

Surah 4. An-Nisaa

Asad: And punish [thus] both of the guilty parties;¹³ but if they both repent and mend their ways, leave them alone: for, behold, God is an acceptor of repentance, a dispenser of grace.¹⁴

Malik: And the two, whether married or unmarried, who are guilty of this offense, punish them both. If they repent and mend their ways, leave them alone. Surely Allah is the Acceptor of Repentance, Merciful.

Pickthall: And as for the two of you who are guilty thereof, punish them both. And if they repent and improve, then let them be. Lo! Allah is Relenting, Merciful.

Yusuf Ali: If two men among you are guilty of lewdness punish them both. If they repent and amend leave them alone; for Allah is Oft-returning Most Merciful.

Transliteration: Waallathani yatiyaniha minkum faathuohuma fain taba waaslaha faaAaridoo AAanhuma inna Allaha kana tawwaban raheeman

Khatab:

And the two among you who commit this sin—discipline them. If they repent and mend their ways, relieve them. Surely Allah is ever Accepting of Repentance, Most Merciful.

Author Comments

13 - Lit., "and the two from among you who become guilty thereof, punish them both". According to most of the commentators, this refers to immoral conduct on the part of a man and a woman as well as to homosexual relations.

14 - Some of the commentators attribute to the term fahishah (here rendered as "immoral conduct") the meaning of "adultery" or "fornication" and are, consequently, of the opinion that this verse has been "abrogated" by [24:2](#), which lays down the punishment of one hundred stripes for each of the guilty parties. This unwarranted assumption must, however, be rejected. Quite apart from the impossibility of admitting that any passage of the Qur'an could have been "abrogated" by another of its passages (see surah {2}, note [87]), the expression fahishah does not, by itself, connote illicit sexual intercourse: it signifies anything that is grossly immodest, unseemly, lewd, indecent or abominable in word or in deed (cf. Lane VI, 2344f.), and is by no means restricted to sexual transgressions. Read in this context, and in conjunction with [24:2](#), this expression obviously denotes here immoral conduct not necessarily amounting to what is termed zina (i.e., "adultery" or "fornication"), and therefore redeemable by sincere repentance (in contrast to a proven act of zina, which is punishable by flogging). - It is noteworthy that in all cases of alleged sexual transgressions or misbehaviour the Qur'an stipulates the direct evidence of four witnesses (instead of the two required in all other judicial cases) as a sine qua non of conviction. For the reasons underlying this injunction, as well as for its judicial implications, see note [7] on [24:4](#).

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