170208 - Can music be used to treat depression?

the question

If music is haram, how can music be used to treat people with depression?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The four Imams, their followers and the vast majority of earlier Muslim scholars are of the view that musical instruments are haram, to such an extent that it was narrated that there was consensus on this issue.

Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to flutes, stringed instruments and drums, there is no difference of scholarly opinion that it is haram to listen to them. I have not heard from anyone whose word carries weight among the early generations and later imams that any of them regarded that as permissible. How can it not be haram when this is the habit of drinkers and evildoers, and it stirs up desires and corruption and immorality. Whatever is like that is undoubtedly haram and the one who does it is an evildoer and a sinner.

This was narrated from him by Ibn Hajar al-Haytami in his book az-Zawaajir ‘an Iqtiraaf al-Kabaa’ir, 2/193

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The view of the four imams is that all musical instruments are haram.

Majmoo‘ al-Fataawa, 11/576

If al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said that musical instruments in his time – and he died

in 671 AH – were “the habit of drinkers and evildoers, and it stirs up desires and corruption and immorality”, what would he say if he could see the state of musical instruments, singers and the people who love them nowadays?!

See also the answer to questions no. 5000 and 5011.

With regard to fondness of musical instruments, see the answer to question no. 50687

Secondly:

Allah has not put the healing for this ummah in that which He has forbidden to them; rather it is a disease for them, whether it is a disease for the body or the heart or both of them. Allah, may He be exalted, does not forbid anything to people except that in which there is nothing but harm or that of which the evil effects outweigh any benefits.

It was narrated that Abu’d-Darda’ said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah has sent down the disease and the remedy, and He has created a remedy for every disease, so seek treatment (of illness) but do not treat (illness) with anything that is haram.”

Narrated by Abu Dawood, 3874; classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

It was narrated from Waa’il ibn Hajar (may Allah be pleased with him) that that Taariq ibn Suwayd al-Ju‘fi asked the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) about khamr, and he forbade him – or expressed his disapproval of his making it. – He (Taariq) said: I only make it as a remedy. He said: “It is not a remedy; rather it is a disease.”

Narrated by Muslim, 1984

See also the answer the questions no. 11941 , 138842 , 41760

Thirdly:

With regard to what some people say about music being used as a remedy for depression and that

it is beneficial in that regard, we do not know what this really means. Does it mean listening to certain types of music, which have an effect on a person, or is it just the imagination of the sick person that is suggested to him by the doctor?

Whatever the case, whether this opinion is correct or not, that does not alter the ruling at all because Allah, may He be exalted, does not limit the remedy to something that is haram. If it so happens that this listening may be a remedy for some people, the remedy for this disease is not limited to that; rather if he gives it up for the sake of Allah, he will find some other type of remedy that will help him and he will have no need for it.

Better than that – indeed it is the best means by which a person may seek healing – is listening to the Quran, because the Quran is beneficial in and of itself, and Allah has benefited many people with healing just by listening to the Quran, including some people who are not Muslim.

Prof. 'Abd ad-Daa'im al-Kaheel (may Allah guide him) has written a useful scientific article on "How listening to the verses of Allah affect brain cells, and what is the scientific explanation for the phenomenon of healing by means of the Quran, and is there a hidden energy in the Quran?" You can read this article by clicking on the following link

To sum up:

Music is haram and Allah, may He be exalted, has not put healing in anything that He has forbidden to us. Music is a disease for the heart (i.e., a spiritual disease) and it has bad effects that are quite obvious.

The ruling on using music as a remedy has been previously discussed in the answers to questions no. 106605 and 9324 .

And Allah knows best.