**Response to Biblical Arguments for Homosexuality**

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The rise of LGBTQ supporting Christian churches in America started in 1968 and the first Jewish LGBT synagogue was founded in 1972. For the roughly 3,500 years leading up to that, everyone knew exactly what was meant by the Old Testament references to homosexuality and for the 2,000 years leading up to the 1970s everyone knew exactly what was meant by the New Testament references. The 1970s saw an effort to question the meaning of these scriptures. If this questioning came as a result of new linguistic or textual analysis, you would see a coherent argument on why these scriptures were wrong but that is not what we see. We see a wide array of opinions regarding these scriptures. There is no agreement in these explanations and the explanations frequently contradict each other. The only unifying element to these arguments is that everything the Bible says about homosexuality is wrong. This is a pattern we see repeatedly when people choose not to examine scripture to find its true meaning (exegesis) but rather decide what they want scripture to say and interpret the scriptures to support their opinion (eisegesis).

Even if you were to successfully reinterpret every scripture about homosexuality and transgenderism to suggest the Bible doesn’t condemn it, you are still facing a complete lack of scriptures supporting it. Suggestions that Jacob was gender-non-conforming compared to Esau or that David and Jonathan had a sexual relationship are fanciful attempts to insert the LGBTQ agenda into scriptures with no actual proof. If God approves of homosexuality why didn’t He say so? If God approves of homosexual marriage, why is every reference to marriage in scripture about heterosexual marriage? Why is every reference to homosexuality in scripture negative? To say scripture allows for homosexuality requires the reader to reinterpret every negative verse and disregard the absence of any positive verses.

There is no Biblical text which approves of or even allows the lifestyle or practice of homosexuality. LGBTQ proponents must rely on textual criticism but they are not even able to unite in their critiques.

**God’s Plan for Sexuality**

Genesis 1:27-18 - **27**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **28**God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

* Objection
  + “Male and female” should be translated “male or female.”
  + The word “and” in “male and female” demonstrates that all are created both male and female.
* Biblical Response
  + These arguments are wishful thinking (eisegesis) and not even worthy of a response. Instead, consider the following: Why would a loving, all powerful God intentionally put someone in a body that does not match their identity? That is a monstrous thing to do. A loving God would perfectly align body and identity.
* Objection
  + God’s perfect plan for sexuality includes homosexuality.
* Biblical Response
  + Why would God create man and woman to be a perfect biological match then want men to engage in sexual activity with other men or women with other women? If God’s plan for sexuality is simply about enjoyment why would He forbid incest? God’s plan for sexuality is tied to the command to be fruitful and multiply, something which cannot be achieved in homosexual unions.

Genesis 2:24 -For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

* Objection
  + God only desires monogamy. This shouldn’t be taken to mean only one man and one woman, but any two people.
* Biblical Response
  + Every reference to marriage in scripture is to heterosexual marriage. God even appears to bless polygamy (e.g., Jacob with Leah and Rachel) but never blesses a homosexual relationship. It is far easier to make the case that God wants polygamy than that God wants homosexual marriage. There is no support for the argument that the Bible requires monogamy but not heterosexual monogamy.

**Homosexuality and the Law**

Leviticus 18:22 - ‘You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination.’

Leviticus 20:13a - ‘If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act…’

* Objection: “Male” should be understood to mean “male temple prostitute.” [WMC]
* Biblical Response: Scripture uses the following Hebrew words for “temple prostitute” in other locations (Gen 38:21-22, Deut 23:17, 1 Kings 14:24, 1 Kings 15:12, 2 Kings 23:7). None of these are used in Leviticus 18 or 20 so there is no support for the claim that these verses should be interpreted in that way.
  + - קָדֵ֖ש / qā-ḏêš / qadesh
    - קְדֵשָֽׁה׃ / qə-ḏê-šāh
    - הַקְּדֵשִׁ֖ים / haq-qə-ḏê-šîm
    - Qadesh / קָדֵשׁ comes from the root קדש  meaning "holy" (thus “temple” for prostitute)
* Objection: “Male” should be translated “young male,” meaning two adult males may lie with each other.
* Biblical Response: All uses of זָכָ֔ר / zā-ḵār as “man child” refer clearly and specifically to newborns. Anywhere else they are used the translation is simply “man.”
  + Circumcision of an 8 day old boy
    - Gen 17:10, 12, 14 - KJV: man child
  + Giving birth to a son
    - Lev 12:2 - KJV: man child
    - Isaiah 66:7 - KJV: man child
    - Jer 20:15 - KJV: man child
* Objection: Leviticus 18-20 is only about not conforming to the practices of the Canaanites. [WMC]
* Biblical Response
  + Walter Wink, who attacks all of the other of the scriptures about homosexuality, refers to these two passages as “unequivocal condemnations” of homosexuality [Wink].
  + If these commands are only meant to differentiate the people of Israel from the people of Canaan or Egypt does that suggest all of God’s commands are only to differentiate, that there is no greater Truth in them? Leviticus 18-20 forbids incest and adultery. Should we disregard what God says about these practices? If not, how do we decide which of these commands to keep and which to discard?
  + If homosexuality is part of God’s perfect plan for sexuality, why would He deny this beautiful, perfect behavior just because other nations were doing it?
* Objection: “Social regulations regarding adultery, incest, rape and prostitution are, in the Old Testament, determined largely by considerations of the males' property rights over women.” [Wink]
* Biblical Response: Do I really need one? Incest is condemned because of “males’ property rights”? Wink is throwing everything he can think of at these verses instead of forming a single coherent argument against them.

* Objection: Lev 18:7 (“The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.”) and Lev 18:14 (“Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she is thine aunt.”) explicitly forbid same-sex incest suggesting same sex non-incest relationships are acceptable. [Dershowitz]
* Biblical Response:
  + Lev 18:8 shows the clear meaning of Lev 18:7 - “The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.” The nakedness of your father’s wife (whether or not she is your mother) is the same as uncovering your father’s nakedness and is therefore banned. The exact same logic applies to your aunt’s nakedness being your uncle’s nakedness. This passage is not about same sex/opposite sex.
  + The KJV is in the minority leaving this so vague. Many other translations (NASB, NIV, ESV) make it clear that your father’s wife’s nakedness is the same thing as your father’s nakedness.
  + Dershowitz’s argument is the logical equivalent of saying, explicitly forbidding same-sex incest suggests opposite sex incest relationships are acceptable which is his next argument...
* Objection: Lev 18, when properly “glossed” reveals that homosexual incest is not prohibited. “Once the new glosses were added to the text, the prohibitions in Leviticus against incest no longer outlawed any same-sex couplings; only heterosexual pairs were forbidden.” [Dershowitz]
* Biblical Response:
  + The logic here is embarrassingly flawed. The notion that Lev 18 speaks only to heterosexual incest and allows for homosexual acts, even incestuous ones, is absurd beyond belief.
  + As noted above, the clear meaning of Lev 18:7 is that the nakedness of your father’s wife is the same as the nakedness of your father. The quoted passages have nothing to do with homosexuality, nor can you “reasonably” draw any conclusions about homosexuality from them.
  + If you read Dershowitz’s article in full you see that his entire argument is based on his assumption that there is a second editor of Leviticus that added the prohibitions against homosexuality. His entire article contains numerous instances of “I believe” and not a shred of evidence that a second editor existed or that this supposed second editor added the prohibitions.

* Objection: Christians are cherry picking verses (we eat lobster which is also forbidden).
* Biblical Response
  + First, if you believe God approves of homosexuality but disapproves of incest you are cherry picking verses.
  + Second, as Christians it is imperative that we consider the law in context because not all of it is meant to apply to Christians. God’s moral law (the 10 commandments and the laws that follow off of that) reflect God’s moral nature and therefore reflect how mankind should live as imitators of God (Eph 5:1).
* Objection: Christ fulfilled the Old Testament law, and the New Testament teaches that Christians should live under the new covenant rather than the old one. Consequently, this verse has never applied to Christians. [Vines]
* Biblical Response: Nothing about the new covenant permits or nullifies sin. God’s laws against idolatry, murder, theft, adultery and many others apply to us under the new covenant. You cannot discard God’s declarations just because they appeared in the Old Testament. Paul’s writings make it clear that the prohibition against homosexuality isn’t limited to the old covenant.
* Objection: Objection: For a man to lie with a man “as with a woman” violated the patriarchal gender norms of the ancient world, which is likely why Leviticus prohibited it. But the New Testament casts a vision of God’s kingdom in which the hierarchy between men and women is overcome in Christ. So not only is Leviticus’s prohibition inapplicable to Christians on its own, the rationale behind it doesn’t extend to Christians, either. [Vines]
* Biblical Response: There is no textual reason to argue that this law was in any way dependent on patriarchal gender norms. It is part of laws governing sexual behavior including incest which are not linked to patriarchy. Even if this claim were true, Ephesians 5:22-24 reinforces to some degree the Old Testament patriarchy.
* Objection: A holiness code is a list of behaviors that people of faith find offensive in a certain place and time. In this case, the code was written for priests only, and its primary intent was to set the priests of Israel over and against priests of other cultures. [White]
* Biblical Response: There is no textual support for suggesting these laws apply only to priests. In fact, the priests are instructed “to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them through Moses” [Lev 10:11].

**Romans**

Romans 1:24-27 - 24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

* Objection: No doubt Paul was unaware of the distinction between sexual orientation, over which one has apparently very little choice, and sexual behavior, over which one does. [Wink]
* Biblical Response: The following Greek and Latin words express various homosexual orientations and behaviors: erastes, eromenos, paiderasste, paiderastes/paiderastïs, paidomanes, paidophthoros euryproktoi, pathikos, tribas, kinaidos, frictrix, tribades, lakkoproktoi, arrenomanes, dihetaristriai, hetairistriai, kinaidoi, lesbiai. (See the next section for the meanings of these words.) Many of these words demonstrate that homosexuality as an identity was known before Paul’s time. In fact, in “The Symposium” (around 350BC) Plato uses the term hetairistriai, meaning women who are attracted to other women, showing that lesbianism was known well before Paul’s time.
* Objection: Paul is condemning heterosexuals who are performing homosexual acts contrary to their heterosexual nature. [Wink]
* Biblical Response: Wink is contradicting himself here. He claims that Paul would have known nothing about homosexuality as an orientation, yet Paul condemns heterosexuals for performing homosexual acts without having a homosexual orientation.
* Objection: Paul is condemning lust, not homosexuality. [Wink]
* Biblical Response:
  + If this is the case, it is extremely odd that Paul didn’t mention the most common form of lust: men lusting after women. This was the only form of lust that Jesus specifically called out (Matt 5:28) so it was clearly a known problem. Why would Paul, who is quite precise in his language, use language that only condemned homosexual lust if his point was to condemn all lustful actions?
  + What “truth of God” (v25) do lusters exchange for a lie? The truth of God is His designed order of one man one woman.
  + Verse 27 tells us that “Men gave up the natural function of the woman.” This clearly indicates that men who “burned in their desire towards one another” instead of for women are committing unnatural acts.
* Objection: Paul was a closet homosexual.
* Biblical Response: This argument is always presented without the slightest shred of proof. Even if he were, why does that nullify what he says in Romans 1? Was he so embittered by being forbidden to publicly acknowledge his homosexuality that he sought to forbid others from that activity?
* Objection: Romans 1 wasn’t written by Paul.
* Biblical Response: There is not one shred of proof for this assertion. The language used is clearly that of Paul. There is also continuity between what Paul states here and in 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy.

**1 Corinthians/1 Timothy**

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 - Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Timothy 1:8-11 - But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

* Objection: Arsenokoitai was made up by Paul so we don’t know what he meant.
* Biblical Response: Paul repeated the language the Septuagint used in the translation of Leviticus 18 and 20 so Paul didn’t make this word up.
* Objection: Arsenokoitai is ambiguous. It is not clear whether 1 Cor. 6:9 and 1 Tim. 1:10 refer to the "passive" and "active" partners in homosexual relationships, or to homosexual and heterosexual male prostitutes. In short, it is unclear whether the issue is homosexuality alone, or promiscuity and "sex-for-hire." [Wink, Vines]
* Objection: Paul could have used any of these words to clearly convey homosexuality [Gay Christian Website]:
  + These terms do not mean homosexuality generically
    - erastes - a sometimes older man who loves a sometimes younger male
    - eromenos - a sometimes younger male who loves an older male
    - paiderasste – sexual behavior between males
    - paiderastes or paiderastïs - παιδεραστής derived from the Greek word pais, παῖς a boy, meaning lover of boys
    - paidomanes - a male mad for boys or boy crazy
    - paidophthoros - a Greek word meaning corrupter of boys
    - euryproktoi – men who dress as women, also a vulgar reference to anal penetration
    - lesbiai - a synonym referencing lesbian sexuality, meaning essentially the same thing as dihetaristriai, hetairistriai, tribad, tribades, from: Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism, Brooton, Bernadette, p. 23.
    - dihetaristriai - a synonym referencing lesbian sexuality, meaning essentially the same thing as hetairistriai, tribad, tribades, from: Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism, Brooton, Bernadette, p. 23.
    - hetairistriai - women who are attracted to other women, used by Plato’s character Aristophanes, in The Symposium. May also refer to hyper-masculine women, from Lucian’s Dialogue of the Courtesans, cited by Brooten, p. 52.
  + These words refer to only one participant in the encounter
    - pathikos – the passive penetrated partner in a male couple
    - tribas - the active partner in a lesbian relationship, who takes the male role
    - kinaidos – a word for effeminate, κίναιδος or kínaidoi (cinaedus in its Latinized form), a man "whose most salient feature was a supposedly feminine love of being sexually penetrated by other men." Winkler, John J., 1990, The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece, New York: Routledge.
* Biblical Response: Paul used the language employed in the Septuagint which clearly refers to homosexuality. There is no textual reason to assume Paul was being selective in one kind of homosexuality versus another just because he only used one word.

**Christ**

* Objection: Christ never spoke out against homosexuality indicating His approval of it.
* Biblical Response: Christ never spoke out against incest or pedophilia. Does that mean He approves of those behaviors as well?

Matt 19:4-6 **- 4** And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, **5**and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? **6** So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

* Objection: Christ was speaking about marriage between any two people being permanent, not just heterosexual marriage.
* Biblical Response: Christ was quoting the creation account in Genesis where only one man and one woman were created and married according to God’s design. If homosexuality was part of God’s perfect design for sexuality, why did Genesis or Christ include this part of God’s perfection?

Ephesians 5:31-32 - FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

Revelation 19:7 - “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.”

* Biblical Response: God framed Christ’s relationship to the church as husband and wife. If God is blessing same sex marriage, then Christ is also the husband to His husband the church and is wife to His wife the church. Christ was a man. There can be no debate about that. As a man, his bride is a woman. Any other assertion makes a mockery of this imagery.

[Dershowitz] <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/21/opinion/sunday/bible-prohibit-gay-sex.html>

[Gay Christian Website] <https://www.gaychristian101.com/what-words-could-paul-have-used-if-he-intended-to-condemn-homosexuality.html>

[Michaelson] Chaos, Law, and God <https://repository.law.umich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1075&context=mjgl>

[Vines] <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/05/us/samesex-scriptures.html>

[White] <https://www.umsl.edu/~safezone/files/pdfs/Manual/14-The%20Bible%20and%20Homosexuality.pdf>

[Wick] Walter Wick <http://umaffirm.org/study/Homosexuality%20and%20the%20Bible.pdf>

[WMC] <http://whosoevermccp.com/the-bible-and-homosexuality/leviticus-1822/>