32752 - Selling video tapes and keeping a TV and VCR

the question

Is selling video and audio tapes haraam?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If the audio and video tapes are free of haraam content, then it is permissible to listen to them, watch them, buy them and sell them. What is meant by haraam is if they contain immorality, music and pictures of unveiled women. The same applies if they contain kufr or bid’ah – except for one who intends to refute them and is qualified to do so.

The Standing Committee was asked: Is it permissible to sell tapes of singing such as tapes of Umm Kalthoom, Fareed al-Atrash and their like?

They replied:

“Selling these tapes is haraam, because of the haraam songs that they contain. Listening to them is also haraam. It was narrated in a saheeh hadeeth that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ‘When Allaah forbids a thing He also forbids its price.’”

From Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah, 13/48

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked about trading in video tapes in which unveiled women appear and in which stories of love are told – is the businessman’s money haraam? What should he do? How can he get rid of these tapes?

He replied:

It is haraam to sell or keep these tapes, or to listen to them or watch them, because they promote fitnah and immorality. They must be destroyed and the one who deal with them should be

denounced, so as to prevent immorality and to protect the Muslims from the causes of fitnah.

Fataawa Islamiyyah, 2/369.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked about the trader who deals in tapes of songs that also include musical instruments, immoral speech, promiscuous love, promotion of corruption, and spreading immorality between the sexes, and renting stores to people who sell these kinds of tapes.

He replied:

If these tapes contain the kinds of things that you mention, of all kinds of musical instruments, promotion of corruption and immorality, spreading promiscuity between the sexes, obscene talk and promiscuous love, then no wise person, let alone one who believes in Allaah and the Last Day and fears the punishment of Allaah and hopes for His reward, will doubt that selling these tapes and listening to them is haraam and is an evil action, because they destroy morals and society, and expose the ummah to punishment on an individual and general basis.

Any person who has any of these tapes should repent to Allaah and erase whatever is on them, and replace them with something useful.

With regard to the money earned by selling them and dealing in them, it is haraam money which is not permissible to its owner, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “When Allaah forbids a thing, He also forbids its price.”

With regard to renting out stores to people who sell these kinds of tapes, that is also haraam, and the rent taken for that is haraam, because this is a kind of co-operating in sin and transgression which Allaah has forbidden as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“but do not help one another in sin and transgression”

[al-Maa’idah 5:2]

The sin of those who buy them is upon them, but it is not farfetched to say that the seller and

landlord of the store will also share some of the burden of sin, without that detracting in the slightest from the burden of those who buy them. And Allaah knows best.”

Fataawa Islamiyyah, 2/370.

And it says in Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah, 13/46:

It is permissible to keep a TV and VCR in your house, if you can control yourself and only use them to listen to religious lectures and beneficial knowledge, recitation of Qur’aan and business news, political news and other permissible things.

If you cannot do that, then do not sell it, because it is most likely that the one who buys it from you will use it for idle entertainment and all the haraam things for which it is used. Rather you should destroy what you have of such things, so as to get rid of evil, and you will be rewarded for that. But if you find someone whom you think will most likely use them for permissible things, then there is nothing wrong with your selling them to him.