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are modern nasheeds  
which contain  
**tunes**  
& **vocal**  
sound effects  
that imitate songs of the disbelievers  
**permissible?**

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# Nasheeds have changed

Previously nasheeds used to have meanings of faith, struggle and knowledge but now – in many cases – they have become akin to songs of evildoers with

- softening of the voice.
- putting a picture of the munshid (the one who sings the nasheed) on the cover of the tape.
- making video clips to accompany the nasheed and these video clips contain haraam things such as the presence of women or evildoers.
- musical instruments.

Nowadays, the best of nasheed (with regards to not using haraam musical instruments) are those that **use sound effects that mimic the sound of musical instruments**. But even in such nasheeds, attention is not paid to the meaning - rather **all the attention is focused on the tune and other sound effects**. Otherwise tell me how a munshid can produce a nasheed in English which the [Arab] listeners enjoy so much even though they do not understand a single word of it?!

(a disadvantage of these modern nasheeds is that) Today, nasheeds have overtaken other kinds of educational and beneficial audio material.

Today, nasheed groups have multiplied in the Muslim world and they do not hesitate to publish pictures of their groups in newspapers and magazines wearing identical clothing. And their faces often proclaim their going against the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ as they have shaved their beards.



Some Qur'aan readers, whom Allah has blessed with beautiful voices and talent in reading, have also followed into the footsteps of these munshids. Some of them became very keen to go down that path and release some recordings which do not befit their status. So, you may find one of them producing a recording with some clean-shaven evildoers and pictures of women appearing in the video clip with the nasheed.

(In the video clips accompanying the modern nasheeds)  
The camera zooms in on the face of the munshid **when he is looking his best and the munshid stares soulfully into the camera and behaves like a pop singer.**

What is mentioned above is neither exaggeration nor talking about things that do not happen. These munshids who publish their pictures and mobile numbers know that women are tempted by them. They also know how the weak section of the society is affected by their movements, looks and images. Yet, unfortunately, we only see them producing more of these nasheeds with images.



# **The scholars who permitted nasheeds previously have retracted the view that it is permissible or they have stipulated conditions for nasheeds to be considered permissible**

Some of the prominent scholars, who previously permitted nasheeds, were upset by what nasheeds and munshids have become – and this was before they found out about the video clips (accompanied by these nasheeds) – and thus the scholars have either (as is known from the following quotes of the scholars)

- retracted the view that nasheeds are permissible or
- stipulated conditions for nasheeds to be considered permissible.

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 a duff 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)]

Shaikh Saalih 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)]



Shaikh 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 ﷺ) 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)]

It is regrettable that some of those who appoint themselves to issue fatawa have reached such a level that they issues fatawa allowing adult women to perform nasheeds in front of men, and even on satellite channels in front of millions, and these female performers use musical instruments which are forbidden in the Sharee'ah but are permitted by these so-called muftis!



# The Guidelines and Conditions of Permissible Nasheeds

derived from the Words of the trustworthy Scholars

1. The words of the nasheed must be free of haraam (impermissible) and unwise words.
2. The nasheed should not be accompanied by musical instruments. No musical instrument is permitted except the duff **for women** on certain occasions.
3. **The nasheed should be free of vocal sound effects that imitate musical instruments**, because what matters is what appears - and imitating haraam instruments is not permissible, especially when the bad effect is the same as that of real instruments, like moving tunes which make the listener feel “high” like what happens to those who listen to songs. This is the case with many of the nasheeds which appear nowadays. The listeners no longer pay any attention to the good meaning of the words, because they are so entranced by the tunes.
4. **Listening to nasheed should not become a habit which takes up a person’s time** and affects his (obligatory) duties and mustahabb (recommended) actions, such as affecting his reading of Qur’aan and calling others to Allah.
5. The performer of a nasheed should not be a woman performing in front of men or a man with an enchanting appearance or voice performing in front of women.



6. **One should avoid listening to performers with soft voices who move their bodies in rhythm, because there is fitnah in all of that and it is an imitation of the evildoers.**

7. One should avoid the images that are put on the covers of their tapes, and more important than that, **one should avoid the video clips that accompany their nasheeds, especially those which contain provocative movements and imitations of immoral singers.**

8. The purpose of the nasheed should be the words, not the tune.

On the following pages are quoted some comments of the scholars which include the guidelines and conditions mentioned above.





Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (rahimahullah) said,

"To sum up, what is well known in the Islamic religion is that **the Prophet ﷺ 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 ﷺ and following that which he ﷺ 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 ﷺ 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)]

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)]

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)]

The scholars of the Standing Committee for issuing Fatawa said in a Fatwa,

"It is permissible for you to replace these songs with Islamic nasheeds which contain words of wisdom and exhortation and lessons, which promote keenness to follow Islam and invoke Islamic feelings, which put one off evil and the things that promote evil, and which motivate the one who "sings" them and the one who hears them to obey Allah and discourage them to disobey Him or transgress His limits; they make one keen to protect His sharee'ah and strive in struggle for His sake.

**But you should not take that as a habit which one**



**persists in, rather that should be something that is done only sometimes**, on special occasions such as weddings or when traveling for struggle against the enemy and so on, and when one feels low, in order to revive the spirit and motivate oneself to do good, or when one feels inclined towards evil, so listening to such nasheeds may ward that off." [Fatawa Islamiyyah (4/533)]

Shaikh al-Albanee (rahimahullah) 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 thereof**, 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 ﷺ as Allah says, "The Messenger (ﷺ) 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 Alaah at-Tarab (p. 181)]

Shaikh 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)]

People have too high opinion of those who perform nasheeds and recite Qur'aan, to think that they could be a cause of Fitnah (corruption) for young men and women, and a cause of their being distracted from obedience to Allah.

These munshids know how great an effect their voices and pictures can have on males and females; if you go to chat rooms you will see very weird things. You will see a woman who is infatuated with a munshid or one who cannot sleep unless she is listening to the voice of so-and-so, and those who call themselves 'aashiqat fulaan (lover of so-and-so munshid) and you see men and women venerating those munshids, giving them titles and high status, even though some of them are not religiously committed at all, and some of them have fallen into the trap of singing immoral songs, and if you go to some websites that have these nasheeds, you will be surprised at how often these nasheeds are downloaded and how many people have no interest in listening to Qur'aan and useful lectures.

We ask Allaah to set the affairs of all of us straight. Ameen. And Allah knows best.

