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ON AN-NASHEED (The "Islamic" Genre of Music)

Compiled by A slave in need of the favour of his Lord

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Bismillah walhamdulillahi wa salaatu wa salaam alas Rasulillah wa aalihi wa ashaabihi wa salaman tasleeman katheerah.

To proceed,

PREFACE

The Prophet —Allah raise his rank and grant him peace— said: On the authority of Abu Hurayrah as reported by Imam Muslim and others:

"Islam started as something strange and it will go back to being strange as it started, then glad tidings to the strangers", the he was asked "who are the strangers of messenger of Allah?" He responded: "those who appropriate the corruption of people or those who remain good when the rest of the people are corrupted", in another route he said "those who becomes estranged from their people" - [Muslim: 140, Ibn Majah: 3988]

Muslims over the years have struggled to remain upon the pure and pristine religion of Islam revealed through the noble prophet —Allah raise his rank and grant him peace—, they have been challenged with Deen corrupters in different forms and stature and no one is protected except the one saved by Allah, therefore many weak Muslims have succumbed to the overwhelming pressure to adopt the 21st century live standards to be admitted into the 'civil society' (in the west's definition) or be ostracized and castigated at every opportunity. Soon these poor Muslims loses whatever they have left of esteem for their religion and

starts to feel the need to modernize, to boost their feeble egos in the face of religion intolerance. May Allah strengthen this group and make them steadfast.

Some however only want a little more freedom, a little more play and merry and some sort of bubbling, so they sought after that in feigning: covering the despicable and censured with a plating of the praised and permissible, while keeping a straight face thinking their crossbreed practices will become admissible if they call it a religious name.. May Allah grant this group contentment with the Islam that He has distinguished them with and all that He is pleased with for them in His religion, and make futility appear as such to them and strengthen them to stir clear off it.

This has affected almost every aspect of majority of today's Muslims lifestyles, there is hardly any aspect with no trace of adulteration and improvising which are alien to pristine Islam; from the way they dress (keeping in mind the evolution of Hijaab styles), to their gatherings, to their occasions, to the way they talk and relate with themselves, everything have a bit of conditioning, to an extent that the traces are even existent in their worships! And Allah's refuge is sought.

Then our situation is even more suiting for the observation of the companions of the prophet centuries aback regarding those they lived with after the demise of the prophet —Allah raise his rank and grant him peace—, and the likes Imam Awzaa'i had wondered during his time over this statement as I also wonder now, what their reactions would have been today if any of them was still alive.

Umm Daradaa reported, she said: *"I entered upon Abu Dardaa —Allah be pleased with him— and met him angry, so I asked what made him angry and he said: "By Allah I do not recognise anything from them with resemblance to the affair of Muhammad except that they pray in congregation""*. - [Bukhari: 651]

And it has also been reported from Anas —Allah be pleased with him— that he said: *"If a man had met the earliest pious predecessors and then lived till today, he will not recognise anything from Islam (of today)", then he placed his hand on his cheek and said: "except for this solah", then he said: "By Allah even with that, for whoever lives in corruption and did not meet those pious predecessors and then sees the innovator calling to his innovation and the profane one calling to his secularism, then Allah safeguards him from all that and made his heart inclined to those pious predecessors, asking about their ways, reviving their traditions, and treading their path, he will surely be recompensed with a great reward, and perhaps he will be like them if Allah wills"* - [Musnad Ahmad: 3/370]

And from the Deen corrupters is the modern day "Islamic" music genre popular as An-nasheed or Islamic An-nasheed or Islamic Music (as the case may be) which has now become widely adopted by Muslims (Sunni inclusive), especially women due to their innate gravitation towards excitements. They keep a library of this music, listen to them all day similar to the way the kufaar rock their music for relaxation and to pass the time, they accompany their adverts with them on social media and play them for their children to sing along, and their events are not complete without interludes of An-nasheed, This has indeed become a great tribulation for the Muslims.

IT'S VICES

Though these nasheeds started off as something harmless and some sort of Muslims replacement for conventional Music, but as expected like most endeavours at creating an islamic compliant branch of a prohibited act or practice, most if not all now bear too much resemblance to the evil music it was

meant to replace, so much that it is now difficult to argue that there is a difference between both, safe for the lyrics, and many are also bereft of anything beneficial even in their lyrics (some are pure love songs similar to any pop or RnB music). They have instrumentals like other music do, they are chanted in chorus with enchanting vocals like other music are, they are performed with bands also like regular music, and they dance to them like regular music, then what else is left as differentiation?

And though we all (I hope) express a conviction that music and musical instruments are haram (prohibited) in Islam, still we seek justification for this one, and we beseech Allah for safety.

To reiterate the prohibition of Music and musical instruments once again, Allah taala said:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ

"And of mankind is he who purchases idle talks (i.e. music, singing, etc.) to mislead (men) from the Path of Allah without knowledge, and takes it (the Path of Allah, the Verses of the Quran) by way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment (in the Hell-fire)". - [Surah Luqman: 6]

Ibn Mas'ud and Ibrahim An-Nakhaai, both said (Al-Lahw al-ahadith) in the verse is music while Ibn Jareer said it is drum. - [Tafseer Al-Baghawy]

Dr. Salih As-Salih (rahimahullah) highlighted the following to be disadvantageous attributes of the present day An-nasheed in his treatise: (A look at An-nasheed), he said:

"Much of what is being practiced with these anasheed does not escape, at least, one of the following observations:

1. Involving more and more people, especially children, keeping them busy with what could be, least to say, of a lesser benefit.
2. Anasheed are accompanied with musical toning and chanting (Eastern and Western beats) in the name of "culture" and "tradition." This is becoming more and more apparent, with bands competing in their selection of words and beats.
3. Remembrances of Allah are introduced in these anasheed in ways clearly resembling the intoning and chanting of the Christians in their churches.
4. The congregational chanting and singing that takes place resembles to a great extent that which goes on in the circles of the mystic Sufis in their singing circles. Former "stars" are being more involved with the mystic Sufi ways through so-called "Islamic anasheed." Some bands sing the infamous Shirk poem known as "Burdah," which involves shirk levels of exaggeration in the status of the Prophet Muhammad —Allah raise his rank and grant him peace—.
5. Luring the children to sing, especially the young girls, imitating the base of the infamous Muslim and Non-Muslim singers.
6. Replacing the Qur'aan with the so-called anasheed in the Da'wah to the young, claiming that they don't respond to the Qur'anic texts, therefore, legitimizing their use. The same is done with the Sunnah, eventually turning people away from what constitutes the true life for the believers.
7. In many of these singing circles, musical instruments and intoning are gradually taking hold, something known to be forbidden in Islam, except for the duff for women.
8. The emergence of so-called professional singing groups performing at weddings, parties, schools and the like.
9. Development of so called more advanced ways of video singing as a modern way of contemplating and reflecting on the creation of Allah.

10. Allowing taking pictures of young girls during different presentations of songs in itself is a fitnah (affliction and trial) and an opposition to the Sahree'ah. Some make movies and records of these young girls singing on special occasions.

11. Many things that are untrue are presented in these songs through acting, or through exaggeration in praise.

12. If you examine many of these songs, you will find a lot of them focusing on the Tawheed Ar-Rubuubiyyah (Lordship) only, something even the Mushriks confess to (i.e. matters pertaining to the signs of Allah in the creation, His running of the affairs, Him being in full authority and the like).

13. Transgression against the Sharee'ah in the form of acting roles. You see a child taking the role of Salah, saying, "I am the Salah, and these are my merits!" Another takes the role of Fasting and so on. Worst of all those who claim to represent the Qur'aan. Yet we know that the Qur'aan is the uncreated Speech of Allah.

14. Assuming in some cases the movements and walks of some of the losers from the known male and female singers. Imagine when this is done while chanting the remembrances of Allah!

15. Calling these Anasheed Islamic itself is a transgression, especially when they call it an "art" and a means of education and nourishment for the Da'wah! "This is an innovation in Deen, and this is from the deen of the innovators of the Sufis."" (End of quote).

This new genre of music has equally assisted in promoting other vices among Muslims in the wake of their videos (which are now widespread as well), vices such as inappropriate exhibition of women, promotion of corrupt mode of dressing, misorientation of children upon the model of effeminate singers, incitements towards illicit attachments and fanaticism to the singers. And Muslims who are subjected to them now exhibit the skewed Islam portrayed in anasheeds.

SCHOLARS VERDICTS

I have made an attempt to compile some of the verdicts of the scholars I came across on An-nasheed and I hope this will benefit whoever still nurses confusion regarding their permissibility or not, and also get clarification on the binds and thresholds in determining halal poetry and music dubbed Islamic nasheed. Read with an open mind and be sincere to yourself, may Allah grant you and I success in this world and the hereafter.

1] Shaykh Abdul-Aziz Bin Abdullah Aal-Shaykh, [the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia]:

"What is the ruling concerning gathering upon sound An-nasheed that call to good?"

Answer:

"My personal position concerning this is that I have reservations as I fear that this is an extension of the songs & chanting of the Sufis. And I fear that it will busy people away from taking pleasure in listening to the Quran and reflecting over it. Thus, I have reservations concerning this even though some of our brothers have made it permissible and have said it is better than that which is lesser than it. But I personally fear that it will draw people towards the singing and chanting of the Sufis that has no good in it."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LlcqrYTfR0>

2] Shaykh 'Abdul Muhsin al-'Abbaad (hafidhahullah) said:

"A person should spend his time with what will give him good in return in this life and the life after this. Let him occupy himself with remembrance of Allaah, read the Qur'aan and beneficial books. Moreover, it is also fine to listen to beneficial

poetry which urges to noble character and good adab. But as for these Anasheed which are listened to in these times, and which are sung in choirs to thereafter be recorded and sold, one should neither listen to them nor care about them (i.e one should ignore them)."

[Al-Qawl al-Mufeed fee Hukm-il-Anaasheed, p. 70]

3] Shaykh Saalih bin Fawzan al-Fawzan (hafidhahullah) said:

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

[Al-Bayaan li Akhta' Ba'd al-Kuttaab (p. 342)]

4] Shaykh Muhammad Nasirdeen al-Albanee (rahimahullah) said:

"I remember very-well that when I was in Damascus, two years before I migrated here to Ammaan, some of the Muslim youth started to sing few nasheeds that had sound meanings, intending thereby to counteract the Sufi songs like the Busayri poems and others. They recorded these nasheeds 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. People began listening to them day and night, whether there was an occasion or not. It became their way of relaxing. But that is only because of their whims and desires and their ignorance of the Shaytaan's tricks, who has diverted them from paying attention to the Qur'aan

and listening to it – let alone studying it! The Qur’aan (thus), became forsaken by them as it says in the verse, “The Messenger (Muhammad) will say, “O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur’aan (neither listened to it nor acted on its laws and teachings).” [Soorah al-Furqaan (25): 30]”

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

5] Shaykh Muhammad Nasirdeen al-Albanee (rahimahullah) again 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 there of, and not nasheed per se. This is a new error, and it is an imitation of the disbelievers and immoral people.

That may lead to a further error, which is imitating them in turning away from the Qur’aan and forsaking it, and being included in the general meaning of the complaint of the Prophet salAlahu alayhi wa salam as Allah says, “The Messenger (salAlahu alayhi wa salem) will say, ‘O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur’aan (neither listened to it nor acted on its laws and teachings).” [Soorah al-Furqaan (25): 30]

[end quote from Tahreem Alaas at-Tarab (p. 181)]

6] Shaykh Muhammad Nasirdeen al-Albanee (rahimahullah) also said:

“If these nasheeds contain Islamic meanings and are not accompanied by any instruments such as the duff, 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 Qur'aan which is encouraged in the Sunnah, and it also distracts them from seeking beneficial knowledge and calling people to Allah."

[Majallaat al-Asaalah (issue no. 2, 15 Jumaada al-Aakhirah 1413 AH)]

7] Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-Uthaymeen (rahimahullah) said:

"There has been a lot of talk about Islamic naasheeds. I have not heard 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 (corruption), and they were not performed with the tunes of haraam (impermissible) songs. But then the nasheeds changed and we began to hear a rhythm that may have been aduff 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 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)]

8] Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-Uthaymeen (rahimahullah) said again:

"I think that nasheeds have changed from what they were before. They were done with voices that were not enchanting, but now they are done with

enchanted 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 anasheed 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 Allaah be upon him)."

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

9] Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-Uthaymeen (rahimahullah) said again in response to the question:

"Is it permissible for the man to chant the Islamic anasheed and is it permissible that the duff, which is the tambourine without any of these bells attached to it, is it permissible to use the duff with the chanting and is the chanting or the anasheed permissible in other than the Eed and other than the festivals?"

The answer: "Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem, In the Name of Allah The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful", then he returned the greeting to the person who asked the Question, and said: "The Islamic anasheed is an innovated chanting innovated by the Sufis. Therefore, one should turn away from it and resort to the admonitions from the Qur'aan and Sunnah, unless it is used in the battlefields to help as a motivation for Jihaad in the cause of Allah, the Most High, then this is good, however, if it accompanied with the duff, then it would be far away from the truth."

[Fatwa al-'Aqeedah, no 369m p. 651, Maktabatu As-Sunnah]

10] Shaykh Abdul-Aziz ibn Baaz (rahimahullah) also said:

“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 judgment 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.”

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

11] Shaykh Abdul-Aziz ibn Baaz (rahimahullah) said:

“Islamic nasheeds 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 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.”

[Majmoo Fatawa ash-Shaykh Ibn Baaz (3/437)]

And finally,

12] Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullah) said:

“To sum up, what is well known in the Islamic religion is that the Prophet salAllahu alayhi wa salam did not prescribe for the righteous devoted worshippers and ascetics of his ummah to gather to listen to poetic verses recited accompanied with clapping or the beating of a duff.

It is not permissible for anyone to deviate from following him salAllahu alayhi wa salam and following that which he salAllahu alayhi wa salem 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. The Prophet 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 the Saheeh (al-Bukharee) that he salAlahu alayhi wa salam 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."

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

Wa sallaLlahu wa salaam alaa Muhammad wa aalihi wa ashaabihi wa man taba'ahum bil'ihسان ilaa yawmi deen.