

Ruling concerning Islaamic songs (Anaasheed)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: What is the ruling concerning Islaamic songs and is it permissible to take them as means for making Da'wah (Calling to Islaam)?

Shaykh Aboo `Abd-al-Mu`iz `Alee Farkous al-Qoobee (*May Allaah preserve him*): All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon whom Allaah sent as a mercy to the Worlds, upon his Family, his Companions and his Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

First, it is worth mentioning that restricting the Anaasheed that contain poetry and the verses made of Rajaz (a poem of the meter termed Rajaz) as being Islaamic or religious is not known among the best people of the three best generations, nor those who came after. However, they used to distinguish between the good and the bad of poetry and Rajaz, between the praiseworthy and the blameworthy, or between the detestable and the permissible.

As if the Anaasheed are poems and Rajaz which are recited in order to show joy or when travelling long distances, or for entertainment, and that they contain exhortations, maxims and wisdoms and without using musical instruments, except Ad-Duff (a sort of tambourine) in a 'Eed or a wedding ceremony, do not contain obscenity and vulgarity which arouse desires and incite to committing fornication, or describe the beauties of women or merits of alcohol and encourage its drinking, or that the poems contain Shirk (ascribing partners to Allaah) or lies against Allaah (*Mighty and Majestic is He*), the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) and his Companions; in this case, there is no problem to use them if they are free from these precedent evils and if they do not contain forbidden things. However, it is not commendable to do much of them, on the contrary, it is better to do little of them, as we do not allow each permissible thing always absolutely, especially if they divert the person who listens to them from reading Qur'aan or studying in order to acquire beneficial knowledge, or if they prevent from doing Da'wah (calling to Allaah). In fact, the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) approved of reciting poetry, Rajaz and Hudaa' (Chanting of camel-drivers keeping time of camel's walk). Al-Bukhaaree named a chapter of his book: "What is permitted of poetry, Rajaz poetry, and Hudaa', and what is

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disliked of them”¹. Al-Baraa' Ibn Maalik (*May Allaah be pleased with him*) used to recite Hudaa' for men and Anjasha used to recite it for women. Anjasha had a sweet voice, so the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) said:

“May Allaah be merciful to you, O Anjasha! Drive the camels slowly, as they are carrying glass vessels! (Women)”².

Generally, Hudaa' is performed by Rajaz poetry or maybe by other forms of poetry, it is a sort of chanting, it resembles the chanting of the drivers and that of people who chant in order to forget their tiredness. Indeed, Ibn `Abd Al-Bar reported that all these kinds of chanting are permissible without any divergence among scholars if the poetry is free from vulgarity and obscenity.

As for the Anaasheed which are qualified as Islaamic, they are performed with some musical instruments like Ad-Duff, drum, drumsticks and others. These are similar to At-Taghbeer³ which Ash-Shaafi'ee, Ahmad and other early Imaams dispraised. It is authentically reported that Ash-Shaafi'ee said: “I have left something in Iraq called At-Taghbeer which was instituted by heretics in order that they might turn away [others thereby] from the reciting of the Qur'aan”. It is also authentically reported that Ahmad said: “It is an innovated heresy”.

Furthermore, it is sufficient that the four jurisprudential Schools agree that musical instruments are absolutely forbidden, save Ad-Duff which is excepted for the wedding ceremony and the two 'Eeds. Many texts mentioned in the Book and the Sunnah dispraise and forbid musical instruments⁴, among them, the Prophet's (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) saying:

“Two voices are cursed; music at the time of happiness and wailing at the time of calamity”⁵

And his saying:

“Indeed, there will be in my Nation such people who will consider fornication, wearing silk, drinking wine and using musical instruments as permissible...”⁶

¹ “Saheeh al-Bukhaaree” (10/627), chapter of “Good manners” number: 90.

² Reported by Ahmad (hadeeth 14020), Al-Baihaqee (hadeeth 21563) on the authority of Anas Ibn Maalik (*May Allaah be pleased with him*). This hadeeth has been judged authentic by Al-Albaanee in “As-Silsilah as-Saheehah” (hadeeth 3205).

³ At-Taghbeer: A reciting of poetry or verses, in the praising, or glorifying, of Allaah, in which the performers trill, or quaver, prolong the voice, dance and raise the dust. (translator's note).

⁴ Shaykh al-Albaanee has a booklet which is published as response to Ibn Hazm and those who follow him, who consider using musical instruments permissible. This booklet is well done as regards authenticity of proofs and refutation.

⁵ Reported by Al-Bazaar (1/377/395) and judged authentic by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book “Mas'alat As-Samaa” (318). This hadeeth has been judged by Al-Albaanee as Hassan (good) in “As-Silsilah As-Saheehah” (hadeeth 427).

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And other proofs of the Sharee'ah.

That being said, taking music and amusement as a means for Da'wah is not lawful as it is known to any reasonable person. In fact, involving oneself in activities of Da'wah without knowing the ruling of religion as regards them and without being supported by evidence from the Sharee'ah is taking as a judge one's desires. Moreover, the actions done by such person are rejected, as it is not permissible to contradict the Sharee'ah's ruling, whether as regards the methods, the purposes or the means, in accordance with Allaah's (*Mighty and Majestic is He*) saying:

(ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

[Then We have put you (O Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)) on a plain way of (Our) commandment [like the one which We commanded Our Messengers before you (i.e. legal ways and laws of the Islaamic Monotheism)]. So follow you that (Islaamic Monotheism and its laws), and follow not the desires of those who know not.]⁷

Furthermore, the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) said:

“Whoever does an action that is not in accordance with our tradition will have it rejected”⁸

Hereupon, the means of making Da'wah should be in accordance with the general or specific texts of the Sharee'ah, or the general principles of the Sharee'ah. Besides, if the means of singing is related to sectarian purposes or serves objectives of a party or a regionalistic purpose, the means is forbidden because of what is related to, since the ways which lead to forbidden and detestable things have the same ruling than these things, in accordance with the jurisprudential rule which stipulates that: “The prohibition of something is also a prohibition of what leads unavoidably to that prohibited thing”. Also, if the means of singing represents a symbol which is specific to a certain group having a dogmatic, sectarian trend or a party to which it calls and which it follows, thus this means is forbidden as it is linked to forbidden things. That is why the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) abandoned the means of blowing the horn for calling to prayer, as it is among the symbols of Jews. He also (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be*

⁶ Reported by Al-Bukhaaree without mentioning its chain of narration (hadeeth 5590). Ibn Hibbaan, however, mentioned it with its chain of narration (hadeeth 6719), At-Tabaraanee (1/167/1), Al-Baihaqee (hadeeth 6317) on the authority of Aboo Maalik al-Ash'aree (*May Allaah be pleased with him*). See: “As-Silsilah As-Saheehah” by Al-Albaanee (1/176).

⁷ Soorah al-Jaathiya (The Kneeling) [45:18]

⁸ Reported by Muslim, chapter of “Judgements” (hadeeth 4590), Ahmad (hadeeth 25870), Ad-Daraqutnee in his “Sunan” (hadeeth 4593) on the authority of `Aa'ishah (*May Allaah be pleased with her*).

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upon him) abandoned ringing the bell as it is a symbol of the Christians and kindling fire which is a symbol of the Magians⁹.

The perfect knowledge belongs to Allaah (*Mighty and Majestic is He*). Our last prayer is all praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon our Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), his Family, his Companions and Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

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⁹ Reported by Aboo Daawood, chapter of "Prayer", concerning the beginning of Adhaan (call to prayer) (hadeeth 498), Al-Baihaqee in "As-Sunan Al-Kubra" (hadeeth 1873), on the authority of `Umayr Ibn Anas (*May Allaah be pleased with him*) according to one of his uncles from Al-Ansaar. This hadeeth has been judged by Ibn `Abd Al-Bar as Hassan (good) in "At-Tamheed" (24/21), Al-Albaanee in "Saheeh Abee Daawood" and Al-Waadi'ee "As-Saheeh Al-Musnad" (The authentic hadeeth about the causes of revelation of the verses. Identified and classified by Shaykh Muqbil ibn Haadee al-Waadi'ee (*May Allaah have mercy on him*), in the order of the Soorahs.)