10791 - Is video taping a wedding party haraam?

the question

Insha Allaah i am getting married soon and i would like to know if video taping the wedding would be haraam. I know that taking pictures via a camera is haraam but i would like to know if video taping falls under the same category as photography. There are people who would like us to video tape the wedding but my intended and i would not like to compromise with picture taking, so we were wondering if we could video tape it instead..

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

One of the evil actions that takes place during parties and celebrations is taking pictures of women. It is haraam whether the pictures are taken with a video camera or a regular camera, but taking pictures with a video camera is worse.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade one woman to describe another to her husband as if he can see her – as it says in al-Saheehayn – so taking pictures – especially on video – is undoubtedly worse than simply describing, because the woman can be seen in a real sense, not just in the imagination.

This, naturally, applies if the pictures are of women only. But if the gathering is mixed then there is another sin as well as the sin of making pictures. Usually in women's gatherings on such occasions they compete in wearing short and revealing clothes. So taking such pictures and distributing them leads to the spread of immorality and sin and encourages such things, and makes people start to take the matter lightly. What should a woman do if she does not want her picture to be taken at all, then her picture is taken of her in all her finery? What should a woman do whom Allaah has guided after she went astray, and pictures of her at parties are in circulation?

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen said:

In addition to the reservations about taking pictures at wedding parties as mentioned above, there is a very serious reservation which is:

We have heard that some women bring cameras with them to take pictures of this celebration, and I do not know what justification these women have for taking pictures at these parties which are then spread among the people, intentionally or otherwise. Do those who take the pictures think that anyone approves of their actions? I do not think that anyone approves of what they do; I do not think that anyone would like his daughter's or wife's picture to be taken and kept by those misguided women to show to whomever they want, whenever they want? Would any of you agree for his mahrams' pictures to be in the hands of other people, to be a source of mockery if they are ugly and a provocation of desire if they are beautiful?

We have even heard of something that is worse than that: that some people bring a video camera to these parties to take moving pictures, and they watch it themselves or show it to others every time they want to enjoy looking at these scenes.

We have also heard that some those who go to these parties and videotape them are young men, who mix with women at these parties or they sit alone with them, and no wise person who has any knowledge of the sources of sharee'ah will doubt that this is evil and is haraam, and that it is stooping to the lowest level of imitating the kuffaar.

Friday Khutbah in the Jami' Mosque of 'Unayzah, entitled Munkaraat al-Afraah Mahaadhir Laylat al-Zafaaf.

And the Shaykh also said:

With regard to taking pictures of events, no wise person will doubt that this is reprehensible, and no wise person – let alone a believer – would agree to let his mahrams' pictures be taken – mothers, daughters, sisters, wives – to be a product to be shown to everyone or be viewed for the enjoyment of any immoral person.

Even worse than that is videotaping events, because this is like a living picture with sound. This is something that will be denounced by every person of sound mind and proper religious commitment, and we cannot imagine that anyone who has a sense of modesty and faith would allow it.

Fataawa ‘Ulama’ al-Balad al-Haraam, p. 439.

And Allaah knows best.