11563 - Are Nashids Haram?

the question

What is the ruling on Islamic nashids that are free of music?

Summary of answer

Nashids are permissible whether recited individually or in unison, but no forbidden musical instruments should be used, and they should not be the focus of the Muslim’s mind. Also, nashids should not be recited by women (in front of men), or include haram or obscene speech.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The clear sahih texts indicate in a number of ways that it is permissible to recite poetry and listen to it. It was narrated in sahih reports that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) listened to verse, recited it (as nashid) and asked others to recite it, both when they were travelling and when they stayed at home, in their gatherings and whilst they were working, individually, as in the case of Hassan ibn Thabit, ‘Amir ibn al-Akwa’ and Anjashah (may Allah be pleased with them), and in unison, as in the hadith of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) which describes the digging of the ditch (al-khandaq).

Anas said: When the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw how exhausted and hungry we were, he said (in verse):

“O Allah, there is no life except the life of the Hereafter, so forgive the Ansar and the Muhajirin.”

And they said in response:

“We are the ones who have pledged allegiance to Muhammad, to make jihad for as long as we live.” (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 3/1043)

And in gatherings too: Ibn Abi Shaybah narrated with a hasan isnad that Abu Salamah ibn ‘Abd al-Rahman said: “The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not speak in devious tones or in a soft manner. They used to recite verses in their gatherings, denouncing the affairs of their jahiliyyah, but if it was the matter of their religion, they would become very serious and cautious (8/711).

This evidence indicates that nashids are permissible , whether recited individually or in unison. The word nashid in Arabic means raising the voice when reciting verse and making the voice sound beautiful and gentle.

There are conditions to which attention must be paid with regard to this matter: Not using forbidden musical instruments in nashid. Not doing it too much or making it the focus of the Muslim’s mind , occupying all his time, or neglecting obligatory duties because of it.

Nashid should not be recited by women , or include haram or obscene speech.

They should not resemble the tunes of the people of immorality and promiscuity. They should be free of vocal effects that produce sounds like those of musical instruments. They should not have moving tunes which make the listener feel “high” as happens to those who listen to songs. This is the case with many of the nashids which appear nowadays, so that the listeners no longer pay any attention to the good meaning of the words, because they are so entranced by the tunes.

And Allah is the Source of strength.

References:

- Fath al-Bari, 10/553-554-562-563
- Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, 8/711

  Al-Qamoos al-Muhit,411