But, not so but, on the contrary, or rather, nay rather, still more, &c. according to the context; for the difference between **بَلْ** and **لَكِنَّ** see D. S. Gr. T. 1, p. 565

Abdul Mannan Omar

بَلْ

A particle of digression signifying the correction or cancellation of what precedes as in 21:26 and transitions from one object of discourse to another as in 87:16. It is also used for confirmation, then it must be followed by a clause in the affirmative, no matter if the question which it follows is the negative or affirmative. It can be rendered as: But, On the contrary, Besides; Much more; No; May; Rather. (L; T; LL; Mughni)

In English translations **بَلْ** "bal" is often translated as "Rather", "But rather" or "No/Nay, but rather" and so on to **negate**, and then correct to prevent misdirection. Since the word doesn't exactly translate to "no" but does serve to negate and clarify in a two-part format, it is also often translated simply "no" or "nay" in English. Because it simultaneously affirms the truth of what comes after, sometimes the fifth or sixth synonym listed is "certainly" or the more archaic "verily" in some entries. However that alone is underwhelming because without provided explanation or Qur'anic context, the negation is not always clear; rather, it would appear to confirm what came previously, *which is incorrect*. Or, as seen in Steingass' entry, "sometimes" which neither registers as total negation or even the incorrect affirmation, albeit it comes last in his list after the more accurate renditions. This is why seeking its role in the Qur'an is tackled next for consistent

patterns after reviewing other works. Any word or phrase that only verifies the latter but does not force the reader's attention into noticing the departure from what came before is not grasping the word's true power.

In general, it seems that the English phrase "But on the contrary" best encapsulates the meaning. That exact phrase is included in the definitions provided by Wright, Wortabet, Omar, as well as Steingass, and correctly adheres to the description provided by Lane, Penrise, and Omar, and how the Qur'an utilizes it every time. For example The Sahih International translation example below uses "on the contrary" to reinforce "but" on at least one occasion in brackets, and "but" solely is

used in the other. Exact English translations may vary depending on the grammar and structure of the sentence.² No matter what exact word or phrase is chosen, it should capture the essence.

Three of MANY Examples of Qur'anic Usage of بَل "bal"

The Qur'an verifies the meaning of this word and confirms the definitions when we look at how it is used in context. The idea is introduced in the preceding verse:

Qur'an 21:43 - Or do they have gods to defend them other than Us? They are unable [even] to help themselves, nor can they be protected from Us. (Sahih International)

Then this is negated with بَل "bal" and continues with the contrast provided:

***But, [on the contrary],** (Arabic: بَل bal) We have provided good things for these [disbelievers] and their fathers until life was prolonged for them. Then do they not see that We set upon the land, reducing it from its borders? So it is they who will overcome? Sahih International (21:44)*

Here it is clarified that despite their shortcomings, their lives have been prolonged and with good tidings even though Allah is capable and might be expected to decrease their protection or good tidings. "On the contrary" is provided in brackets to assist translation. Here is another example; this time they are within single verses with two opposing thoughts.

*they say, "You, [O Muhammad], are but an inventor [of lies]." **But** (Arabic: بَل bal) most of them do not know. Sahih International 16:101 (part)*

*Or do they say, "In him is madness?" **Rather** (Arabic: بَل bal), he brought them the truth, but most of them, to the truth, are averse. Sahih International (23:70)*

بَل "bal" is used here to negate the preceding idea by saying the disbelieving accusers are not aware of the truth, rectifying the false notion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ being a liar. Obviously if we had inserted "certainly" or "verily" one could see the negation but this is despite the word, not because of it. It is not as apparent elsewhere, so we will maintain "but on the contrary".

Prefixed Interrogative *Alif*

² This word should not be confused with a similar word, "balay", which has its separate entry. Although they have the same role of contrasting, "balay" is used to negate a question asked in a negative tense. This can also be seen in the Qur'an for context. "Am I *not* your Lord? Yes, (balay) you are." (Q. 7:172) As it negates a negative question, it is translated in the English definitions to include "yes" or "verily". Penrise specifically includes that caveat that "balay" is not the same as "na'am" (yes), because "balay" negates the preceding question while "na'am" affirms it. "On the contrary" is also found in Penrise's entry for "balay".

Particles of Interrogation الإِسْتِفْهَامُ حَرْفًا		
Is it that ?	'a-	أَ
	hal	هَلْ

The prefixed interrogative *alif* is used at the beginning of Qur'an 26:1655; 27:54; and 29:28-9.

Source: [Free Comprehensive Resource of Arabic Grammar](#) © Hani Deek 2005-2018

As we begin to look at the verses in question, it is helpful to note that some of these verses start with a prefixed interrogative *alif*. Much like the French phrase “est-ce que” (is it that/is it true that?) which is also used to form certain questions, this particle of interrogation literally translates to “is it true that...?”.³ Because it seems the flow in English becomes a bit awkward when forming sentences in that manner, it is usually translated in English as “do you?”

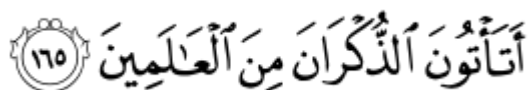
However, “do you?” in English is more general and does not seek that level of specificity as the literal translation (“Is it that?”). For better emphasis, the phrase “Do you actually”, “Do you truly”, “Do you *really*?” might be more suitable. Despite limitations, the point being made with هَلْ "hal" can still be seen. Inserting the more accurate “is it that” on the other hand truly shows how complementary it is with “but on the contrary” in the original Arabic.

2. Lut (a.s.) And the Two Misconceptions

As we see in the Qur'anic examples above, what may be perceived on the surface is not so. There are two misconceptions being addressed in regard to what the townsfolk of Lut a.s. Used to do with newcomers that passed by their town. One is of adultery, the other is of homosexuality.

Misconception: Is this adultery?

Verses 26:165-166



Do you approach males among the worlds -

³ [https://www.commeunefrancaise.com/blog/questions-french-est-ce-que#:~:text=%E2%80%9CEst%2Dce%20que%E2%80%A6%E2%80%9D,\(%3D%20Are%20you%20ready%20%3F\)](https://www.commeunefrancaise.com/blog/questions-french-est-ce-que#:~:text=%E2%80%9CEst%2Dce%20que%E2%80%A6%E2%80%9D,(%3D%20Are%20you%20ready%20%3F))

وَتَذَرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

And leave what your Lord has created for you as mates? **But** (Arabic: بل *bal*) you are a people transgressing."

As stated here the people of Lut a.s have spouses (*azwaj*) that they are leaving aside. (This will be addressed again when Lut's (a.s.) daughters are discussed toward the end). The misconception here is that adultery is being committed. Although on the surface we see that a sexual act is being performed outside of wedlock, directed towards to travelers from other regions ("from among the worlds") passing through, this misconception is corrected by saying بل *bal*, or "but on the contrary" their crime transgresses the aforementioned adultery (which requires at least two consensual partners) to that of something else. That risk of associating the two is thrown out. The next one to address is homosexuality. There is a danger of conflating their crime to homosexuality, since their victims are passersby who are men. Multiple popular translations are provided by [Qur'an Corpus](#).

(بل)
بَلْ *but, nay rather*

Misconception: Is this Homosexuality?

Verses 27:54-55

وَلَوْ طَا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

Sahih International: And [mention] Lot, when he said to his people, "Do you commit immorality while you are seeing?"

The misconception is paired with ↓↓ clarification. Key words italicized or bolded.

أَإِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

Sahih International: Do you *indeed* approach men with desire instead of women? **Rather**, you are a people behaving ignorantly.

Pickthall: Must ye needs lust after men instead of women? **Nay, but** ye are folk who act senselessly.

Yusuf Ali: Would ye *really* approach men in your lusts rather than women? **Nay**, ye are a people (grossly) ignorant!

Shakir: What! do you *indeed* approach men lustfully rather than women? **Nay**, you are a people who act ignorantly.

Muhammad Sarwar: Do you have carnal relations with men rather than women? You are ignorant people".

Mohsin Khan: "Do you approach men in your lusts rather than women? **Nay, but** you are a people who behave senselessly."

Arberry: What, do you approach men lustfully instead of women? **No**, you are a people that are ignorant.'

For the average reader that has the concept of homosexuality being a sin well-engrained in their mind, there is a risk of an unintentional "reading-into" the Qur'an, therefore the distinction here will be quite difficult to notice. The retractive particle will simply be passed over (it does not even factor into Sarwar's translation!), even though it creates a hiccup in the flow of the verse if homosexuality is the sin being referred to. Translating the Qur'an is a mammoth task which deserves appreciation, but sometimes preconceived notions are a worse barrier than a lackluster translation. In reality, the verse *is actually saying the opposite of* what most people believe.

Perhaps Shakir's and Mohsin Khan's rendering of 27:55 really convey that distinction best - while the people are indeed "acting ignorantly", that characteristic is disassociated lusting for men rather than women:

"What! do you *indeed* approach men lustfully rather than women? **Nay**, (Arabic: بل bal) you are a people who act ignorantly. (Shakir)

"Do you approach men in your lusts rather than women? **Nay, but** (Arabic: بل bal) you are a people who behave senselessly." (Mohsin Khan)

It can be discerned with more clarity if again we see the complementary role played with "بل "bal"" (But on the contrary) when the prefixed interrogative *alif* is read as literally as "Is it that?" Shakir translates it as "do you *indeed*" which is closer to the literal meaning. "Would ye *really*?" from Yusuf Ali comes close too.

Mohsin Khan on the other hand does a slightly better job at translating بل "bal" as "Nay, but" rather than just "Nay". Though this apparently is not as strong as "but/no, on the contrary" to best fit Lane's, Penrise's, and Omar's description of the role in amending whatever was previously expressed, which is how the Qur'an employs it; readers tend to miss it. Combining their translations with their strong points would paint a better picture. But ideally, the translation of this verse would read better as,

"**Is it that** (pref. int. *alif*) you really approach men in your lusts rather than women? **But/No, on the contrary** (Arabic: بل bal) you are a people who act senselessly."

Verses 7:80-81

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

And [We had sent] Lot when he said to his people, "Do you commit such immorality as no one has preceded you with from among the worlds?"

Now comes the misconception paired with clarification in the same verse.

إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

Sahih International: Indeed, you approach men with desire, instead of women. **Rather**, you are a transgressing people."

Pickthall: Lo! ye come with lust unto men instead of women. **Nay, but** ye are wanton folk.

Yusuf Ali: "For ye practise your lusts on men in preference to women : ye are indeed a people transgressing beyond bounds."

Shakir: Most surely you come to males in lust besides females; **nay** you are an extravagant people.

Muhammad Sarwar: You engage in lustful activities with people instead of women. You have become transgressing people.

Mohsin Khan: "Verily, you practise your lusts on men instead of women. **Nay, but** you are a people transgressing beyond bounds (by committing great sins)."

Arberry: See, you approach men lustfully instead of women; **no**, you are a people that do exceed.

Here, Lut a.s confirms that his town is in fact doing **something** that *none other have done*, and this is what the "indeed" in the latter verse refers back to and its association is nullified with the retraction. Note: This discussion of "indeed", but sans prefixed interrogative *alif*, paired with this "something no one has done" characterization is applied again on Page 17 for Qur'an 29:28-29.

This brand new immorality that the town is being known for which to the clueless person looks like homosexuality due to the misleading optics of the situation. To say that this town *en masse invented* homosexuality, a trait is less frequent than heterosexuality among individuals, would be bizzare. Here Lut a.s. confirms the difference between homosexual disposition and a male-on-male act, which can be done by married heterosexual men (26:165). Because Surah 26 specifies "males of the worlds" and "azwaj", this dispels the notion of homosexuality and adultery with travelers simultaneously. If this was unaccounted for and were considered generalized terms, it is dismissed by بَلْ "bal" regardless. This time Mohsin Khan does a good translation, but Arberry's seems to convey it the best of the bunch:

“See, you approach men lustfully instead of women; *no*, (Arabic: بل bal) you are a people that do exceed.”
(Arberry 7:81)

While the act in and of itself is there as with acts of infidelity, the intention is something altogether, “exceeding” what constitutes the aforementioned notion. Here بل "bal" corrects the conflation, and explains that what they do goes beyond the realm of that.

If there was any doubt, the Surah 27 pair *explicitly* reinforces the argument. This is why related Qur'an verses have to be accounted for in totality and not read in isolation. More explicit ones will define the implicit ones to narrow down interpretations in verses of the same story, larger themes, and the entire Book.

RECAP

The two motives that appear on the surface (but are not so) here are:

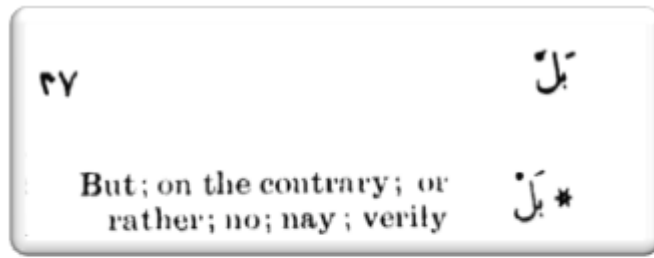
1. Approaching travelers and leaving spouses \neq adultery
2. Approaching men and leaving aside women \neq homosexuality

Although 26:165 uses the word “males” it is referring to a specific party (the travelers) rather than gender, as this description is linked to “of the worlds”, not local males within the town. This is a critical detail which we will see again in 29:28-29. Had the identifying descriptor been “travelers” instead of “males”, the point of the verse (question of adultery) would be intact, as it specifically refers to leaving aside spouses. When 54:37 on page {X} summarizes the mob incident Lut's a.s. visitors are simply referred to as “guests” rather than making it a point they are men.

Rather, it is the other set of verses (7:80-81; 27:54-55) that deals with the question of homosexuality as now they are asked about generally leaving aside women for men (travelers or otherwise), and not the spouses they are bound to by the institution of marriage in 26:165-166. The ‘*transgressing*’ and ‘*excessive*’ attributes are beyond the realm of what constitutes adultery and homosexuality.

To be clear, the misconception to be clarified is not that the people of Lut a.s. think they haven't done any wrong and that he is pointing out new information to prove otherwise. They *already know* what they are doing is wrong despite having open eyes, as kufr has veiled them. He has already told them to desist many times before. The Qur'an points out that they have done this in the past, and also Allah SWT does not destroy a community without several warnings.

The next section clarifies through Qur'an 29:28-9 shows us *what exactly is going on, if not adultery or homosexuality*. And here “approaching men” is listed **without** “besides women”, and instead is **linked** to a criminal process featuring no retractive particle this time, which is the key difference in its structure when compared to Qur'an 7:80-1



3. The Actual CRIME of 29:29

وَلَوْ طَا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّكُمْ لَنَاتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ
مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

Sahih International 29:28: And [mention] Lot, when he said to his people, "Indeed, you commit such immorality as no one has preceded you with from among the worlds.

This time, there is no بل "bal" in the next verse as this is no misconception.

أَنتُمْ لَنَاتُونَ الرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ السَّبِيلَ وَتَأْتُونَ فِي نَادِيَكُمُ الْمُنْكَرَ
فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَتَيْنَا بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ
الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

Sahih International: Indeed, you approach men and obstruct the road and commit in your meetings [every] evil." And the answer of his people was not but they said, "Bring us the punishment of Allah, if you should be of the truthful."

Pickthall: For come ye not in unto males, and cut ye not the road (for travellers), and commit ye not abomination in your meetings? But the answer of his folk was only that they said: Bring Allah's doom upon us if thou art a truth-teller!

Yusuf Ali: "Do ye indeed approach men, **and** cut off the highway?- **and** practise wickedness (even) in your councils?" But his people gave no answer but this: they said: "Bring us the Wrath of Allah if thou tellest the truth."

Shakir: What! do you come to the males **and** commit robbery on the highway, **and** you commit evil deeds in your assemblies? But nothing was the answer of his people except that they said: Bring on us Allah's punishment, if you are one of the truthful.

Muhammad Sarwar: Do you engage in carnal relations with **men**, rob the **travellers**, and commit evil in your gatherings? His people had no answer but to say, "Bring upon us the torment of God if you are truthful".

Mohsin Khan: "Verily, you do sodomy with men, **and** rob the wayfarer (travellers, etc.)! **and** practise Al-Munkar (disbelief and polytheism and every kind of evil wicked deed) in your meetings." But his people gave no answer except, that they said: "Bring Allah's Torment upon us if you are one of the truthful."

Arberry: What, do you approach men, **and** cut the way, **and** commit in your assembly dishonour?' But the only answer of his people was that they said, "Then bring us the chastisement of God, if thou speakest truly."

The Conjunction “Wa”

The acts being described here are sequential and associated with each other as a larger collective crime, and not totally isolated actions that are separated by time or intent. It becomes clear that his people ambush the traveling males, which would in fact quite literally interrupt the path they travel on, and subjugation would have to be done in large numbers (a gathering of the town) to project superior force required to dominate. These are being carried out in quick succession.

In Joseph A. Islam's article, "Does the Qur'an Really Sanction Beating of Wives", he discusses that it does not with a more accurate rendering of the Arabic word, 'idribohunna'.⁴ Here he explains the function of "wa" in verse 4:34 where corrective steps are listed, with his emphasis:

*"the Arabic word 'wa' does **not necessarily** indicate a separation in time but an action that can be performed simultaneously or indeed in a relatively short sequence (not separated by any significant time spans)."*

In another article, "The Seven Oft-Repeated", Islam explains the meaning of the phrase "saba'an minal-mathani" (the namesake of the article) that is associated with the Qur'an, and discusses whether it refers to seven or a multiplicity of verses (several) that is *not separate* from the Qur'an itself.⁵ Here, he writes again about how the Qur'an employs "wa":

"Some Muslims understand the conjunction 'wa' (and) as an indication to imply something separate from the main Qur'an. Such an assertion takes little account of the Qur'anic style of dialogue which clearly uses the conjunction 'wa' in different ways....

....Not only is 'wa' used in the Qur'an to denote something separate or additional, it is also used to elucidate an existing statement by defining it or clarifying it.

⁴ Joseph A. Islam. Qur'ansmessage.com "Does the Qur'an Really Sanction Beating of Wives?"

<http://qur'ansmessage.com/articles/does%20the%20qur'an%20sanction%20wife%20beating%20FM3.htm>

⁵ Joseph A. Islam. Qur'ansmessage.com. "The Seven Oft-Repeated". <http://qur'ansmessage.com/articles/oft-repeated%20FM3.htm>

For example, in the following verse, we note:

055:068

*In both of them (are) **fruits** (Arabic: **fakihatun**) and **(wa)** date-palms and **(wa)** pomegranates'.*

*Here the conjunction 'wa' (and) when used with date-palms and pomegranates only **clarifies** the 'fruits' and is not read as separate from the category of fruits (**fakihatun**)".*

If this variant was applied, then “approaching men” would also entail cutting off the highway (to ambush and trap), and to do evil to them, in one swoop. It is a tactic in part of the grander effort, the “immorality no one else has done” in the previous verse, to ambush and gang rape victims, close the escape route, and overpower them with superior numbers in a large group, altogether constituting in “approaching men” to commit “the immorality none preceded with”. The fact that the township is on an established route (Qur'an 15:76) means they could have laid in waiting for new victims.

The Charge is Made, and the Accused Answer

Sahih International 29:29: Indeed, you approach men and obstruct the road and commit in your meetings [every] evil."

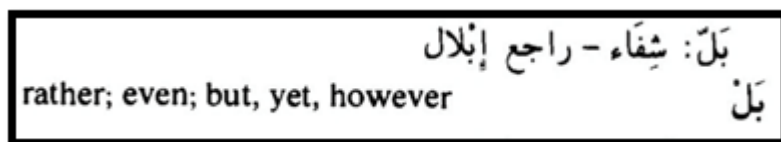
- Notice here “besides women” **is no longer the issue in a more *detailed* verse** explaining the crime, and is now **immediately associated with** cutting the path and evil in groups.
- This malicious act of “approaching men” et cetera with the complete picture, **is quite different** from the “men besides women” that one may do out of their innate disposition, that of which was listed *alone* in the other verses and subsequently nullified with **﴿ "bal"** .
- Furthermore, *indeed* links these two together and is **not contrasted** like in the Surah 7 pair as **there is no ﴿ "bal" here**. That is the key difference between the set-up in the Surah 29 and Surah 7 pairs: “Approaching men besides women” has been filtered out in the Surah 7 pair, which is accentuated by the Surah 27 pair.

“Is it that you’re **actually** doing **this...**?”

Now, it is asking if they are actually (indeed) considering this with the interrogative *alif* and “indeed” combination in the 29th, because there is no more retraction **﴿ "bal"** where the crime is specified. Just like in 7:80-1, “indeed” in the 29th refers back to the charge in the previous verse, the “immorality as no one has preceded you with from among the worlds” but with no cancellation this time.

Now it's a statement or exclamation of **incredulity and confirmation**. It would be akin to “Is it that you’re *actually* doing *this*?!” This fits the overall incredulous tone well especially when he asks them if they “...commit immorality **while you are seeing?**” (Qur'an 27:54). It points out the madness of doing something of this nature especially while sober and perceptive. The only “khamr” here blinding their judgement is the sheer intoxication of their kufr which drove them to act madly, so much so that Allah (SWT) swore by Muhammad's ﷺ life. This is the new immorality no one has done before them. The act is confirmed and comes with an explanation that needs no correction.

Notably this is also the *only* time the charge receives a challenge from the criminals. They mocked or challenged him to bring Allah’s punishment, essentially affirming the charge with “Go ahead and stop us”.



Why "bal" Was Necessary: Not Knowing Components Spurs Damaging Conflation

Sadly rape, even in recent times in many Muslim countries, has been reduced to adultery - an outrageous comparison. Punishments are meted out to rape victims that are typically associated with adultery (i.e. flogging, stoning). Similarly, homosexuality has also been attributed to Lut's (a.s.) community, which is also crudely reductionist and thus wildly inaccurate as is equating adultery to rape. This is done because extremely pertinent nuance between all these actions are unjustly stripped away and reduced to make damaging conflations.

This is what happens when all context is devoid and such things are not discussed or challenged in traditional and conservative societies. These two misconceptions continue to this day, which could explain why of the three components listed in 29:29, it is explained that the first component (approaching the male travelers) that **exceeds beyond** that of lusting for males besides the females (7:80-81; 27:54-55) and of course **transgressed beyond** leaving the spouse for an extramarital sexual act (26:165-166) to cover all bases. It is بل "bal" that takes the two main misleading interpretations being read into the Qur'an and puts a cap on it, and allows the rest of the story to provide the context for what is happening, unhindered.

What appears on the surface is not so, and important distinctions need to be made. Similar to that of 7:80-81 which confirms the literal act with a retractive particle to clarify, note how the format of this excerpt from a news article regarding a case from Pakistan.⁶ Emphasis added:

*“Furthermore, he said, in accusing her brother-in-law of **raping** her, Ms. Zafran had confessed to her crime.*

*‘The lady stated before this court that, **yes, she had committed sexual intercourse, but** with the brother of her husband,’ Judge Khan said. ‘This left no option to the court but to impose the highest penalty.’”*

The court fails to recognize this extra-marital sexual contact is rape, as readers do when they read verses typically believed to condemn homosexuality in the Qur'an. Zafran Bibi clarifying that it was rape seems to have no bearing here, sadly. It is still clearly expressed that she “confessed” to a crime.

For the matter of sexual orientation especially this leads to further nonsensical comparisons to bestiality, necrophilia, incest, being prone to anger or inclining to theft, and conjecture about afflictions affecting LGBT people.

⁶ Seth Mydans. 2002. “In Pakistan, Rape Victims are the ‘Criminals’”. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/17/world/in-pakistan-rape-victims-are-the-criminals.html>

(٤) نَیْ, *nay, nay rather, not so, on the contrary, but* (Heb. *בֵּל*, *Phoen. بَل*). [When it is followed by a single word it is a conjunction.]

Synopsis

Qur'an verses 29:28-9 reveal the larger scope and scale of the crime being committed. Foreigners who pass by the town are "approached", the pathway is simultaneously blocked off, and "evil" is then committed in the gatherings, which based on the power being projected here [through superior strength in numbers of the townspeople], appears to be an ambush with the intent of gang rape directed towards unsuspecting travelers. This "evil" is related to the "immorality" and "ignorant/senseless behavior" inquired about in the verses where homosexuality is dismissed and an "exceeding" transgression is attributed to them. This is an act that no nation preceding them had done, and is highly unlikely to refer to accepting homosexuality as an invented practice of the townspeople in all of humanity.

Moreover, rape is a crime that requires power to subdue the victim, and can happen to either men or women and is reprehensible either way, regardless of the genders of victims or perpetrators. It is also very plausible that you would need a large gathering to "cut-off the path" as well. **These three are occurring in continuum. They are not an isolated list of faults occurring out of sequence.** These three, altogether, *share the characterization* of "indeed, committing an act no one has done" provided in the preceding verse, 29:28, shown below and therefore are grouped together in a sequence. Refer to the explanation of "indeed" and the characterization discussed earlier with 7:80-81 discussed prior.

'Immorality no one before them has done'

Indeed They

بَل *"bal" (but they are NOT):*

<p><i>approach men + cut off path + evil done in large gatherings</i></p> <p><i>they are exceeding limits, transgressing</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Leaving spouses aside (adultery)</i> <i>preferring men besides women (homosexuality)</i>
--	--

بل¹ *bal* (also with foll. و *wa-*) nay, — rather...;
(and) even; but, however, yet

4. Additional Qur'anic Context

Power Projection and Lut's Fear

Additional Qur'anic context paints the picture. A coercive crime such as sexual assault or rape requires power to subdue the victim by overriding their ability to resist. One way to project strength or power is through numbers. It appears that most of the townspeople were involved in this crime, and 29:29 indicates that this was done in gatherings which again, may be needed to effectively cut the path as well as forcefully subdue the travelers.

Furthermore, Lut a.s. himself **wishes for more power to resist** his townspeople. It becomes abundantly clear that these are not a bunch of curious gay lovers inquiring all at once at his doorstep to whom one would offer to reacquaint with wives as an alternative, or general women to marry and/or rape to prioritize fighting casual homosexuality.

Sahih International: He said, "If only I had against you some power or could take refuge in a strong support." (11:80)

The above sentiment can be expressed by anyone in an oppressed or compromised state. They had also warned him from providing any sort of relief or even association with travelers in the past in Qur'an 15:70. Translations vary. Note Sahih International and Mohsin Khan especially hint at **protection**, which appropriately fits the context of a threat.

Sahih International: They said, "Have we not forbidden you from [protecting] people?"

Pickthall: They said; Have we not forbidden you from (entertaining) anyone?

Yusuf Ali: They said: "Did we not forbid thee (to speak) for all and sundry?"

Mohsin Khan: They (people of the city) said: "Did we not forbid you to entertain (or protect) any of the 'Alamin (people, foreigners, strangers, etc. from us)?"

Before Lut a.s. is informed by his guests that they are in fact angelic messengers (Qur'an 11:81) ready to smite the aggressors into the pages of history, he grieves at the sight of newcomers; his townspeople have done fearful acts in the past that would violate their safety.

Qur'an 29:33 : And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was distressed *for them* and felt *for them* great discomfort. They said, "Fear not, nor grieve. Indeed, we will save you and your family, except your wife; she is to be of those who remain behind. (Sahih International)

Lack of Clear Punishment for Alleged Sin of Homosexuality

In mainstream Muslim thought, it is solely the crime of homosexuality that is referred to when discussing Prophet Lut a.s. The other two components are regarded as separate to that, and is almost an after-thought. If cutting the path refers to highway robbery, there is at least punishment prescribed for exemplary theft. The same is true for adultery. For the “evil in gatherings”, literally no one recognizes this as an associated step, and thus takes shots in the dark as to what this involves rather than sourcing from the Qur'an. Wild guesses range from a spectrum of faults, including farting and laughing out loud together about it;⁷ a ridiculous assessment and an embarrassment to exegesis of a severe message. Anything that uses baseless conjecture as opposed to the Qur'an-centric methodology should be waved aside.

On a serious note, for a crime which the town is often referred to as having been turned upside down, there is an interesting absence of a punishment for homosexuality, their highlighted sin. Outside the narratives of Lut a.s., there is no general mention of a punishment for an act described as “approaching males besides females” and “approaching females besides males”. لُ "bal" has already divorced the former phrase from the umbrella term “fahisha” and there is utter silence on the latter.

Especially when the Qur'an specifies the rewards of good work for believing males and females, sins for disbelieving males and females, one would expect a crime where gender is the focus of the sin to mention it as such. Even the punishment of exemplary robbery mentions male and female thieves.

Qur'an 5:38: [As for] the thief, the male and the female...

Note: A female thief can also be an *azwaj* while contributing to a larger crime with her townsfolk.

Alleged ‘Punishment’ in Surah 4 - Homosexuality in the middle of financial wrangling and inheritance?

Qur'an 4:15: Those who commit *unlawful sexual intercourse* of your women - bring against them four [witnesses] from among you. And if they testify, confine the guilty women to houses until death takes them or Allah ordains for them [another] way. (Sahih International)

Pickthall, Yusuf Ali: *lewdness*;

Shakir, Arberry: *indecent*;

M. Khan: *unlawful sexual intercourse*.

Qur'an 4:16: And the two who commit it among you, dishonor them both. But if they repent and correct themselves, leave them alone. Indeed, Allah is ever Accepting of repentance and Merciful. (Sahih International)

Mohsin Khan (part) : And the two persons (man and woman) among you who commit illegal sexual intercourse, punish them both. And if they repent (promise Allah that they will never repeat, i.e. commit illegal sexual intercourse and other similar sins)...

⁷ <http://mqur'an.org/content/view/8212/2/>

Punishment for adultery is already described in Surah 24. These verses are about financial issues in the family, particularly dowries and inheritance and safeguarding it for the entitled in the surrounding context. Although Lane mentions discord in the family in regards to going out, and using a sharp tongue against one's relatives, the entry here seems to single out women. Whereas, the Qur'an specifies the *fahisha* here in Surah 4 for three or more women, and then the dual form for two men, or man with a woman. Mohsin Khan for instance specifies man with woman.

Given the context of finances and safeguarding money for those who are entitled, the very last definition provided by Lane here seems to be the most appropriate. That particular rendition of the word is specifically for those who are miserly, and would fit best as a candidate under the general umbrella term "*fahisha*" given the context. It likely speaks about a **domestic situation** where conniving family members are conspiring to hoard wealth from rightful inheritors who are being denied what is rightful theirs. Once proven with four witnesses, the culprits are banished to the **home** unless they repent. Because women historically were shunned in financial matters, the Qur'an does allow for a female witness to have support when giving her testimony in case she is manipulated or intimidated in such disputes should one arise. This possibly explains why a plurality of women (three or more) are grouped in one verse and then two men, or a man and woman in the latter verse. There is nothing here to indict lesbians of three or more, or gay men, especially smack-dab in the middle of inheritance and financial issues!

Double Standard: Marriage Is Only Between Man and Woman - But Zina Applies to All?

Many Muslims will commonly maintain that marriage is only between a man and a woman. Following that logic, the penalty for *zina* can also only delivered to a man and a woman, considering that they had an already existing institution now with new regulations introduced explicitly in the Qur'an (including the obvious, such as direct incest prohibitions). The concept of *zina* is dependent on that of marriage. We cannot have one without the other.

فَاحِشَةٌ [*An excess; an enormity; anything exceeding the bounds of rectitude:*] *a thing excessively, enormously, or beyond measure, foul, evil, bad, abominable, or unseemly; [gross, immodest, lewd, or obscene:]* (Mgh:) *or anything not agreeable with truth:* (Lth, Mgh:) *or a sin, or crime, that is very foul, evil, bad, &c.: or anything forbidden by God:* (K:) *or any saying, or action, that is foul, evil, bad, &c.:* (TA:) and **فَحْشَاءٌ** signifies the same as **فَاحِشَةٌ**; (S;) *or an enormity, or excessive sin, beyond measure foul, evil, bad, &c.; or a thing that reason disapproves, and the law regards as foul, evil, bad, &c.:* (Bd in ii. 164:) the pl. of **فَاحِشَةٌ** is **فَوَاحِشٌ**. (Msb, TA.) Also, particularly, *Adultery, or fornication;* (S, Mgh, Msb, K;) and so **فَحْشَاءٌ**: (Bd in xii. 24; &c.): so in the Qur iv. 23 and lxxv. 1 [as well as in numerous other instances]: *or the فَاحِشَةُ [or excess] there mentioned is the women's going out without permission:* (Mgh, Msb:) *or their using foul language against their husband's relations, by reason of the sharpness of their tongues.* (Esh-Sháfi'ee.) And **فَحْشَاءٌ** particularly signifies *Niggardliness, tenaciousness, or uvarice,* (A, K,) *in the payment of the poor-rate:* *or the abstaining [altogether] from paying it.* (TA.) So in the Qur ii. 271. (A, TA.)

It's Either Marriage...

For the sake of consistent logic, it makes absolutely no sense that certain standards apply for marriage of two mature adults, that which would also apply to those relations that are supposedly invalid for marriage. Such a marriage or civil union would appear to be permissible as it is not expressly prohibited when discussing new and introduced explicit regulations (again, incestuous unions). When Lut's (a.s) daughters visit this discussion, marital regulations will be quite noteworthy and extremely relevant.

Or no Zina Charge

If for whatever reason such unions do not seem feasible, then the rules of *zina* cannot be applied to those of homosexual disposition that have no marital outlet to begin with. *If* extramarital homosexual relations are to sit under the same umbrella of punishment that heterosexual couples face, one should ponder as to why, they do not fall under the umbrella of what is permissible when even incestuous unions have not been untouched. And there is no such punishment specifically for gay or lesbian Muslims as already noted. Given that we are instructed to guard our private parts, the position should lean towards allowing marriage.

Scope and Scale: Fasaad fil'ard- spreading corruption throughout the land

"Fasaad fil'ard", or spreading corruption throughout the land is a term appropriate for this town as they do not just practice evil, they do it en masse as a larger community when they extend their oppression onto those who travel on the pathways from among the worlds to their city. The term is used in comparison to murder and those that ingite the flame of war among other things:

Qur'an 5:64

And the Jews say, "The hand of Allah is chained." Chained are their hands, and cursed are they for what they say. Rather (Arabic: بل bal) both His hands are extended; He spends however He wills. And that which has been revealed to you from your Lord will surely increase many of them in transgression and disbelief. And We have cast among them animosity and hatred until the Day of Resurrection. Every time they **kindled the fire of war** [against you], Allah extinguished it. And they **strive throughout the land [causing] corruption** (Arabic: fil ardi fasaadaa), and Allah does not like corrupters. (Sahih International)

رَوْدَان (T, TA) and رَوْدُ and رَوْدُ, (TA,) *The wind became in motion, or in a state of commotion: (T, TA:) or veered about. (M, TA.)* — [Hence,] رَادٌ [lit. *His pillow moved to and fro; meaning*] † *he was, or became, restless, (S, A,) by reason of disease or anxiety: (A:) [or he was, or became, sleepless: for] a poet uses the phrase رَادٌ وَسَادُهَا as expressive of an imprecation, meaning † May she be sleepless, so that her pillow may not remain still. (TA.)* [And رَادٌ خُرْتُ الْقَوْمَ and رَادَتْ أَخْرَاتُهُمْ: see خُرْتُ.] = رَادٌ, aor. يَرُودُ, (Mṣb,) inf. n. رِيَادٌ (Mṣb, K) and رَوْدٌ; (K;) and رَاتَادَ, (Mṣb,) inf. n. ارْتِيَادٌ; (K;) and استَرَادَ (TA;) *He sought, sought after, or desired; or he sought, or desired, to find and take, or to get; (Mṣb, K;) a thing. (Mṣb.)* [It seems to imply the going to and fro in seeking.] You say, رَادٌ

Considering scope and scale, and also attempting to project force and making an effort to wander maliciously to and fro trying (Arabic: raawduhu'an) to shake Lut a.s. into surrender his guests (54:37) and other wayfarers through their intimidation- they are quite literally *striving* throughout the land like pacing predators.

وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدُوهُ عَنْ ضَيْفِهِ فَطَمَسْنَا أَعْيُنَهُمْ فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِي وَنُذِرُ ۚ

Sahih International: And they had demanded from him his guests, but We obliterated their eyes, [saying], "Taste My punishment and warning."

Yusuf Ali: And they even sought to snatch away his guests from him...

Muhammad Sarwar: They demanded that he turn over his guests to them.

Mohsin Khan: And they indeed sought to shame his guest...

Qur'an 5:32 allows the punishment for such a crime to be executed as a possibility, likely at the discretion of an authoritative body with mutual consultation to see if a *fabisha* falls under the scope and scale of "corruption throughout the land" (or among the worlds in this case) with murder and incitement of war as guiding references. It is one of the few times the Qur'an mentions an earthly punishment. For roving rapist gangs attacking the vulnerable travels, this is fitting.

"We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land – it is as if he had slain mankind entirely." (Sahih International)

5. Sacrificing Lut's (a.s.) Daughters (15:71) - A Heterosexual Alternative?

Sahih International: [Lot] said, "These are my daughters - if you would be doers [of lawful marriage]."

Pickthall: He said: Here are my daughters, if ye must be doing (so).

Yusuf Ali: He said: "There are my daughters (to marry), if ye must act (so)."

Shakir: He said: These are my daughters, if you will do (aught).

Muhammad Sarwar: Lot said, "These are my daughters if you want them."

Mohsin Khan: [Lout (Lot)] said: "These (the girls of the nation) are my daughters (to marry lawfully), if you must act (so)."

Arberry: He said, "These are my daughters, if you would be doing."

Already we can see in many translations there are phrases about marriage enclosed in parentheses to alert the reader of implied meanings. These however, are not to assist in defining Arabic terms into English as one would see elsewhere. These seem to be an attempt to soften the blow of what would have been implied otherwise. One example of softening the blow would be the infamous 4:34, where Yusuf Ali is known to have included "lightly" in parentheses after one is instructed to *daraba* (commonly translated to 'strike') a troublesome wife.⁸ These are coming more so from the translators' train of thought than from the linguistic aspect.

Because his children here are female, it is generally believed by Muslims that Lut a.s. is providing a heterosexual alternative to the male victims. Some do not think that these are his offspring, and instead believe "daughters" is an expression referring to the women of Lut's a.s. town as the heterosexual alternative.

Are Prophets Symbolic Fathers?

Nisa notes in another piece, citing Asma Barlas, that Allah (SWT) commanded the Arabs to **not** regard Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the patriarch of not just Zaid, but of his *entire people*, and in the same verse (33:40) that rather he is the Messenger for *all*, ruling out the literal and symbolic encompassing our Ummah, save his real daughters. His Prophetic authority is not to be blindly followed the way the patriarchal Meccans traditionally followed their errant forefathers. Logic and rational thinking is the basis of falling under Prophetic guidance towards Islam, not blind, cult-like patriarchal norms. We saw this with the woman who disputed with him. So these norms were constantly disavowed throughout the lineage of the Prophets as the kuffar recycled the same lines through the ages regarding their fathers.

Qur'an 2:170 *And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has revealed," they say, "Rather (Arabic: بَلْ bal) , we will follow that which we found our fathers doing." Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?*

Aside from that:

⁸ Joseph Islam's daraba article

- The Qur'an says that Lut (a.s.) was a brother to them (Qur'an 26:161), not a father. In that vein, he would have endorsed his sisters of the community, not daughters.
- Lastly, "...and give not your daughters/women in marriage to idolaters..." (Qur'an 2:221)

Holes in the Standard Narrative

At this point, claiming that these "daughters" are women of the Lut's (a.s.) town amounts to academic laziness or dishonest interpolation for damage-control to reduce awkward interpretations by accommodating beliefs. As the Qur'an blows this stance into oblivion, we scrutinize the false notion that Lut (a.s.) is offering a heterosexual alternative to a homosexual sin through literal daughters. We run into some problems with these common narratives:

1. It does **not** seem that Lut is offering them *in marriage*. People assume he's offering them up to be had "done to" (as it reads in the verse) what they had planned for his guests. This also implies that a rape between different genders is preferable to one with the same gender, and would avoid at least Lut's (a.s.) immediate scorn otherwise. Casual homosexuality takes priority over heterosexual rape. Hence, the damage control.
2. Once more, if he's wanting to divert them back to heterosexual relations, they have *azwaj*. But we know this isn't about adultery, nor is he not telling them to rape their wives (or general unmarried women).
3. The Qur'an does not specify how many literal daughters he does have, though the Bible mentions at least two are present during the final escape; Allah knows best. Still, how will they marry these awful men? Again: "...and give not your daughters/women in marriage to idolaters...". There is no exception saying, "unless it is to stop idolater men from being gay".
4. Also: "Let no man guilty of adultery or fornication marry but a woman similarly guilty..." (Qur'an 24:3) His daughters were not similarly guilty.

He does appear to be outnumbered by a force of men he cannot project power against, a force that would be sufficient in cutting off the path. So unless his daughters, assuming there are a few, (who were among his loyal followers that fled the town with him) are each ready to marry a superior number of men (polyandry is generally not accepted in the mainstream), who are also *grave sinners to boot*, this ransom doesn't seem plausible. In fact, it's tragic whether it was a sacrificial rape offering or some hetero marital configuration of one daughter to many (horrible) men.

The Exchange at the Doorstep

Overview

During the exchange Lut (a.s.) has with the mob at the doorstep, Nisa points out that his daughters are not even there, as he had no support in his protest. (It would also have been quite awkward to make the offer with them standing there). There was no direct presence of them until they fled the town with their literal father. His townsfolk were apparently tipped off that there were visitors, which caused the initial frenzy. No one had actually caught sight of these visitors entering his house. Perhaps a treacherous insider informed the townsfolk (his wife- Qur'an 66:10)? So, Lut a.s. attempts to appeal to their own logic and say that these guests are actually his daughters, and therefore not low enough ('purer for you', unlike outsiders) to be raped, if they were to do so.

Because they appear to have wicked lust for power and a penchant for attacking victims '*from among the worlds*' to establish social hierarchy through rape, Nisa makes it a point here that his *local* daughters are of higher

status than to be subjected to the punishment of what normally is reserved for outsiders. The mob have no claim per their tradition (which Lut a.s. knows to his advantage) for locals, which is why despite his annoying preaching, there is no mention of an attack of such nature on him. Rather he is the one who protects victims with his residential privilege. Thinking quickly, he tries to dissuade them by saying those rumored guests are just visiting daughters.

“These guests are my [visiting] daughters!” (No travelers here!)

He makes the connection between his daughters being his guests when he says:

Qur'an 11:78 And his people came hastening to him, and before [this] they had been doing evil deeds. He said, "O my people, **these are my daughters**; they are purer for you. So fear Allah and do not disgrace me concerning **my guests**. Is there not among you a man of reason?"

Rather than differentiating daughters and guests, he is using the term **interchangeably** to soundly reinforce the idea that **these guests** are in fact, **his visiting girls from within the township**. The same exact plural demonstrative pronoun is used for both guests and daughters in Qur'an 15:68-71. (Not only that, the usage of it indicates he is referring to a party within the vicinity of his doorstep, not out and among the town). He urges them to refrain:

Qur'an 15:68 He said: Surely these are my guests, therefore do not disgrace me (Sarwar)

They bluntly remind him that they have told him before to not protect strangers, (demanding he should turn them over to him) to which he replies:

Qur'an 11:70 Lot said, "These are my daughters if you want them." (Sarwar)

He was not offering a swap. It is similar to how “travelers” and “males” were one and the same. There is a separation of time between the mob being struck in the eyes that night, and then the final shriek at dawn (Qur'an 54:38), which would buy him enough time to safely collect his daughters from their homes.

Purer for you: Appealing through their own reasoning

Keep in mind, he is attempting to reach them through their own twisted logic that his daughters are not eligible to be raped, and if they act (“**these are my daughters if ye must *do so***.” Qur'an 15:71) as they do with foreign men, they would violate their own customs. “If you do so” is not an invitation, it is to stop the mob by appealing to their norms.

Those targeted foreign men who are “pure” are not actually considered worthy of respect in their eyes. To them they are actually the untermenschen, the lower class to dominate. The foreign men that come into their territory are actually impure, inferior prey. If they want to stay “pure” like their own native class that does not get raped, they better stay out, and Lut (a.s.) better not protect them if they arrive (Qur'an 15:70). His people would opt for expelling them outside the town's boundaries if they cannot rape them.

Qur'an 7:82 “But the answer of his people was only that they said, "Evict them from your city! Indeed, they are men who keep themselves pure.” (Sahih International)

Since they do not rape native residents either, they also opt for expelling the righteous residents outside the town's boundaries, just like the former group. Since Lut a.s. himself is irritating but indigenous, it would appear they opted to expel him since the town specifically targets travelers from among the worlds, not their own:

Qur'an 26:162 “They said: If thou cease not, O Lot, thou wilt soon be of the outcast.”

This is why he attempts to sway the mob and claim the alleged newcomers are just his visiting daughters. They are purer for them as opposed to their normal prime targets and in their system this has no *haqq*. Also consider when the “purer” designation is used in the Qur’an, it does not at all imply that it is still objectively “pure” to rape outside men. This is merely a preferential style known as *tafdil*.⁹ For instance when Prophet Yousuf (a.s.) claimed that jail was dearer to him than adultery, or when it was said that the Believer’s way was better in guidance than the Pagans’, it does not imply that jail is dear to Yousuf (a.s.) or that those Pagans had guidance to begin with.

While he reminds them that this xenophobic style of attack is not legitimate, the men recognized his tactic and relay this back to him. In their backwards thinking of what is “pure” and what is “haqq” (claimed) for them, they call him out for anticipating it for his plan.

Qur’an 11:79: *They said, "You have already known that we have not concerning your daughters any claim, and indeed, you know what we want."* (Sahih International)

His ruse ultimately fails, and then the whole town spectacularly fails. Far removed from the typical and inherently unsteady homophobic herneumetic, the Nisa tafsir reveals that Lut (a.s.) is actively discouraging rape for all parties, heterosexual and homosexual. He is thus redeemed from the compromised judgement Muslims have attributed to him. They jam their revisionist views into the text by opting for either oppressive and polyandrous marriages or heterosexual rape offerings of his daughters. She also notes that since his story is interwoven with that of Ibrahim (a.s.), the prevention of child sacrifice should be fresh on the mind when interpreting the verse to even further eliminate wrong ideas. All the connections and disassociations for the correct reading of this story have been laid out perfectly in the Qur’an.

Recap

Lut a.s.: “Guys, these guests you heard about **glares at wife** are just my daughters visiting. So please, do not humiliate me or my guests like this when I have my daughters over. Oh, did I mention my guests are just my daughters? So if you are going to do what you do, to my guests - (my LOCAL daughters, mind you), you’re doing it to those who are ABOVE [purer] than the lesser class, if you insist on doing so [thereby breaking your own rape standards]. Just letting you know! One of you has to be reasonable, yes?”

His town: “You know why we’re here, and You KNEW we couldn’t claim your daughters. Ha, nice try.”

His daughters are not at all “eligible” to be raped per their standards, if they truly will commit the act (“if ye must *do so*”), because they aren’t the foreign men the mob heard news about, so the mission should have been aborted. The exchange at the doorstep is just verbal, not a material ransom. This, Lut a.s. Is vindicated of the homophobic interpretations that were willing to sacrifice his quick wit and moral compass alongside his daughter’s well-being, because Muslims themselves did not realize his plan. Do they sacrifice his daughters while they are seeing?

⁹ The clear Qur’an by khattab

6. Final Thoughts, Rape to Humiliate; Emasculation; Shaming Hosts and Guests

Rape is often used as a weapon in war, feuds, conflicts, impacting both physically and psychologically towards their victims. It can be used to shame, humiliate, embarrass, dominate, or even send a message of intimidation to the enemy's loved ones or those under one's protection. The raped end up feeling more shame than the rapists.

Prison rape and emasculation (men being "demoted" [misogyny] to woman status), female rape victims as collateral damage in feuds between individuals or nations; the rape of Rohingya women, U.S. forces of Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, and the Pakistan army in Bangladesh etc. History provides endless tragic case studies.

Because this requires acknowledging graphic practices of a variety of case studies and real situations outside of what the Qur'an has cared to unravel, I will not be going in depth here as this aims to be strictly Qur'an-centric. Some links are provided for further understanding. It is this lack of awareness that again, leads to conflation when looking at adultery and homosexuality in such scenarios. False associations or fallacious comparisons with other practices should not be made. Even if one were sheltered and not aware, the Qur'an does clarify with ب "bal". All else is tied together if you allow yourself to see.

“And the people of Lot, they are not far from you”.

Points needed to address for contention with this view

1. Why is the retractive particle used in all other verses outside of Surah 29:28-29, (the only time the crime is specified and receives an affirmative reply via a challenge from his people)?
2. If the role of bal as a retractive particle is denied in this case (for whatever reason), what of the multiple times it is used? Does this not open up the possibility?
3. Just as above, why is the linkage through “wa” being denied in 29:28-29?
4. Is the power struggle inherent to rape going into your consideration? If so, is heterosexual rape secondary to casual homosexuality?
5. Being gay is the sin no one before them had done? They invented this trait that became dominant in a community when heterosexuality is far more frequent in average populations?
6. Or, do you think it's because it was out in the open? So is it okay indoors?
7. No? Still a general sin? Just like adultery is even when no one sees it? Then where is the condemnation?
8. Why is there no punishment for “approaching men besides women” in general?
9. Why is there total silence of “women approaching men besides women” when gender has been specified for other aspects?
10. Why do 4:15 and 4:16 apply to **three** or more women, and then a man with another man or woman? And in the midst of financial issues?
11. Why consider 4:15 and 4:16 when we already have punishment for zina?
12. Is there not a double standard for marriage and zina for those that have a legal path and those that do not?
13. Did the Qur'an introduce the concept of marriage, or just seek to regulate an existing institution? This would be *the* place to include it as a general rule.

14. Why is something as explicit as incest mentioned in marriage rules but not same sex marriages?
15. Why did Lut (a.s.) say **Here** or **These** are my daughters, referring to the immediate vicinity of his doorstep, if he's talking about women from among the town?
16. Why is Lut (a.s.) considered the father of his community when the Qur'an explicitly says he is their brother, and he did not offer his "sisters?"
17. Why offer them wives when they have azwaj? Even if they were to newly marry, they disobeyed his orders before. Would they not go back to just attacking the traveling men, thus repeating the same charge but with specific azwaj this time?
18. Logistically, how is he going to marry off his few daughters to all these men? Are you willing to accept polyandry? Other than that, isn't this an insincere marriage?
19. If you acknowledge rape in this story, is he going to allow his daughters to marry such awful men? This strictly violates Qur'an 24:3 and Qur'an 2:221. *Or offer to be raped for the sake of hetero relations.*
20. Are you willing to compromise the judgement and character of Lut a.s. and the happiness of his daughters to "reform" those who obviously could not be reformed?

The following are **not** counter arguments:

1. "This is not found in the opinions of any jurist or scholar!"
We know, that's why this is radical and enlightening. Your scholars thought they were farting in group circles.
2. "You're twisting verses to suit desires!"
This is a strictly Qur'an-centric view. It can be tested and proven through this methodology. The standard view cannot.
3. "This is not in the Hadith and Sunnah!"
If it contradicts, inserts, or alters the Qur'anic purview then it holds no significance. Qur'an reigns supreme, full stop.
4. What aboutism' and false associations with anger, gluttonous urges, etc.
Insert "How many times must I teach you this lesson old man?!" meme
5. "You don't know Arabic!"
Then neither do the linguistic scholars that dedicated their entire lives to completing their lexicons. It was just a coincidence that the Qur'an itself consistently verifies their definitions.
6. "You're using ENGLISH translations. Classical Arabic is the most beautiful language whose meaning only XYZ can understand the true meaning of!"
You don't seem to have a problem in using English translations to prove YOUR points. Why the different rules for us?
7. "Well you're not a scholar, you have no training in *usul al fiqh*!"
Then bring forth all your ulema. They should refute ALL the above easily in an honest academic way for you rather than confirm your bias.
8. "This is a part of a Western, Zionist, LGBT liberal conspiracy!"
Citation needed. Also, suspicion is a sin. If you are proven wrong, you will be lashed for false testimony.

9. “Homosexuality will destroy the familial institution. It will spread and the human race will end reproduction! Gay gene is a hoax!!!”

Again? What did we say about knowing what and what doesn't constitute homosexuality?

10. “KAFFIR! MURTAD! QUR'ANIYOON! LIAR! You yourself are a GAY!”

You finally got to this point. This is literally the same style of arguing the kuffar used. Oh well, you tried.

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(ت) بَلْ, *nay, nay rather, not so, on the contrary, but* (Heb. בִּלְ, Phœn. בַּל). [When it is followed by a single word it is a conjunction.]

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بَلْ *bal* (also with foll. و *wa-*) *nay*, — *rather...*;
(and) *even*; *but*, *however*, *yet*

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بَلْ
But; on the contrary; or
rather; no; nay; verily

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<https://archive.org/details/AlMawridAModernArabicEnglishDictionary/page/n243/mode/2up>

بَلِّ: شفاء - راجع إبلال
rather; even; but, yet, however

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(بَلِّ)
بَلِّ but, nay rather

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bal, or rather, on the contrary;
no ; nay ; certainly ; sometimes ;

12. © Hani Deek 2005-2018. <http://arabic.tripod.com/Interrogation1.htm>

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Appendix

All Verses With Lut a.s. Story: <https://www.al-islam.org/alphabetical-index-holy-qur'an/prophet-lut>

http://lexicon.qur'anic-research.net/data/02_b/168_bl.html

^ A more legible looking text version of Lane's complete entry.

بَلْ

بَلْ is a particle of digression: (Mughnee, ك:) or, accord. to Mbr, it denotes emendation, wherever it occurs, in the case of a negation or an affirmation: (T, TA:) or it is a word of emendation, and denoting digression from that which precedes; as also بَلْ, in which the ن is a substitute for the ل, because بَل is of frequent occurrence, and بَل is rare; or, as IJ says, the latter may be an independent dial. var. (M.) When it is followed by a proposition, the meaning of the digression is either the cancelling of what precedes, as in *وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَانَهُ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ* [And they said, "The Compassionate hath gotten offspring;" extolled be his freedom from that which is derogatory from his glory! nay, or nay rather, or nay but, they are honoured servants (Kur xxi. 26)], or transition from one object of discourse to another, as in *فَذَاقْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا* [He hath attained felicity who hath purified himself, and celebrated the name of his Lord, and prayed: but ye prefer the present life (Kur lxxxvii. 14-16)]: (Mughnee, ك:*) and in all such cases it is an inceptive particle; not a conjunctive. (Mughnee.) When it is followed by a single word, it is a conjunction, (ش,* Mšb,* Mughnee, ك,) and requires that word to be in the same case as the word before it: (ش:) and if preceded by a command or an affirmation, (Mughnee, ك,) as in *إِصْرَبْ زَيْدًا* [Beat thou Zeyd: no, 'Amr], (Mšb, Mughnee, ك,) and *قَامَ زَيْدٌ بَلْ عَمْرٌو* [Zeyd stood: no, 'Amr], (M, Mughnee, ك,) or *جَاءَنِي أَخُوكَ بَلْ أَبُوكَ* [Thy brother came to me: no, thy father], (ش,) it makes what precedes it to be as though nothing were said respecting it, (ش,* Mšb,* Mughnee, ك,) making the command or affirmation to relate to what follows it: (ش,* Mšb,* Mughnee:) [and similar to these cases is the case in which it is preceded by an interrogation: see أَمْ as syn. with this particle:] but when it is preceded by a negation or a prohibition, it is used to confirm the meaning of what precedes it and to assign the contrary of that meaning to what follows it, (Mughnee, ك,) as in *مَا قَامَ زَيْدٌ عَمْرٌو* [Zeyd stood not, but 'Amr stood], (Mughnee,) or *مَا رَأَيْتُ زَيْدًا بَلْ عَمْرًا* [I saw not Zeyd, but I saw 'Amr], (ش,) and *لَا يَقُمْ زَيْدٌ بَلْ عَمْرٌو* [Let not Zeyd stand, but let 'Amr stand]. (Mughnee.) Mbr and 'Abd-El-Wáarith allow its being used to transfer the meaning of the negation and the prohibition to what follows it; so that, accord. to them, one may say, *مَا زَيْدٌ قَائِمًا بَلْ قَاعِدًا* [as meaning Zeyd is not standing: no, is not sitting], and *بَلْ قَاعِدٌ* [but is sitting]; the

meaning being different [in the two cases]. (Mughnee, K.*) The Koofees disallow its being used as a conjunction after anything but a negation [so in the Mughnee, but in the K a prohibition,] or the like thereof; so that one should not say, *صَرَبْتُ زَيْدًا بَلْ إِيَّاكَ* [I beat Zeyd: no, thee]. (Mughnee, K.) Sometimes *لَا* is added before it, to corroborate the meaning of digression, after an affirmation, as in the saying,

* وَجْهَكَ الْبَدْرُ لَا بَلِ الشَّمْسُ لَوْ لَمْ
* يُقْضَ لِلشَّمْسِ كَسْفُهُ وَأُقُول *

[Thy face is the full moon: no, but it would be the sun, were it not that eclipse and setting are appointed to happen to the sun]: and to corroborate what precedes it, after a negation, as in

* وَمَا هَجَرْتُكَ لَا بَلْ زَادَنِي شَغَفًا
* هَجْرٌ وَبَعْدُ تَرَاحَى لَا إِلَى أَجَل *

[And I did not abandon thee, or have not abandoned thee: no, but abandonment and distance, protracted, not to an appointed period, increased, or have increased, my heart-felt love]. (Mughnee, K.*)

Root: *بَل* - Entry: *بَلْ*—Signification: A2

Sometimes it is used to denote the passing from one subject to another without cancelling [what precedes it], and is *syn. with* *وَاو*, as in the saying in the K_{ur} [xxxv. 20 and 21], *وَاللَّهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ مُحِيطٌ بَلْ هُوَ* [And God from behind them is encompassing: and it is a glorious K_{ur}-án: or here it may mean *إِنَّ*, as in an ex. below]: and to this meaning it is made to accord in the saying, *لَهُ عَلَى دِينَارٍ بَلْ دِرْهَمٍ* [I owe him a *deenár* and a *dirhem*]. (Mṣb.)

Root: *بَل* - Entry: *بَلْ*—Signification: A3

In the following saying in the K_{ur} [xxxviii. 1], *وَالْقُرْآنُ ذِي الذِّكْرِ بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي عِزَّةٍ وَشِقَاقٍ*, it is said to signify *إِنَّ*; [so that the meaning is, *By the K_{ur}-án possessed of eminence, verily they who have disbelieved are in a state of pride and opposition;*] therefore the oath applies to it. (Akh, Ṣ.)

Root: *بَل* - Entry: *بَلْ*—Signification: A4

Sometimes the Arabs use it in breaking off a saying and commencing another; and thus a man commences with it a citation, or recitation, of verse; in which case, it does not form any part of the first verse, but is a sign of the breaking off, or ending, of what precedes. (Akh, Ṣ.)

Root: *بَل* - Entry: *بَلْ*—Signification: A5

Sometimes it is put in the place of *رَبَّ*, (Ṣ, Mughnee,) as in the saying of the *rājiz*,

* بَلْ مَهْمَهُ قَطَعْتُ بَعْدَ مَهْمِهِ *

[Many a far-extending desert have I traversed, after a far-extending desert]. (Ṣ: [and a similar ex. is given in the Mughnee.])

Root: *بَل* - Entry: *بَلْ*—Signification: A6

What is deficient in this word [supposing it to be originally of three letters] is unknown; and so in the cases of هَلَّ and قَدَّ: it may be a final و or ی or they may be originally بَلَّ and هَلَّ and قَدَّ. (Akh, Ş.)

Further reading

Male pride, Misogyny or emasculation in male-to-male rape

His brother keeps asking what's wrong with him. "I don't want to tell him," says Jean Paul. "I fear he will say: 'Now, my brother is not a man.'"

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/jul/17/the-rape-of-men>

Modern Examples of Conflating Adultery with Rape

Ms. Zafran in Pakistan

<https://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/17/world/in-pakistan-rape-victims-are-the-criminals.html>

She states sexual intercourse did happen. The other details are however not accounted for. Just like in 7:80 we see that the act of approaching men did indeed happen, but this time other details are elucidated. It is a lack of understanding of what constitutes these different things that causes reckless misunderstandings, and as a result, the innocent suffer.

Myths about Male Rape

<https://livingwell.org.au/information/unhelpful-myths-about-the-sexual-assault-and-rape-of-men/>

Oh this right here would sum up the short above paragraph well:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/man-abducted-from-train-and-raped-1557478.html>

“According to Mr Leak, male rape is not confined to the homosexual community and, like female rape, it has more to do with power than sexuality. The effects, he said, can be devastating and long- term, with feelings of frustration, powerlessness and anger experienced by victims.”

Female soldier aiding/abetting rape of Iraqi male teen:

Scott Higham; Joe Stephens (May 21, 2004). "New Details of Prison Abuse Emerge". The Washington Post. p. A01. Archived from the original on August 20, 2011. Retrieved September 19, 2011. Hilas also said he witnessed an Army translator having sex with a boy at the prison.

Packs <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6886282/>

This subtheme of rape is when the perpetrators of rape were reported to have been working or walking in flocks in search of victims to rape. The name of this subtheme/subtype is informed by the participants' utterances. For example, a participant reported that he was raped by a group of men who he met while walking in the street. He reported that the perpetrators behaved like hunters because immediately after seeing him, they came straight up to him and instructed him to go under a bridge, where they raped him.

Another participant reported that he was raped by a group of women who entered his home pretending to be looking for a job. However, they were actually "hunting for someone" with whom they could fulfill their sexual desires.