

SEX & SEXUALITY IN ISLAM

According to Islam, life is not a wretched prison or a dark grave, nor is it a happy hunting ground where one is absolutely free to 'hunt' whatever one desires. It is life worth living, provided one endeavours to live within proper moral limits. Thus in the ideal life of Islam there is no place for shifting the natural, psychic impulses. Its approach to life is not negative, "a systematic slaying of all the propensities of life" or self-mortification. Islam exhorts its followers to live life with full zest and vigour.

In other religions, piety lies in denying oneself the relish of life, whereas in Islam piety is attained in throwing oneself resolutely and joyfully into the arms of life, but not be overpowered by its carnal temptations. It encourages healthy enjoyments and one out of these is the satisfaction of the sexual desire. Islam does not associate the idea of sexual pleasure with that of sin and vice. Pleasure gives strength to the moral facet of a man provided one does not transgress the limits of its ethical code.

Islam believes that there is nothing superfluous and nothing evil in human impulses. They are creative forces given to man provided they are properly made use of.

SEX & SEXUALITY IN ISLAM *Mawlānā* FEIZEL CHOTHIA

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