

THE RELEVANCE OF THE HADITH ON THE ANGELS' CURSE UPON A WIFE WHO REFUSES HER HUSBAND'S INVITATION IN THE CONTEXT OF MARITAL RAPE

Qurota Ayunin Nissa^{1*}, Ahmad Fudhaili²

¹²Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

qurota.ayunin25@mhs.uinjkt.ac.id

ahmad.fudhaili@uinjkt.ac.id

(*) Corresponding Author

qurota.ayunin25@mhs.uinjkt.ac.id

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 20-06-2026

Revised : 15-07-2026

Accepted : 30-07-2026

KEYWORDS

Hadith; marital rape;
Ma'ānī al-Ḥadīth;
maqāṣid al-sharī'ah;
mu'āsyarah bi al-
ma'rūf

ABSTRACT

The hadith concerning the angels' curse upon a wife who refuses her husband's invitation is frequently interpreted as imposing an absolute obligation on wives to comply with their husbands' sexual requests, raising debates regarding its relevance to the issue of marital rape. This study aims to verify the authenticity of the hadith, examine its contextual meaning, and analyze its relevance to the phenomenon of marital rape. This research employs a library research design using a thematic (mawḍū'ī) hadith approach. The analysis consists of takhrīj al-ḥadīth, verification of the transmission chains and textual variants, sanad and matn criticism, contextual interpretation based on Yusuf al-Qaradawī's Ma'ānī al-Ḥadīth approach, and analysis through the perspective of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. The findings indicate that the hadith, which is transmitted in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, possesses authentic transmission chains, while the examination of its sanad and textual variants confirms the reliability and continuity of its principal narrations. Contextual interpretation demonstrates that the warning in the hadith applies only to unjustified refusal of marital obligations rather than to every form of refusal. Consequently, the hadith cannot be interpreted as legitimizing coercive sexual relations within marriage but should be understood as an ethical framework that emphasizes reciprocal rights and responsibilities, justice, compassion, and respect for human dignity. The novelty of this study lies in integrating takhrīj, sanad and matn criticism, Yusuf al-Qaradawī's contextual approach, and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah to provide a comprehensive reinterpretation of the hadith in relation to the contemporary issue of marital rape.

This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license.



INTRODUCTIONS

Marriage in Islam is founded upon the principles of *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf* (living together with kindness), *mawaddah wa rahmah* (love and compassion), and a balanced fulfillment of the rights and obligations of both husband and wife (Afrilian & Rizki, 2023; Muhsin et al., 2021). Within this framework, sexual relations are not merely the fulfillment of biological desires but also constitute an act of worship grounded in mutual willingness, respect, and responsibility. Consequently, intimacy in marriage should be based on the consent of both spouses rather than coercion that disregards either partner's physical or psychological condition (Susila, 2013; Sya'ima et al., 2024).

One of the most frequently cited prophetic traditions concerning marital relations is the hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim regarding the curse of angels upon a wife who refuses her husband's invitation to bed without a valid reason (al-Bukhari, 2011):

"قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَلَبِثَتْ، قَبَاتَ غَضَبًا، لَعَنَتْهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "If a husband calls his wife to his bed and she refuses, causing him to spend the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning." (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 3237)

For centuries, this hadith has served as one of the principal textual foundations in classical Islamic discussions concerning the sexual rights and obligations of spouses. Nevertheless, when interpreted literally and detached from its historical and ethical context, it may lead to the assumption that a wife is religiously obliged to comply with her husband's sexual request under all circumstances, thereby narrowing the space for legitimate refusal. Such an interpretation potentially overlooks broader Islamic principles emphasizing justice, compassion, reciprocity, and *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf* in marital life (Douki Dedieu et al., 2021; Mateen, 2020).

The issue becomes increasingly significant when examined alongside the contemporary phenomenon of marital rape, defined as non-consensual sexual intercourse committed by one spouse against the other through physical force, psychological pressure, intimidation, or coercion (Karyanto, 2018; Muqtada et al., 2024). Marital rape is internationally recognized as a form of domestic sexual violence because of its severe physical, psychological, and emotional consequences for victims. In Indonesia, this issue has also received legal recognition through Law No. 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, which categorizes forced sexual intercourse within marriage as a form of domestic violence (Samsudin, 2010). These legal and social developments encourage renewed scholarly reflection on how Islamic normative texts addressing marital intimacy should be understood in contemporary contexts.

Several contemporary studies have observed that textual interpretations of the hadith concerning the curse of angels continue to influence religious discourse on marital sexual obligations. In certain religious and social contexts, such interpretations may discourage wives from refusing unwanted sexual relations because refusal is perceived as sinful or as exposing them to divine condemnation (M. H. Aziz, 2025; Rinangku & Munawaroh, 2025). This situation illustrates a tension between literal readings of the hadith and contemporary understandings of sexual violence, human dignity, and the objectives of Islamic law. Consequently, the hadith requires contextual reinterpretation that remains faithful to the Prophetic tradition while aligning with the higher objectives of Islamic law, particularly the protection of life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), human dignity (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*), and family welfare (Nikmatullah et al., 2026; Rafika et al., 2024).

Previous studies have discussed this issue from different perspectives. (Isti'anah, 2022) examined the hadith concerning the curse of angels using a thematic (*mawḍū'ī*) approach and concluded that the curse is conditional rather than absolute, applying only when a wife refuses without a legitimate Sharī'ah excuse. Windariana analyzed marital rape through the interpretation of Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 222–223 in Tafsir al-Azhar and argued that Islamic teachings

on sexuality are fundamentally based on mutual respect and reject the objectification of women. Meanwhile, (Samsudin, 2010) examined marital rape from legal and human rights perspectives, emphasizing that forced sexual intercourse within marriage constitutes a form of violence with serious physical and psychological consequences for victims. These studies have enriched discussions on marital ethics, sexual violence, and Islamic legal thought; however, they approach the issue from separate disciplinary perspectives.

Despite these valuable contributions, several important gaps remain. First, previous studies generally examine either the authenticity and meaning of the hadith, Qur'anic interpretation, or the legal dimensions of marital rape without integrating these perspectives into a unified analytical framework. Second, no previous study has simultaneously employed *takhrīj al-ḥadīth*, sanad criticism, matn analysis, Yusuf al-Qaradawi's *Ma'ānī al-Ḥadīth* approach, and the perspective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* to reinterpret the hadith in relation to marital rape. Third, limited attention has been given to demonstrating how a contextual understanding of the hadith can reconcile fidelity to the Prophetic tradition with the Islamic objectives of protecting life, dignity, justice, and mutual consent within marriage. These gaps indicate the need for a more comprehensive reinterpretation that bridges classical hadith scholarship with contemporary discussions on domestic sexual violence.

This study aims to reinterpret the hadith concerning the curse of angels upon wives who refuse their husbands' sexual invitations through an integrated framework consisting of *takhrīj al-ḥadīth*, sanad criticism, matn analysis, Yusuf al-Qaradawi's *Ma'ānī al-Ḥadīth* approach, and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. By employing this comprehensive framework, the study seeks to explain the relevance of the hadith to the contemporary phenomenon of marital rape and to demonstrate that a contextual understanding of the Prophetic tradition upholds justice, mutual consent, compassion, and the protection of human dignity as fundamental principles of marital relations in Islam.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs library research using a thematic (*mawḍū'ī*) hadith approach. The primary data consist of hadiths concerning the curse of angels upon wives who refuse their husbands' invitation to sexual intercourse, collected from the *Kutub al-Sittah*, particularly the narrations contained in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, as well as relevant works of *syarḥ al-ḥadīth*. Secondary data were obtained from classical and contemporary literature on hadith studies, Islamic jurisprudence, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, marital ethics, and scientific publications discussing marital rape from Islamic, legal, and social perspectives.

The selection of hadiths was based on two criteria: (1) narrations explicitly addressing a wife's refusal of her husband's sexual invitation and the associated curse of angels, and (2) narrations that provide explanatory information relevant to the interpretation of marital rights and obligations. The primary references include *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and selected classical commentaries that discuss the legal and ethical implications of these narrations.

The research was conducted through several stages. First, hadith identification and *takhrīj* were carried out to locate all relevant narrations and trace their original sources in the *Kutub al-Sittah*. Second, the sanad of each narration was analyzed by mapping the chains of transmission and evaluating the reliability (*'adālah*) and accuracy (*ḍabt*) of the transmitters based on the assessments of classical hadith critics. Third, matn analysis was conducted by examining the linguistic structure, thematic coherence, and consistency of the hadith with other narrations on the same topic, as well as with the general principles of the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah.

The interpretation of the hadith was subsequently carried out using Yusuf al-Qaradawi's *Ma'ānī al-Ḥadīth* approach. This approach emphasizes that hadith should be understood comprehensively rather than merely through its literal meaning. Accordingly, the interpretation was conducted by relating the hadith to relevant Qur'anic verses, comparing it with other hadiths discussing the same theme, considering the historical context (*asbāb al-wurūd*) and the objectives of the Prophet's guidance, distinguishing between permanent objectives and context-dependent applications, and identifying the ethical values underlying the narration (Rafsanjani & Khoiryuf, 2023).

The findings were contextualized through the perspective of maqāsid al-sharī'ah to examine their relevance to the contemporary phenomenon of marital rape. The analysis focused on whether the contextual meaning of the hadith is consistent with the objectives of Islamic law, particularly the protection of life (ḥifẓ al-nafs), human dignity (ḥifẓ al-'ird), family welfare, and the principle of mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf. Through these analytical stages, the study seeks to formulate a contextual understanding of the hadith that remains faithful to the Prophetic tradition while responding to contemporary issues of sexual violence within marriage.

Results and Discussion

Hadith About the Curse of the Angels on the Wife Who Refuses the Husband's Invitation

In this discussion, the researcher first identifies the hadiths concerning the curse of angels upon wives who refuse their husbands' invitation through the process of takhrīj al-ḥadīth. This stage aims to determine the original sources of the narrations, identify their transmission routes, and examine their position in the principal hadith collections before conducting sanad and matn analyses.

The takhrīj method employed in this study is al-takhrīj bi al-alfāz (keyword-based takhrīj) using al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī. The keyword لَعَنَ (la'ana, "to curse") was selected because it represents the central expression in the hadith under investigation. The search identified several narrations preserved in the principal hadith collections, including Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan Abū Dāwūd, and Musnad Aḥmad (Afrilian & Rizki, 2023; Muhsin et al., 2021). Although these narrations exhibit minor variations in wording, they convey the same essential meaning regarding the Prophet's statement on a wife who refuses her husband's invitation without a legitimate excuse.

The narration recorded by Imam al-Bukhārī is as follows:

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ ثَنَا أَبُو عَوَانَةَ عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ عَنْ أَبِي حَازِمٍ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَأَبَتْ، فَبَاتَ غَضَبًا، لَعَنَتُهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ». تَابَعَهُ شُعْبَةُ وَأَبُو حَمْزَةَ وَابْنُ دَاوُدَ وَأَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ

"It was narrated to us by Musaddad, from Abu 'Awanah, from al-A'mash, from Abu Hazim, from Abu Hurairah, who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'If a man calls his wife to his bed but she refuses, causing him to spend the night angry with her, the angels will curse her until morning.' This narration is also transmitted by Shu'bah, Abu Hamzah, Ibn Dawud, and Abu Mu'awiyah from al-A'mash." (al-Bukhari, 2019).

The narration recorded by Imam Muslim states:

وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَأَبُو كُرَيْبٍ، قَالَا: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ. (ح)، وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو سَعِيدٍ الْأَشْجِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ. (ح)، وَحَدَّثَنِي زُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ (وَاللَّفْظُ لَهُ) حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ، كُلُّهُمْ عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ، فَلَمْ تَأْتِهِ، فَبَاتَ غَضَبًا عَلَيْهَا، لَعَنَتُهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ».

"And Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah and Abu Kurayb narrated to us from Abu Mu'awiyah; Abu Sa'id al-Ashajj narrated to us from Waki'; and Zuhayr ibn Harb narrated to us from Jarir all from al-A'mash, from Abu Hazim, from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'If a man calls his wife to his bed but she does not come to him, and he spends the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning.'" (al-Naysaburi, 2011).

The narration recorded by Imam Abū Dāwūd is as follows:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَمْرِو الرَّازِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ، عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَلَمْ تَأْتِهِ، فَبَاتَ غَضَبًا عَلَيْهَا لَعَنَتُهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ».

"Muhammad ibn 'Amr al-Razi narrated to us from Jarir, from al-A'mash, from Abu Hazim, from Abu Hurairah, that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'If a husband calls his wife to his bed but she does not come to him, and he spends the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning.'" (al-Sijistani, 2009).

The narration recorded by Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal states:

حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ، عَنْ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ، فَأَبَتْ عَلَيْهِ، قَبِيتَ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهَا سَاخِطٌ، لَعَنَتْهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ".

"Waki' narrated to us from al-A'mash, from Abu Hazim, from Abu Hurairah, who reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'If a husband calls his wife to his bed but she refuses him, and he spends the night displeased with her, the angels curse her until morning.'" (Hanbal, 2001)

A comparison of these four narrations demonstrates only minor lexical variations, such as the expressions fa-abat, fa-lam ta'tihi, and wa huwa 'alayhā sākhīṭ, all of which convey the same substantive meaning. These differences do not alter the legal or ethical message of the hadith. Instead, they reflect variations in transmission while collectively strengthening the narration through multiple transmission routes (mutāba'āt). Furthermore, all four narrations ultimately trace back to the Companion Abū Hurairah, indicating that the hadith is transmitted through a common Companion source with supporting chains at the levels of the Tābi'ūn and Tabi' al-Tābi'īn.

Based on these four transmission routes, the sanad of the hadith can be illustrated as follows:

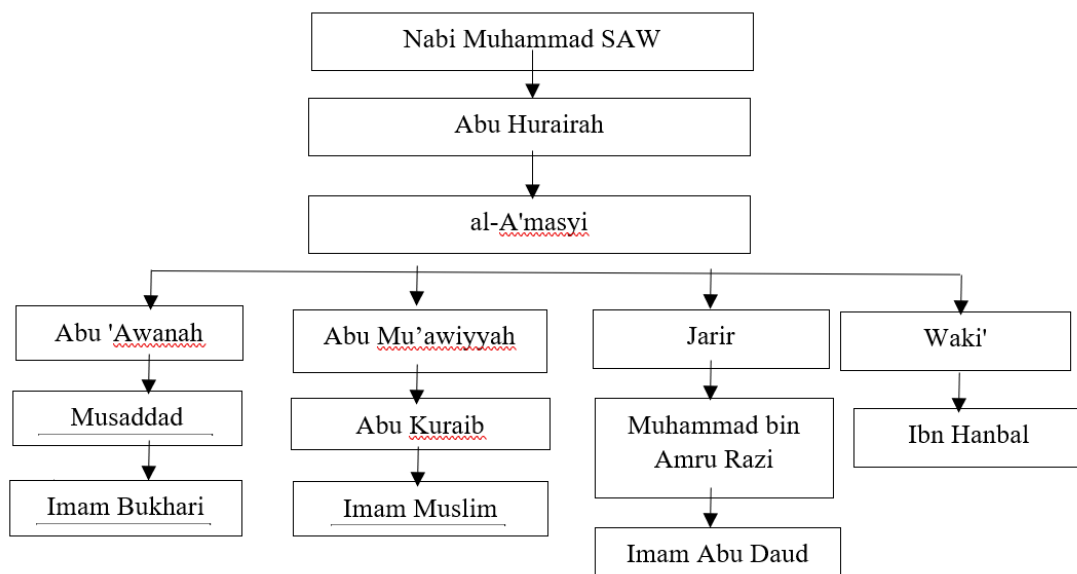


Figure 1. Sanad Scheme of the Hadith

Based on the four transmission routes identified above, all narrations ultimately trace back to the Companion Abū Hurairah. Consequently, no shawāhid (supporting narrations from different Companions) were identified, while several mutāba'āt (parallel transmission routes) exist at the levels of the Tābi'ūn and Tabi' al-Tābi'īn. These parallel narrations strengthen the transmission of the hadith by demonstrating that it was preserved through more than one reliable chain.

The evaluation of the principal narrators in the four transmission routes was conducted by examining the assessments of classical hadith critics concerning their integrity ('adālah), precision (ḍabt), and their positions within the sanad. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation of the Principal Narrators

Narrator	Evaluation of Classical Hadith Critics	Integrity ('Adālah)	Precision (Ḍabt)	Remarks
Musaddad ibn Musarhad	Thiqah (Yahyā ibn Ma'tn, al-'Ijlī, Ibn Ḥibbān)	Reliable	Strong	Teacher of al-Bukhārī
Abū 'Awanah al-Waddāḥ	Thiqah, Ṣadūq	Reliable	Good	Narrated from al-A'mash
Abū Kuraib Muḥammad ibn al-'Alā'	Thiqah	Reliable	Strong	Teacher of Muslim
Abū Mu'āwiyah Muḥammad ibn Khāzim	Thiqah	Reliable	Strong	Reported to have practiced tadlīs in some narrations
Muḥammad ibn 'Amr al-Rāzī	Thiqah	Reliable	Strong	Narrator in Sunan Abū Dāwūd
Jarīr ibn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd	Thiqah	Reliable	Strong	Senior Kufan narrator
Wakī' ibn al-Jarrāḥ	Thiqah Thabt	Reliable	Excellent	Principal transmitter of al-A'mash
al-A'mash (Sulaymān ibn Mihrān)	Thiqah Ḥāfiẓ	Reliable	Excellent	Recognized as a mudallis narrator
Abū Ḥāzim Salmān al-Ashja'i	Thiqah	Reliable	Strong	Tābi'i narrator
Abū Hurairah	Companion	Accepted	Accepted	Principal Companion narrator

As presented in Table 1, the principal narrators in the four transmission routes are consistently evaluated by classical hadith critics as reliable (thiqah) or acceptable transmitters. The assessments of scholars such as Yahyā ibn Ma'tn, al-'Ijlī, al-Nasā'i, Abū Ḥātim, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Ibn Ḥajar indicate that the principal requirements of narrator integrity ('adālah) and precision (ḍabt) are generally fulfilled throughout the sanad. Furthermore, the sanad mapping demonstrates a continuous teacher–student relationship from Abū Hurairah through Abū Ḥāzim, al-A'mash, and their respective students, with no indication of interruption (inqiṭā') in the principal transmission routes examined.

Particular attention should be given to al-A'mash (Sulaymān ibn Mihrān), who appears in all major chains of transmission. Although he is unanimously recognized by classical scholars as a trustworthy (thiqah) and highly accurate (ḥāfiẓ) narrator, he is also known as a mudallis. Therefore, the occurrence of the transmission formula 'an ('an'anah) in his narrations should not automatically be regarded as conclusive evidence of direct hearing (samā'). Instead, its acceptability should be assessed together with corroborating transmission routes and the evaluations of classical hadith critics. In the present case, the narration is supported by several mutāba'āt preserved in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Musnad Aḥmad, and other canonical collections, thereby strengthening the continuity and reliability of the transmission.

In addition, Ibn Ḥajar explains in Faṭḥ al-Bārī that the narration was also transmitted by Shu'bah, Abū Ḥamzah, Ibn Dāwūd, and Abū Mu'āwiyah through al-A'mash from Abū Ḥāzim and Abū Hurairah. According to his explanation, the narrations of Shu'bah and Ibn Dāwūd were transmitted through connected (mawṣūl) chains in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, while the narration of Abū Mu'āwiyah is preserved through connected chains in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim and Sunan al-Nasā'i. These parallel transmissions provide additional support for the continuity of the sanad and reinforce the authenticity of the narration.

Another narration with a similar meaning is also reported by al-Tirmidhī, who classified it as ḥasan gharīb. Although its degree differs from the narrations of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, it does not diminish the authenticity of the

principal narrations. Rather, it functions as additional supporting evidence indicating that the hadith was transmitted through multiple channels.

Based on the sanad analysis, the four principal transmission routes satisfy the essential criteria of sanad authenticity, namely continuity of transmission (*ittiṣāl al-sanad*), narrator integrity (*'adālah*), and narrator precision (*ḍabt*). With regard to the assessment of *shudhūdh* (irregularity) and hidden defects (*'illah*), this study follows the evaluations of classical hadith critics who generally classified these narrations as authentic after considering the available transmission evidence. Accordingly, the sanad analysis provides a sufficient methodological basis for proceeding to the analysis of the *matn* and its contextual interpretation using Yusuf al-Qaradawi's *Ma'ānī al-Ḥadīth* approach.

Hadith Interpretation About the Curse of Angels on Wife Who Refuses Her Husband's Invitation

The hadith concerning the curse of angels upon a wife who refuses her husband's invitation has often been understood textually as imposing an absolute obligation on wives to comply with their husbands' sexual requests. However, such a reading does not adequately reflect the complexity of hadith interpretation. According to Yusuf al-Qaradawi's methodology of *Ma'ānī al-Ḥadīth*, a narration should be interpreted not only through its literal wording but also in light of the Qur'an, other relevant hadiths, the historical context (*asbāb al-wurūd*), the objectives of the *Sharī'ah*, and the broader ethical principles governing human relations. Therefore, the present hadith should be understood within a comprehensive interpretative framework rather than through a purely literal approach.

Linguistically, the Prophet employed the expression *دَعَا* (*da'ā*), which literally means "to invite" or "to call." This lexical meaning indicates that the narration describes a husband's invitation rather than an explicit act of coercion. Nevertheless, the lexical meaning of a single word alone cannot determine the entire normative implication of the hadith. The legal and ethical significance of the narration must also be understood through its context, the explanations of classical commentators, and its relationship with other Islamic legal principles.

Likewise, the expression *فَأَبَتْ* (*fa-abat*) literally denotes refusal. However, the narration itself does not explicitly define the nature of that refusal. Therefore, interpreting it as a refusal without a legitimate excuse should not rely solely on lexical analysis but should be supported by the explanations of authoritative hadith commentators. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, in *Fath al-Bārī*, explains that the phrase "the angels curse her until morning" is associated with the continuation of the narration stating that the husband "spent the night angry with her" (*fabāta ghaḍbāna 'alayhā*). According to Ibn Ḥajar, this anger indicates that the wife's refusal constituted an unjustified neglect of marital rights rather than a refusal based on illness, physical exhaustion, menstruation, psychological distress, or other legally recognized excuses. He further explains that the expression *al-firāsh* (bed) functions as a *kināyah* (figurative expression) for sexual intercourse, while the phrase "until morning" reflects the common time for marital intimacy rather than limiting the ruling exclusively to nighttime. Ibn Ḥajar also emphasizes that the hadith should not be applied when the husband himself commits injustice or neglects his wife's rights.

Al-Nawawī likewise explains that the threat mentioned in the hadith applies only when the refusal occurs without a valid *Sharī'ah*-based reason. If the wife is prevented by illness, fear of harm, physical hardship, or other legitimate circumstances, the warning contained in the hadith is no longer applicable because Islamic law does not impose obligations beyond one's capacity. These classical interpretations demonstrate that the legal implication of the hadith is derived from contextual interpretation rather than from the literal meaning of individual words alone.

This contextual reading is further supported by the Qur'an. QS. al-Nisā' [4]:34 emphasizes the importance of maintaining family responsibilities, while QS. al-Baqarah [2]:223 recognizes sexual relations as a lawful aspect of marital life. At the same time, QS. al-Baqarah [2]:228 establishes the principle of reciprocity by affirming that women possess rights comparable to their obligations according to what is *ma'rūf* (*wa lahunna mithlu alladhī 'alayhinna bi al-ma'rūf*). Consequently, the Qur'an presents marriage not merely as a framework of obligations but as a relationship founded upon reciprocal rights, justice, and mutual respect.

The interpretation of this hadith should also consider other Prophetic traditions concerning marital relations. One narration reported by al-Tirmidhī encourages wives to respond positively to their husbands' invitation whenever

no legitimate obstacle exists. At the same time, the Prophet also emphasized the husband's ethical responsibility toward his wife, stating:

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو كُرَيْبٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو خَالِدٍ، عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ شَقِيقٍ، عَنْ مَسْرُوقٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِنِسَائِهِمْ»

Abu Kuraib narrated to us, he said: Abu Khalid narrated to us, from al-A'mash, from Shaiq, from Masruq, from Abdullah ibn 'Amr, who reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "The best among you are those who are best to their wives." (Ibn Mājah).

Taken together, these narrations indicate that marital relations in Islam are based on *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf*, mutual respect, and the reciprocal fulfillment of rights and obligations. Accordingly, the hadith concerning the curse of angels cannot be interpreted in isolation from other Prophetic teachings that require husbands to treat their wives with kindness and compassion.

Classical jurists generally regarded sexual fulfillment as one of the reciprocal rights of marriage, although they differed regarding the legal consequences of refusing marital intimacy and the circumstances that constitute legitimate excuses. Contemporary Muslim scholars, including Yusuf al-Qaradawi, further emphasize that the objectives of Islamic law require every interpretation of hadith to preserve justice, compassion, and human dignity. Therefore, the warning contained in this hadith applies only when a spouse deliberately neglects marital obligations without legitimate justification and should not be understood as religious authorization for coercion or violence within marriage (Zakiah et al., 2023).

Based on this analysis, the hadith cannot be interpreted literally as requiring wives to comply with every sexual request regardless of their physical or psychological condition. Rather, it serves as an ethical reminder for both spouses to maintain marital harmony through the balanced fulfillment of reciprocal rights and obligations (Iskandar et al., 2025). The threat of the angels' curse is therefore directed at deliberate and unjustified neglect of marital responsibilities, not at every form of refusal. Interpreting the hadith within the framework of justice, compassion, *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf*, and the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* provides a more comprehensive understanding that is consistent with the broader objectives of Islamic teachings and does not legitimize marital coercion or marital rape.

Fenomena Marital Rape

The term marital rape refers to the act of coercing sexual relations carried out by a husband against his wife or vice versa without the consent of the partner. In contrast to the traditional understanding that considers sexual relations in marriage as the absolute right of the husband, the development of legal studies, human rights, and gender studies views that every individual still has the right to the integrity of his or her body, even if he is in a marital bond. Therefore, consent is an important element in every sexual relationship, including in domestic life.

Etymologically, marital rape comes from two words, marital which means marriage and rape which means rape. Thus, marital rape is understood as rape that occurs in a marital relationship. In the perspective of modern criminal law, this act is not only in the form of forced sexual relations with physical violence, but also includes threats, intimidation, psychological pressure, and coercion when the partner is in a condition that makes it impossible to give consent.

In Indonesia, the recognition of marital rape has undergone a long development. Prior to the birth of Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence (PKDRT), forced sexual relations by husbands against wives were not seen as a criminal offense because sexual relations in marriage were considered a consequence of a marriage contract. However, the PKDRT Law emphasizes that forced sexual relations against people within the scope of the household is a form of sexual violence that can be subject to criminal sanctions (Siburian, 2020). The arrangement shows that marriage does not take away the right of every individual to obtain protection from all forms of sexual violence.

Even though it has been legally recognized, the practice of marital rape still occurs in the community. The National Commission on Anti-Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) shows that sexual violence in the domestic is still a form of violence that continues to be reported every year. However, the number of cases revealed is estimated to be much smaller than the actual conditions (iceberg phenomenon). Many victims choose not to report their cases because they consider forced sexual intercourse to be an obligation to be accepted as a wife, feel ashamed, fear social stigma, or worry that it will damage the integrity of the household (M. Aziz, 2025; Solihah et al., 2022).

In the context of Muslim society, the phenomenon of marital rape is often influenced by a religious understanding that places the wife's absolute obedience to her husband, including in sexual relations. Some hadiths, especially hadiths about the curse of angels against wives who refuse their husband's invitation, are often understood textually so that they are considered to provide legitimacy for the coercion of sexual relations in marriage. In fact, such an understanding ignores the basic principles of Islam that emphasize justice, compassion, and *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf* as the foundation of the marriage relationship.

The impact of marital rape is not only felt in the form of physical violence, but also affects the psychological and social condition of the victim. Victims can experience trauma, anxiety, depression, reproductive disorders, and even loss of sense of security in domestic life. Therefore, marital rape is no longer understood solely as a matter of sexual relations, but as a form of violence that is contrary to the purpose of marriage in Islam, which is to create a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. This phenomenon is important to study in order to be able to clearly distinguish between the obligations of husband and wife in fulfilling their respective sexual rights and acts of coercion that violate the principles of justice and humanity.

The Relevance of the Hadith of the Curse of the Angels to the Phenomenon of Marital Rape

The relevance of the hadith concerning the curse of angels to the phenomenon of marital rape should be understood primarily from a normative and hermeneutical perspective. Normatively, the hadith regulates the reciprocal rights and obligations of spouses in maintaining marital harmony. Hermeneutically, its relevance lies in the need to interpret the hadith comprehensively so that it is not employed partially as a religious justification for coercive sexual relations within marriage. Consequently, the issue is not whether the hadith remains relevant in contemporary society, but how its meaning should be understood in accordance with the broader objectives of Islamic teachings.

The phenomenon of marital rape illustrates the consequences of interpreting the hadith solely through a literal lens. In some social contexts, the marriage contract is perceived as granting husbands unrestricted sexual rights, while wives are regarded as having an unconditional obligation to comply. Such an understanding is frequently reinforced through a partial reading of the hadith concerning the curse of angels, leading to the assumption that every refusal of sexual intercourse constitutes sinful disobedience regardless of the wife's physical or psychological condition (Mardhotillah & Yafiq, 2026). As a result, some wives feel compelled to submit to sexual intercourse despite illness, exhaustion, emotional distress, pregnancy-related complications, or other circumstances that prevent them from giving free and meaningful consent. This misunderstanding may contribute to the perpetuation of sexual violence within marriage.

The contextual interpretation developed in the previous section demonstrates that the warning contained in the hadith is not absolute. Rather, it is directed toward deliberate refusal without legitimate justification that disrupts the reciprocal rights and responsibilities established in marriage. Accordingly, the relevance of the hadith does not lie in legitimizing unrestricted sexual authority for husbands but in preserving mutual responsibility, communication, and balance within the marital relationship. At the same time, the hadith cannot be invoked to deny the spouse's right to personal safety, dignity, physical well-being, and psychological integrity.

This understanding is consistent with the broader objectives of marriage in Islam. The Qur'an describes marriage as a relationship intended to realize *sakīnah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*, all of which require mutual respect, compassion, and cooperation between spouses. Sexual intimacy therefore functions not merely as the fulfillment of biological needs but also as an expression of affection and mutual trust. When sexual relations occur through

intimidation, coercion, or fear, these fundamental objectives are undermined, and marital intimacy is transformed into a form of violence rather than an expression of marital harmony (Ahmed, 2021).

The contextual interpretation of this hadith also serves an important hermeneutical function by preventing the misuse of religious texts. Interpreting the narration in isolation from other Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions risks reducing Islamic teachings to a single legal obligation while neglecting the equally important principles of compassion, justice, and *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf*. Therefore, the hadith should not be understood as conferring unilateral authority upon husbands but rather as emphasizing the reciprocal responsibilities of both spouses in maintaining a healthy and harmonious marital relationship. In this respect, the ethical significance of the hadith lies in encouraging communication, mutual understanding, and respect for each spouse's circumstances rather than legitimizing coercion.

The relevance of the hadith becomes even clearer when examined through the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. Forced sexual intercourse directly contradicts the objective of preserving life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) because it may inflict physical injury, psychological trauma, anxiety, depression, and long-term emotional suffering upon the victim. It also violates the preservation of honour and human dignity (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*), since sexual coercion disregards bodily integrity, personal autonomy, and the ethical obligation to respect one's spouse. Furthermore, marital rape may undermine the preservation of progeny (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*) by damaging the stability of family relationships, increasing the risk of domestic conflict, separation, and adverse consequences for children's psychological well-being. Ultimately, these harms are inconsistent with the broader objective of realizing *maṣlaḥah* (public and familial welfare), which constitutes one of the fundamental aims of Islamic law.

From this perspective, the prohibition of marital rape is not merely a response to contemporary human rights discourse but is also deeply rooted in the objectives of the *Sharī'ah* itself. The preservation of life, dignity, family stability, and welfare requires that sexual relations be founded upon mutual willingness, respect, and compassion. Any interpretation of the hadith that legitimizes coercive sexual relations would therefore contradict these higher objectives and reduce the ethical vision of Islam concerning marriage.

The relevance of the hadith to the contemporary phenomenon of marital rape lies in establishing clear interpretative boundaries. The hadith should neither be detached from its historical and textual context nor employed selectively to justify violence against women. Instead, it should be understood as reinforcing the reciprocal rights and responsibilities of spouses while safeguarding the principles of justice, compassion, and human dignity. Through such a contextual reading, the hadith continues to provide ethical guidance for Muslim families without serving as a religious justification for marital rape or other forms of domestic violence.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the hadith concerning the curse of angels upon a wife who refuses her husband's invitation fulfills the principal criteria of authenticity based on the *sanad* and *matn* analyses. The *sanad* is supported by continuous transmission chains (*ittiṣāl al-sanad*), reliable narrators possessing integrity (*'adālah*) and precision (*dabt*), while the *matn* is consistent with the Qur'an and other authentic Prophetic traditions. Nevertheless, the authenticity of the hadith does not imply that it should be interpreted solely through its literal wording.

Using Yusuf al-Qaradawi's *Ma'anī al-Ḥadīth* approach, this study finds that the warning contained in the hadith applies to deliberate refusal without legitimate *Sharī'ah*-based justification rather than to every form of refusal. A contextual interpretation that considers the Qur'an, related hadiths, classical commentaries, and the objectives of the *Sharī'ah* demonstrates that the narration emphasizes reciprocal marital responsibilities instead of legitimizing coercive sexual relations. Accordingly, the hadith cannot be invoked as religious justification for marital rape but should be understood as an ethical guideline for fostering marital relationships based on *mu'āsyarah bi al-ma'rūf*, balanced rights and obligations, justice, compassion, and respect for human dignity.

The academic contribution of this study lies in integrating *takhrīj al-ḥadīth*, *sanad* and *matn* criticism, Yusuf al-Qaradawi's contextual approach to hadith interpretation, and the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* to reinterpret

one of the most frequently cited hadiths concerning marital sexual relations. This integrated approach demonstrates that contextual hadith interpretation provides a more comprehensive understanding while preventing the selective use of religious texts to legitimize domestic sexual violence.

This study is limited by its library research design, which focuses on textual and interpretative analysis without examining how the hadith is understood, received, or applied within contemporary Muslim communities. Future studies may therefore employ empirical approaches, such as hadith reception studies, qualitative field research, or interdisciplinary research combining hadith studies, Islamic family law, gender studies, and sociology, to investigate how contextual interpretations of this hadith influence religious discourse and marital practices in contemporary Muslim societies.

REFERENCES

- Afrilian, A., & Rizki, M. (2023). A Critique of Misogynistic Hadith Reasoning in the Case of Marital Rape: A Study of Abu Hurairah's Hadith on Prohibition of Wife Refusing Husband's Invitation. *At-Turas: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 10(2), 328–342.
- Ahmed, L. (2021). *Women and gender in Islam: Historical roots of a modern debate*. Yale University Press.
- al-Bukhari, M. ibn I. (2011). *Al-Jami' Al-Sahih Al-Bukhari*. Markaz al-Shaykh Abi al-Hasan al-Nadawi lil-Buhuth wa al-Dirasat al-Islamiyyah.
- al-Bukhari, M. ibn I. (2019). *Al-Tarikh Al-Kabir Li Al-Bukhari*. al-Nashir al-Mutamayyiz li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'.
- al-Dhahabi, S. al-D. (2004). *Tadhib Tahdhib Al-Kamal Fi Asma' Al-Rijal*. al-Faruq al-Hadithah li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr.
- al-Naysaburi, M. ibn al-H. al-Q. (2011). *Al-Jami' Al-Sahih (Sahih Muslim)*. Dar Tawq al-Najah.
- al-Sijistani, A. D. S. ibn al-A. (2009). *Sunan Abi Dawud*. Dar al-Risalah al-'Alamiyyah.
- Aziz, M. (2025). Working Through Sexual Anxiety With Muslim Patients. In *The Routledge International Handbook of Sex Therapy and Religion* (pp. 427–442). Routledge.
- Aziz, M. H. (2025). Musdah Mulia's Thoughts on Women's Reproductive Rights in Islam. *Komparatif: Jurnal Perbandingan Hukum Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 5(1), 60–91.
- Cholidi, M. F., Ansori, I., & Zahroh, A. (2025). The Ethics of Intimacy: Understanding Hadith in the Context of Marital Rights and Rape Allegations. *Journal Of Qur'an And Hadith Studies*, 14(2), 453–474.
- Douki Dedieu, S., Ouali, U., Ghachem, R., Karray, H., & Issaoui, I. (2021). Violence against women in the Arab world: Eyes shut wide open. In *Handbook of healthcare in the Arab world* (pp. 207–255). Springer.
- Hanbal, A. ibn. (2001). *Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*. Mu'assasah al-Risalah.
- Iskandar, I., Nurafifah, D., Irsan, M., Purnama, H., Sudrajat, S. A., & Rosidin, D. N. (2025). Handling Domestic Violence from the Perspective of Islamic Law and Positive Law in Indonesia. *Unifikasi: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*, 12(01), 17–35.
- Isti'anah. (2022). Studi Hadis-Hadis Tentang Laknat Malaikat Terhadap Istri Yang Menolak Ajakan Suami. *El-Mu'jam: Jurnal Kajian Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 2(2).
- Karyanto, U. B. (2018). Female's Fingers Myth (Gender Study And Al-Qur'an Perspective). *University-Community Engagement October 8-10, 2018*, 3(2), 951.
- Mardhotillah, A., & Yafiq, M. A. (2026). Marital Rape in Indonesia: Convergence and Divergence in Social, Legal, and Islamic Perspectives. *Usriyyat: International Journal of Islamic Family Law*, 1(1), 35–52.
- Mateen, H. S. A. (2020). Marital Rape and Marriage Institution in Islamic Law. *Journal of Legal Studies and Research*, 6(6), 28–30.
- Mughlathai, A. bin Q. bin A. al-H. (2001). *Ikmal Tahdzib Al-Kamal Fi Asma Al-Rijal*. al-Faruq al-Haditsah li al-Thiba'ah wa an-Nasyr.
- Muhsin, I., Ma'Mun, S., & Nuroniyah, W. (2021). Sexual violence in an islamic higher education institution of

- indonesian: A maqasid al-shariah and foucauldian perspective. *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam*, 5(1), 127–152.
- Muqtada, M. R., bin Mustapha, A. S., & Mufid, A. (2024). Fiqh contestation on women's public leadership in Indonesia and Malaysia: Reproducing Qur'anic and Hadith interpretations. *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial*, 19(1), 221–248.
- Nikmatullah, N., Sugiarto, F., & Istianah, I. (2026). The Current Hadith Interpretation on Wife's Obedience among Muslim Conservatives and Progressives on Online Media. *Equalita: Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Anak*, 8(1), 11–28.
- Rafika, A., Hasbi, M. R., & Putra, A. (2024). Hadith Solutions To The Problem Of Domestic Abuse A Study Analysing the Judicial Divorce of Tsabit's Wife. *Syahadah: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Keislaman*, 12(1), 1–28.
- Rafsanjani, A. R., & Khoiryuf, M. F. (2023). *Sunnah Nabi dan Metode Memahaminya Menurut Yusuf Al-Qardhawi*. 13(2).
- Rinangku, D. K. B., & Munawaroh, L. (2025). Protecting Wives' rights: Kyai Husein Muhammad's Reinterpretation Of Sexual Obligations In Marriage. *Kafaah: Journal of Gender Studies*, 15(2), 113–127.
- Samsudin, T. (2010). Marital Rape Sebagai Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Manusia. *Jurnal Al-Ulumm*, 10(2), 339–354.
- Siburian, R. J. (2020). Marital Rape Sebagai Tindak Pidana Dalam RUU-Penghapusan Kekerasan Seksual. *Jurnal Yuridis*, 7(1), 149–169.
- Solihah, C., Syawali, H., Amalia, M., & Dewi, R. (2022). Marital rape (Kekerasan seksual dalam perkawinan) perspektif budaya hukum dan Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2004 tentang PKDRT. *Palastren: Jurnal Studi Gender*, 15(1), 149–176.
- Susila, M. E. (2013). Islamic perspective on marital rape. *Jurnal Media Hukum*, 20(2).
- Sya'ima, A., Widiyanto, W., & Alotaiby, N. (2024). The Development of Marital Rape in Islamic Family Law Reform. *Mizan Journal Of Islamic Law*, 12(2), 139–156.
- Umam, M. F. (2025). Legal Arguments of Gender Activists Against the Rejection of Criminal Sanctions for Perpetrators of Domestic Rape in the 2015 MUI Fatwa. *Asian Journal of Law and Humanity*, 5(1), 89–104.
- Zakiah, A. R. S., Nasiruddin, M., Naf'an, A. W., & Andania, R. A. (2023). The Marital Rape Phenomenon as A Form of Gender Oppression: An Analysis of the Urgency of Sexual Consent Mubādalāh's Perspective. *Family Law*, 1, 41–56.