91142 - Haraam issues in modern anaasheed and the conditions of nasheed being permissible

the question

Are the modern nasheeds permissible ‘video clips’? Is it not similar to the normal songs of ‘kuffar’? Are these video clips permissible although it includes women wearing makeup and showing their faces and hands, many sound effects and men without beards. Is it permissible for all this to be displayed? Please answer in details. May Allah reward you!.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Nasheeds have changed from what they were at first.

Unfortunately nasheeds and munshids (nasheed-“singers”) have sunk to this level. Whereas nasheeds used to have meanings of faith, jihad and knowledge, they have now – in many cases – become akin to the songs of evildoers, with softening of the voice, putting a picture of the munshid on the cover of the tape, and making video clips to accompany the nasheed, which contain haraam things such as the presence of women or evildoers, and using musical instruments. The best of them nowadays are those that use sound effects that mimic the sound of musical instruments. No attention is paid to the meaning, rather all the attention is focused on the tune and other sound effects. Otherwise tell me how a munshid can produce a nasheed in English which the [Arab] listeners enjoy listening to so much even though they do not understand a single word of it?!

Nasheeds have overtaken other kinds of educational and beneficial audio material and nasheed groups have proliferated in the Muslim world. These groups do not hesitate to publish pictures of

their groups in newspapers and magazines wearing identical clothing, and their faces often proclaim their going against the guidance of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), as they have shaved their beards. Some Quran readers whom Allah has blessed with beautiful voices and talent in reading that makes one weep have followed in their footsteps. Some of them became very keen to go down that path and released some recordings which do not befit their status. So you may find one of them producing a recording with some clean-shaven evildoers and pictures of women appearing in the video clip with the nasheed. The camera zooms in on the face of the munshid when he is looking his best and he stares soulfully into the camera and behaves like a pop singer.

We are not exaggerating, and we are not talking about things that do not happen. These munshids who publish their pictures and mobile phone numbers know that women are tempted by them, and they know what effect their movements and looks and images have on that weak section of mankind. Unfortunately we only see them producing more of these nasheeds with images.

Hence some of the prominent Shaykhs who permitted nasheeds at first were upset by what nasheeds and munshids have become – and this was before they found out about the video clips – so they retracted the view that it is permissible or they stipulated conditions for it to be said to be permissible. Among these prominent Shaykhs are: Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him).

1.He said (may Allah have mercy on him):

I think that Islamic nasheeds have changed from what they were before. They were done with voices that were not enchanting, but now they are done with enchanting voices, and they are also accompanied by evil and corrupting tunes and they say that they are accompanied by the duff, but all of this means that one should keep away from these nasheeds. But if a man comes to us and sings anaasheed that have a sound meaning, and which do not include any nonsense, and uses his voice only with no musical instruments, there is nothing wrong with that. Hassaan ibn Thaabit used to recite poetry in the mosque of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Duroos wa Fataawa al-Haram al-Madani, 1416 AH, question no. 18.

2.He also said (may Allah have mercy on him):

There has been a lot of talk about Islamic nasheeds. I have not listened to them for a long time. When they first appeared there was nothing wrong with them. There were no duffs, and they were performed in a manner that did not involve any fitnah, and they were not performed with the tunes of haraam songs. But then they changed and we began to hear a rhythm that may have been a duff or it may have been something other than a duff, and they began to choose performers with beautiful and enchanting voices, then they changed further and began to be performed in the manner of haraam songs. Hence we began to feel uneasy about them, and unable to issue fatwas stating that they were permissible in all cases, or that they were forbidden in all cases. If they are free of the things that I have referred to then they are permissible, but if they are accompanied by the duff or performers are chosen who have beautiful and enchanting voices, or they are performed in the manner of indecent songs, then it is not permissible to listen to them.

Al-Sahwah al-Islamiyyah (p. 185).

3.Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

As for that which is called Islamic nasheeds, they have been given more time and effort than they deserve, to such an extent that they have become an art form which takes up space in school curricula and school activities, and the recording companies record huge numbers of them to sell and distribute, and most houses are full of them, and many young men and women listen to them, and it takes up a lot of their time, and they are listened to more than recordings of Quran, Sunnah, lectures and useful lessons.

Al-Bayaan li Akhta’ Ba’d al-Kuttaab (p. 342).

4.Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

I remember full well that when I was in Damascus, two years before I migrated here to ‘Ammaan,

some of the Muslim youth started to sing some anaasheed that had sound meanings, intending thereby to counteract the Sufi songs like the Busayri poems and others, and they recorded that on tapes, but soon it was accompanied by beating the duff! At first they used it in wedding parties, on the basis that the duff is permissible in such parties, then the tapes became widespread and copies were made of them, and they started to be used in many homes, and they started to listen to them day and night, whether there was an occasion or not. That became their way of relaxing. But that is due only to their whims and desires and their ignorance of the shaytaan's tricks, so he diverted them from paying attention to the Quran and listening to it, let alone studying it, and it became forsaken by them, as it says in the verse (interpretation of the meaning): "And the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) will say: 'O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Quran (neither listened to it nor acted on its laws and teachings)'" [al-Furqaan 25:30].

Tahreem Aalaat al-Tarb (p. 181, 182).

It is regrettable that some of those who appoint themselves to issue fatwas have reached such a level that they issues fatwas to adult women allowing them to perform nasheed in front of men, and even on satellite channels in front of millions, and these female performers use musical instruments which are forbidden in sharee'ah, but are permitted by this so-called mufti.

Secondly:

The guidelines and conditions of permissible nasheeds:

By studying the words of the scholars and trustworthy Shaykhs we may compile a list of guidelines and shar'i conditions which must be fulfilled for the nasheed to be permissible. That includes:

1.The words of the nasheed must be free of haraam and foolish words.

2.The nasheed should not be accompanied by musical instruments. No musical instrument is permitted except the duff for women on certain occasions. See the answer to question no. 20406 .

3.It should be free of sound effects that imitate musical instruments, because what counts is what appears to be the case, and imitating haraam instruments is not permissible, especially when the

bad effect is the same as that which happens with real instruments.

4.Listening to nasheed should not become a habit which takes up a person’s time and affects his duties and mustahabb actions, such as affecting his reading of Quran and calling others to Allah.

5.The performer of a nasheed should not be a woman performing in front of men, or a man with an enchanting appearance or voice performing in front of women.

6.One should avoid listening to performers with soft voices who move their bodies in rhythm, because there is fitnah in all of that and it is an imitation of the evildoers.

7.One should avoid the images that are put on the covers of their tapes, and more important than that, one should avoid the video clips that accompany their nasheeds, especially those which contain provocative movements and imitations of immoral singers.

8.The purpose of the nasheed should be the words, not the tune.

There follow some of the comments of the scholars which include the guidelines and conditions mentioned above.

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

To sum up, what is well known in the Islamic religion is that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not prescribe for the righteous, devoted worshippers and ascetics of his ummah to gather to listen to poetic verses recited to the accompaniment of clapping or the beating of a duff. It is not permissible for anyone to deviate from following him and following that which he brought of the Book and wisdom, whether that has to do with inward or outward matters, either for an ordinary man or a member of the elite. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) granted concessions allowing some kinds of entertainment in weddings and the like, and he allowed women to beat the duff during weddings and other celebrations.

As for the men of his era, not one of them used to beat the duff or clap, rather it is proven in al-Saheeh that he said: “Clapping is for women, and tasbeeh is for men” and he cursed the women

who imitate men and the men who imitate women.

Because singing, beating the duff and clapping are things that women do, the salaf used to call a man who did those things effeminate, and they called men who sang effeminate, and this is well known among their sayings. End quote.

Majmoo' al-Fataawa (11/565, 566).

2.Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Islamic anasheed vary. If they are sound and contain nothing but calling people to what is good, and reminding them of what is good, and obedience to Allah and His Messenger, and calling people to defend their homelands against the plots of the enemy, and preparing to face the enemy and so on, there is nothing wrong with that. But if they are something other than that, and they promote sin and and are performed before mixed audiences of men and women, or audiences in which women are uncovered in the presence of men, or any other evil action, then it is not permissible to listen to them. End quote.

Majmoo' Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baaz (3/437).

3.He also said (may Allah have mercy on him):

Islamic nasheeds are like poetry: if it is sound then it is sound and if there is anything objectionable in it then it is objectionable.

The conclusion is that you cannot pass one judgement on all types of nasheed, rather each should be examined on its own merits. There is nothing wrong with sound nasheeds, but nasheeds which contain anything objectionable or promote anything objectionable are objectionable and evil. End quote.

Shareet As'ilah wa Ajwabah al-Jaami' al-Kabeer (no. 90/A).

4.The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas said:

It is permissible for you to replace these songs with Islamic nasheeds which contain words of wisdom and exhortation and lessons, which promote keenness to follow Islam and invoke Islamic feelings, which put one off evil and the things that promote it, and which motivate the one who "sings" them and the one who hears them to obey Allah and discourage them to disobey Him or transgress His limits; they make one keen to protect His sharee'ah and strive in jihad for His sake. But you should not take that as a habit which one persists in, rather that should be something that is done only sometimes, on special occasions such as weddings or when travelling for jihad and so on, and when one feels low, in order to revive the spirit and motivate oneself to do good, or when one feels inclined towards evil, so listening to such nasheeds may ward that off. End quote.

Fataawa Islamiyyah (4/533); we have quoted the fatwa in full in the answer to question no. 47996 and 67925.

5.Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

There may be another sin involved in that [i.e., nasheeds], which is that they may be performed in the manner of immoral songs and performed according to the rules of eastern or western music which makes the listeners enjoy it and makes them dance and behave in a foolish manner. So the aim becomes the tune and the enjoyment thereof, and not nasheed per se. This is a new error, and it is an imitation of the kuffaar and immoral people. That may lead to a further error, which is imitating them in turning away from the Quran and forsaking it, and being included in the general meaning of the complaint of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): "And the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) will say: 'O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Quran (neither listened to it nor acted on its laws and teachings)'" [al-Furqaan 25:30]. End quote from Tahreem Alaat al-Tarb (p. 181).

6.He also said:

If these anaasheed contain Islamic meanings and are not accompanied by any instruments such as the daff, tablah drum and so on, then there is nothing wrong with them, but we must point out an important condition of their being permissible, which is that they should be free of anything

that goes against sharee'ah, such as exaggeration and the like. Then there is another condition, which is that they should not become a habit, because that distracts the listeners from reading Quran which is encouraged in the Sunnah, and it also distracts them from seeking beneficial knowledge and calling people to Allah. End quote.

Majallat al-Asaalah (issue no. 2, 15 Jumaada al-Aakhirah 1413 AH).

7.In the answer to question no. 11563 we mentioned a number of guidelines, which we will mention again here, because they are useful:

Not using forbidden musical instruments in nasheed.

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.

Nasheed should not be recited by women, or include haraam 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 nasheeds 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.

We have too high an opinion of our brothers who perform nasheeds and recite Quran to think that they could be a cause of fitnah for young men and women, and a cause of their being distracted from obedience to Allah. They know how great an effect their voices and pictures may have on males and females; if you go to chat rooms you will see very weird things. You will see a woman who is infatuated with a munshid or one who cannot sleep unless she is listening to the voice of So and so, and those who call themselves 'aashiqat fulaan (lover of So and so – a munshid) and you see men and women venerating those munshids, giving them titles and high status, even though

some of them are not religiously committed at all, and some of them have fallen into the trap of singing immoral songs, and if you go to some websites that have these nasheeds, you will be surprised at how often these nasheeds are downloaded and how many people have no interest in listening to Quran and useful lectures.

We ask Allah to set the affairs of all of us straight.

And Allah knows best.