39744 - Ruling on selling TVs, VCRs and Playstation

the question

I have a store selling electrical equipment. Is it permissible for me to sell TVs, VCRs and Playstations and the disks that go in them, knowing that I do not know for what purpose these items will be used?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

These items – TVs, VCRs, etc – are things that may be used for good and bad purposes, but nowadays they are usually used for evil purposes, such as viewing naked women, and listening to idle entertainment such as music, etc. In this case a person should act according to what he thinks is most likely the case.

It is not permissible to sell them to anyone except one who you think will most likely use it for permissible purposes.

As for one whom you know or think it most likely will use it for haram purposes, it is not permissible for you to sell it to him, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression” [Al-Maa’idah 5:2]

It says in Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah: “Everything that will be used in a haram manner, or which one thinks will most likely be used in a haram manner, it is haram to manufacture it, import it, sell it, and distribute it among the Muslims.”(Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah, 13/109)

The Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas was also asked the following question:

I work as an electronic engineer, and part of my work involves fixing radios, TVs, VCRs and similar equipment. I hope you can advise me as to whether I should continue in this work, noting that if I give up this work I will miss out on a lot of experience and lose my profession for which I have studied all my life, and leaving it might cause me harm.

They replied:

The shar'i evidence from the Quran and Sunnah indicates that the Muslim must seek provision from halal sources. So you should look for work where your income will be halal. Some of the income from the work that you mention is not halal, because these machines are usually used for haram purposes.(Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 14/420).

With regard to the Playstation and its disks, they come under the same ruling as mentioned above. It is permissible to sell them to those whom you think will most likely use them for permissible purposes, and it is haram to sell them to those whom you think will most likely use them for haram purposes.

Many people nowadays use them for haram purposes, and instead of leisure being something to which a person turns occasionally, leisure has become the main thing for many people, and they spend a lot of their time, money and energy on playing these kinds of games, and going to clubs and swimming pools, travelling, sitting with friends, going on trips, etc.

Many of those who use the Playstation and similar games miss prayers because of them, and get distracted from many of their religious and worldly interests, which makes us certain that such things are forbidden.

But for those who can put things in their proper place, and play these games for a little while as a form of leisure, but do not miss any of their duties or worldly or religious interests because of them, whilst ensuring that the games they play are free of evils such as music and pictures of naked women, etc, then there is no sin in that, in sha Allah.

What matters is that the Muslim should strive to earn halal money in which there is nothing

dubious. He should remember the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “Every body that is nourished from haram sources, the Fire is more fitting for it.” Narrated by al-Tabaraani and classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh al-Jaami’, 4519.

And Allah knows best.