101172 - Did Dawood (peace be upon him) play a flute?

the question

I would like to ask about the ruling on songs according to my description:
Birds' warbling is a kind of music, waterfalls, rains and wind sounds are also kinds of music, how can we ever avoid listening to these sounds? Prophet Dawood as well used to mention Allah by playing a flute. I do not mean here the songs that arouse desires or the very loud music; I mean quiet music and normal words. Please answer my question in detail.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We have previously stated the ruling that it is haraam to listen to music. The evidence for that is quoted in the answer to question no. 5000. We have also explained that it is invalid to draw an analogy between music and the sound of birdsong or running water, in the answer to question no. 96219.

The view that Dawood (peace be upon him) used to seek forgiveness by playing the flute is a view for which there is no basis, rather what is meant by the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari , "You have been given a beautiful voice (mizmaar, lit. flute) like the beautiful voices of the family of Dawood" (narrated by al-Bukhaari (5048) and Muslim (793) is that he had a beautiful voice, and the beauty of his voice was likened to the sound of the flute.

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in Sharh Muslim: The words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) concerning Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari – "he has been given a beautiful voice (mizmaar) like the beautiful voices of the family of Dawood" – The scholars said: What is meant by mizmaar (lit. flute) here is a beautiful voice.

The original meaning of the word zamr is singing, and phrase "the family of Dawood" refers to

Dawood himself. The phrase “the family of So and so” may apply to the person himself. Dawood (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) had a very beautiful voice. End quote.

Al-‘Iraaqi said in Tarh al-Tathreeb (3/104): What it meant by mizmaar here is a beautiful voice. The original meaning is the instrument that is blown into (wind instrument). The beauty and sweetness of his voice is likened to the sound of the flute. … He had an extremely beautiful voice in recitation. End quote.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar said in Fath al-Baari: What is meant by mizmaar is a beautiful voice. The basic meaning is the instrument and the word is used of the voice as a simile. End quote.

This is like when Abu Bakr (may Allaah be pleased with him) described singing as the flutes or musical instruments of the Shaytaan, as al-Bukhaari (3931) and Muslim (892) narrated from ‘Aa’ishah that Abu Bakr entered upon her when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was with her on the day of (Eid) al-Fitr or Adha, and there were two young girls singing lines of poetry that were said by the Ansaar on the day of Bu’aath. Abu Bakr said: Flutes of the Shaytaan! The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Let them be, O Abu Bakr, for every people has its Eid and our Eid is this day.”

The two young girls did not have a flute or musical instrument with them, but he (may Allaah be pleased with him) called singing the flute of the shaytaan, likening it to that because he found it displeasing.

And Allaah knows best.