

A BALANCED ISLAMIC VIEW ON MUSIC & SINGING

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This presentation is based on the book “Music & Singing in the Balance of Islam” (Arabic) by Shaykh Abdullah al- Juday (2004)

Summary – The Balanced *Fatwa*

Music & Singing are types of *lahw* (entertainment, amusement, frivolity, sport, etc.). Thus, they are acceptable and even encouraged at times in moderation in the *Sunnah*, just like poetry, humour, laughter, etc. However, excessive use of *lahw* may deaden the heart and our spiritual faculties. The question is to find the Balance ...

Introduction

Music & singing are types of sounds. All worldly matters (including sound) are in principle lawful (*halal*) unless there is a clear-cut prohibition in the Qur’an and/or Sunnah.

Worldly Matters are Lawful unless Proved Otherwise

It is He who has created for you whatever is in the earth, all of it.

Al-Baqarah (The Cow, 2:29)

But do not say – for any false thing that your tongues may put forth – “This is lawful, and this is forbidden,” so as to ascribe false things to Allah. For those who ascribe false things to Allah, will never prosper.

Al-Nahl (The Honey-Bee, 16:116)

Qur’an & Hadith

There is no clear-cut *ayah* of the Qur’an specifically about music and/or singing. There are some *ahadith* that appear to prohibit music/singing. The vast majority of these are very weak and/or fabricated

Claims of *Ijma’* (Consensus)

Many people claim that there is *Ijma’* (Consensus) that music is prohibited, but this is utterly unproven & a baseless claim. A holistic, contextualised

reading of the Qur'an & Hadith/Sunnah enables us to arrive at the position on Music/singing that is already outlined under "Summary" above.

Arguments from the Qur'an for Prohibiting Music & Singing

1- The Voice of Satan?

Allah (God) says to Iblis (Satan):

Lead to destruction those whom you can among them, with your (seductive) voice ...

Surah al-Isra' (The Night-Journey, 17:64)

Mujahid allegedly said that this means:

Wind-instruments ...

Mujahid also allegedly said that it means: *play & amusement or entertainment & singing*

His teacher Ibn 'Abbas allegedly said that it means:

Every caller to the disobedience of God.

Imam Tabari summarised: *Allah did not specify one voice over another, so it refers to every voice calling to Satan and his actions and his obedience in opposition to the obedience of Allah ...*

2- Idle Talk / Tales

... But there are, among the people, those who purchase idle tales (lahw al-hadith) to mislead from the Path of Allah without knowledge and throw ridicule (on the Path): for such there will be a humiliating penalty.

Luqman (31:6)

Mujahid allegedly said: *Lahw refers to drums (??? – nothing to do with tales)*

Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Mas'ud & others definitely said: *Lahw al-hadith refers to singing.*

... But there are, among the people, those who purchase idle tales to mislead from the Path of Allah without knowledge and throw ridicule (on the Path): for such there will be a humiliating penalty.

This *ayah* was revealed regarding Ibn Ubayy, Chief of the Hypocrites, who bought singing-slavegirls and held sessions promoting vice and opposing virtue and Islam. The *ayah* applies to buying songs, poetry, stories, fiction, images, plays & films etc. with the purpose of misleading people from the Path of Allah and ridiculing it.

3- Whistling & Clapping

The polytheists' prayer at the House (i.e. the Ka'bah) is nothing but whistling and clapping of hands: Taste the Penalty because you blasphemed.

Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War, 8:35)

Ibn 'Atiyyah of Andalusia: Whistling & clapping was a religious ritual of the Arab polytheists, audible over 4 miles between Mount Hira and Mount Safa in Mecca! They intensified their rituals in order to oppose the Prophetic and Muslim practice of recitation and prayer.

4- Falsehood?

Those who witness no falsehood (zur) and,

If they pass by futility, they pass by it honourably.

al-Furqan (The Criterion, 25:72)

Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyyah: *Falsehood = amusement & singing*

Mujahid: *Falsehood = singing*

Hasan of Basra: *Falsehood = singing & wailing over the deceased: unpleasant & offensive to the ear & heart*

(All these narrations are weak)

Zur: lies, falsehood, deception, etc.

Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi, the Maliki jurist, said:

The correct view about this *ayah* is that falsehood refers to lying ... as for the view that it refers to singing, that is going too far.

5- Time-Wasting Vanities?

Do you then wonder at this recital?

And will you laugh and not weep,

Wasting your time in vanities?

But fall down in prostration to Allah and worship!

Al-Najm (The Star, 53:59-62)

Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: *Time-wasting vanities refers to singing in the tongue of the Himyari Yemeni Arabs ... When they heard the Qur’an recited, they would sing and play.*

This explanation is similar to the *ayah*:

The unbelievers say: Do not listen to this Recitation (Qur’an), but talk at random in the midst of its (recitation), that you may gain the upper hand!

Ha Mim al-Sajdah (Ha Mim – The Prostration, 41:26)

Arguments from the Hadith for Prohibiting Music & Singing

Fornication, Silk, Wine & Wine

There will be peoples amongst my nation who will legalise fornication and adultery, silk, wine and musical instruments ... some will sink into the earth, others will be transformed into apes and swine ...

Transmitted by Bukhari with a chain of transmission that is less strict than his usual exceptionally-high standards.

Ibn Hazm said that this hadith is not authentic.

Most hadith scholars say that it is authentic.

“Legalise” assumes that the matter is prohibited. But musical instruments are not prohibited elsewhere in the Qur’an & Sunnah!

There were two Ansari girls in Ayesha’s apartment beating tambourines and singing Ansari folk-songs in the presence of the Prophet (pbuh). Abu Bakr scolded them and wished to expel them, saying, “Satan’s wind-instruments

in the house of the Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet replied, “Leave them alone, for it is our festival (*Eid*).” (Bukhari etc)

Abu Bakr & ‘Umar were very serious, austere men who disliked *lahw*. Abu Bakr even renounced poetry. His actions are similar to those of ‘Umar, who tried to forbid the Abyssinian martial arts in the Prophet’s Mosque at Eid as well as Ibn Rawaha’s poetry at the Conquest of Mecca. The Prophet corrected ‘Umar on both occasions, just as he corrected Abu Bakr on the occasion of Eid.

Ibn ‘Abbas reported that the Prophet (sAws) said, “Truly, Allah has prohibited wine, gambling and the *kubah*.”

Ahmad & others - sahih

Kubah: A drum, flute or backgammon piece.

Azhari and Ibn al-Athir: The correct explanation is the backgammon piece, when used for gambling.

Abu Hurayrah said: the Messenger of Allah (Pbuh) prohibited the income of a *zammarah* (singer or prostitute).

Abu Bakr al-Attar, Bayhaqi & others – sahih

Qasim b. Sallam, Ibn Qutaybah & others agreed that the hadith refers to prostitutes, not singers.

Ahadith Permitting or Commanding Music/Singing

The Prophet (pbuh) commands there be Music & Singing at Weddings

On the authority of Ayesha that she prepared and presented a bride to one of the Ansar, so the Prophet of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said:

O Ayesha! Did you not have any music and singing (lahw)? For the Ansar love that!
(Bukhari, Hakim & Bayhaqi)

Muhammad b. Hatim al-Jumahi said that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said:

The difference between the lawful (i.e. marriage) and the unlawful (i.e. fornication) is the tambourine and singing at the wedding.

Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Nasa’i, Bayhaqi

The Prophet, Ayesha & the Singer

Sa'ib b. Yazid narrated: A woman came to the Messenger of Allah (sAws). He asked, "Ayesha, do you know who this is?" She replied, "No, O Prophet of God." He said, "This is the singer of tribe such-and-such: would you like her to sing to you?" She replied, "Yes." He gave the woman a plate, and she sang to Ayesha. The Prophet said, "Satan has breathed into her nostrils." (Ahmad – *sahih*)

The Prophet, the Four Caliphs & the Singer

The Prophet returned from one of his military expeditions. A black slavewoman came and said that she had vowed to beat a tambourine and sing to him if Allah brought him back safely. The Prophet said, "If you have vowed to do this, then yes, otherwise no." She began to beat the tambourine and sing to him, and continued while Abu Bakr, 'Ali & 'Uthman entered in turn ... When 'Umar entered, she immediately stopped and sat on her tambourine. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said:

Truly, Satan is afraid of you, O 'Umar!

Tirmidhi etc. – hasan (sound)

The Daff

(Tambourine without Percussion) is not the only Instrument allowed!

Jabir b. 'Abdullah said: When there was a wedding, the slave-girls used to walk through the streets of Madinah beating drums and playing flutes (or other wind-instruments) ...

Tabari with a *sahih isnad* (Q. 62:11)

The Shepherd's Flute

Nafi', the freed-slave of Ibn 'Umar, narrated that Ibn 'Umar heard the sound of a shepherd's flute, so he put his fingers in his ears and diverted his mount away from the path, asking, "Nafi', can you hear the music?" As long as I could hear it, he continued, until I said, "No." He said: I have done as the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) once did.

Ahmad, Abu Dawud & others – *sahih* (authentic)

Eleven Women Describe Their Husbands (The Hadith of Umm Zar’)

The tenth one said: My husband owns many camels ... When they hear the sound of flutes, they know that they are about to perish.

Bukhari & Muslim

Abu ‘Ubayd of Herat said: He would entertain his guests with musical instruments and slaughter camels for them ...

Music & Singing beyond Eids & Weddings

‘Amir b. Sa’d al-Bajali said: I entered upon Abu Mas’ud, Qarazah b. Ka’b and Thabit b. Yazid. Slave-women were beating tambourines and singing. I said, “You approve of this when you are Companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)?!” They replied, “Singing at weddings is a concession given to us ...”

Nasa’i, Tabarani, Hakim & others - sahih

Tariq b. Shihab said: I entered upon a number of Companions of the Prophet (pbuh), who were having non-alcoholic drinks and listening to a female singer. I said, “You are the elect amongst the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (Pbuh)!!” Abu Mas’ud al-Ansari replied, “The Messenger of Allah allowed us to listen to singing at weddings ...”

Abu l-Shaikh al-Isbahani & others - sahih

Khalid b. Dhakwan said: We were in Madinah on the day of ‘Ashura. The girls were beating tambourines and singing. We visited Rubayyi’ bt. Mu’awwidh and mentioned that to her. She mentioned her wedding-day in the presence of the Prophet (sAws), when two singing-girls had been singing about the heroes of Badr. (Ibn Majah – *sahih*)

A Curious Experience before Prophethood

‘Ali heard the Messenger of Allah (sAws) saying: I was never tempted to do any of the obscene things that the people of Jahiliyyah used to do, except for two occasions. Both times, Allah saved me from those obscene matters (i.e. wine, women, etc.). One night, I asked a young Qurayshi friend to tend my sheep for me whilst I spent a night awake doing what the young men of Mecca did ...

... I heard the sound of music and singing coming from one of the houses in Mecca. It was a wedding celebration. I amused myself with those sounds until I fell asleep, and was woken by the heat of the sun. I returned the next night, and the same thing happened. When I returned to my friend, he

asked, “What did you do?” I replied, “I did nothing.” By Allah, I was never tempted again by the obscenities of *Jahiliyyah* until Allah honoured me with Prophethood!

Sirah Ibn Ishaq - sahih

Other Forms of Music

Hida' or Huda': singing to camels to encourage them to keep travelling by day and night. Approved by the Prophet (pbuh) when he said to his camel-singer, “Be gentle with the delicate crystals!” (referring to female hearts).

Hasan of Basra was asked about singing to camels. He replied, “The Muslims (i.e. the Companions) used to do it.” (Ibn Abi Shaybah)

Not All *Lahw* (Amusement) is Bad

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said:

Only three types of amusement are good: A person's training his horse; husband and wife playing together; archery.

Ahmad, Abu Dawud & Nasa'i

All human amusement is falsehood, except for three types: archery, training horses and domestic fun, for they are part of Truth.

Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Darimi

Views of the Companions

‘Umar b. al-Khattab

Aslam, the freed-slave of ‘Umar, said: ‘Umar heard a man singing (to encourage his camels) in the desert and observed, “Singing is part of the rider's provisions.”

Ibn Abi Shaybah & Bayhaqi - hasan

‘Uthman b. ‘Affan

I have stored ten matters as treasure with my Lord: I was the fourth person to accept Islam. I have never sung ...

Ayesha

Ayesha's nieces were in pain after being circumcised, so she sent for a singer to sing and lessen their pain. She went to observe and saw him singing and shaking his long-haired head, at which point she said, "Uff! Shaytan! Get rid of him!"

(She expelled him because of his appearance, not because he was a male singing to women and girls. Singers were clearly common in Madinah at the time.)

The Prophet (pbuh) allowed the young Ayesha to watch the Abyssinian martial arts display in his mosque. One narration mentions an Abyssinian woman dancing in the street for the amusement of the children. Ayesha watched her, too.

Ibn 'Abbas

Tambourines are prohibited. Musical instruments are prohibited. Drums are prohibited. Flutes are prohibited.

(Authenticity not proven)

Ibn 'Umar

People in the state of *ihram* passed by him. A man amongst them was singing. He said, "Lo! May Allah not hear you. Lo! May Allah not hear you". He passed by a little girl who was singing and said, "Were Satan to leave anyone alone, he would have left her alone."

Bilal & Ibn al-Zubayr

Once, Bilal was singing whilst lying down and a man asked him about it, surprised at his behaviour. He sat up and said, "Which of the *muhajirun* have I not heard humming or singing?"

Ibn al-Zubayr said, "Which of the Companions have I not heard singing?"

'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf

While travelling to Mecca for the Hajj, he asked his companion Rabah to sing in order to relieve the boredom of the journey. 'Umar caught up with them and asked what they were doing. When they explained, he replied, "If you must do so, sing the poetry of Dirar b. al-Khattab". Umar gave the same

advice to ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Hatib b. Abi Balta’ah and his group who were in *ihrām* on the way to Hajj.

Usamah b. Zayd

Muhammad b. ‘Abdullah b. Nawfal said that he saw Usamah b. Zayd lying down in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (sAww), with one leg resting upon the other, singing.

Bayhaqi, ‘Abd al-Razzaq & Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr - sahih

‘Abdullah b. al-Arqam

‘Abdullah b. ‘Utbah said that he heard ‘Abdullah b. al-Arqam raising his voice in song. He also said that he had not seen anyone more God-fearing than ‘Abdullah b. al-Arqam.

Bayhaqi - sahih

Hassan b. Thabit

‘Urwah b. al-Zubayr narrated that a person held a feast during the rule of ‘Uthman and invited many of the Companions. Hassan b. Thabit, who had turned blind, attended along with his son ‘Abd al-Rahman. There were two female singers there, and Hassan’s son encouraged them to sing Hassan’s poetry, upon which Hassan wept.

‘Abdullah b. Ja’far

‘Abdullah b. Ja’far visited Damascus and stayed at the house of Mu’awiyah b. Abi Sufyan. Mu’awiyah’s wife told him, “Your guest listens to singing.” Mu’awiyah saw one of ‘Abdullah’s slave-women singing to him and then serving him honey & water. He said, “I see nothing wrong.” His wife later told him, “Your guest doesn’t let us sleep at night, with his constant recitation of the Qur’an.” Mu’awiyah replied, “Such are my people: monks by night, kings by day!”

Ibn ‘Asakir, History of Damascus

Sheikh Juday’s Summary

All these traditions refer to popular folk-songs that were part of the culture of the Companions at the time, to reduce and relieve boredom. They would sing to themselves or to others, and would see no harm in this.

The reputation of ‘Abdullah b. Ja’far in listening to music & singing and having singing-girls is established and well-known. The Prophet (pbuh) had prayed for him, and none of the leading Companions criticised him.

These narrations show that the Companions neither prohibited the principle nor the practice of singing. The most that can be said is that sometimes, singing is disliked when it replaces something better.

Similarly, none of them prohibited music, except for an unproven narration from Ibn ‘Abbas. Even if it were authentic, it would be understood to apply to music becoming a means towards vice, not to music in general. This is the only way to reconcile the different evidence.

Their listening to music and singing was not limited to weddings and Eid celebrations, but extended to other occasions.

Views of the Generations after the Companions

Anti Singing

Mujahid, ‘Ikrimah, Ibrahim al-Nakh’i, Habib al-Kufi & Makhul all explained “idle tales” in the *ayah* of Surah Luqman to be singing.

Sa’id b. al-Musayyib: I hate singing, but like *rajaz* (a type of poetry).

Sha’bi disliked the income of singers.

Ibrahim: Singing sows hypocrisy in the heart.

Fudayl b. ‘Iyad: Singing calls to fornication/adultery.

Against music

A man broke another’s drum, but Qadi Shurayh refused to order compensation.

Qadi Shurayh: Angels do not enter houses containing tambourines.

Hasan of Basra would refuse to attend wedding-feasts where flutes were played.

Iyas b. Mu’awiyah: If I distinguished Heavenly actions from Hellish ones, flute-playing would not be a Heavenly action.

Ibrahim: Ibn Mas’ud’s disciples would rip the tambourines of singing-girls in the streets.

Awza'i would not attend weddings where there were drums or other musical instruments.

Waki' b. al-Jarrah: Seize the drum and break it over its owner's head, as Ibn 'Umar did! Drums and other instruments of vice have no monetary value.

Pro Music: Authentic Narrations

Awza'i allowed girls to play the tambourine secretly on Eid days.

Suwayd b. Ghafalah used to order his servant to sing camel-songs. (Suwayd was a *Mukhadram* who had set off for Madinah to visit the Prophet (pbuh) but arrived when the Muslims had finished burying him.)

Sa'id b. al-Musayyib did not allow his daughter to play with ivory dolls, but did allow drums.

'Ata b. Abi Rabah: There is no harm in songs, camel-songs or poetry, even for a *muhrim*, as long as the words are not obscene.

Iyas b. Mu'awiyah: Singing is like the wind. It enters from here, and exits from there.

Sufyan b. 'Uyaynah saw no harm in singing.

Ibn Sirin used to enjoy tambourine music at weddings.

'Awn b. 'Abdullah was a great Kufi Tabi'i. He would tell stories, and then order his slave-girl to also tell stories and sing to the people to make them dance. Mughirah wrote to him: Your actions are those of a fool.

The Great Jurist Family of Madinah – Al Majishun

Al Majishun was a great family of Madinan jurists and Hadith-scholars, who were also known for teaching singing, listening to it and having singing slave-girls. Imam Dhahabi said: The people of Madinah make a concession for singing, and they are known to be lenient about it. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Truly, the Ansar love *lahw* (music & song)." This was part of their nature and custom, so the Prophet (sAws) made allowances for them.

Views of the Imams & Jurists

Imam Abu Hanifah (80-150 H)

He was asked about a wedding-feast where there was amusement and singing. He replied, “I was afflicted by that once.”

If a person breaks another’s flute or drum, he must pay the value of the carved wood.

It is allowed but disliked (*makruh*) to sell musical instruments such as flutes, drums and tambourines.

Imam Abu Hanifah’s Students

Abu Yusuf & Muhammad b. al-Hasan differ from their teacher:

No compensation for broken musical instruments. The sale of these is invalid because they may be used for wickedness and corruption. Admittedly, they may also be used for allowable matters.

Thus, prohibition does not apply to instruments in themselves, but only when they are used for vice.

Imam Malik of Madinah (93-179 H)

Malik was asked about the fact that it was well-known that the people of Madinah indulged in singing. He replied, “Only the wicked do that in our city”.

He did not prohibit singing in general, but only singing that involves wickedness.

Imam Malik – View on Singing

Disliked the selling or hiring of manuscripts of poetry, elegy, song & *fiqh* (opinion)

Suhnun was asked: Did Malik dislike song? He replied: Malik disliked Qur’an-recitation with melody; how could he not dislike singing?

Disliked the sale of a slave-girl upon condition of her being a singer.

Imam Malik – View on Music

Suhnun from ‘Abd al-Rahman b. al-Qasim: Malik disliked tambourines and all musical instruments at weddings. (*al-Mudawwanah*)

Malik: I am not impressed by a dignified man attending play & sport.

Malik was asked about enjoying the sound of flutes & drums on the street or in a gathering. He advised: Leave the gathering.

Malik & Ibn al-Qasim were asked about attending a gathering where there was entertainment. They both replied: If there is a little beating of drums and tambourines such as those used by women, there is no harm.

Thus, he regarded music as disliked (*makruh*), not prohibited (*haram*).

Imam Shafi’i (150-202 H): Song

The witness of singers is not acceptable, because singing is disliked amusement, although it is not clearly prohibited. A singer is attributed with foolishness and lack of manhood. Ditto for someone who constantly listens to singers ... As for listening to camel-songs, Arabian poetical songs (*nashid*) and poetry, there is no harm in it, whatever the amount.

Kitab al-Umm

Imam Shafi’i -Music

No compensation for broken musical instruments such as drums or flutes.

Kitab al-Umm

Imam Shafi’i’s Students & Followers

Allowed the tambourine at weddings and circumcisions. Allowed all drums except for a few types that they disagree about.

Imam Nawawi, Rawdah al-Talibin

Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 248 H)

Prohibited all musical instruments except the percussion-less tambourine.

No compensation for broken instruments.

Prevent the musician, but don't take him to court or the governor, for he should discipline him with up to ten stripes.

Destroy musical instruments, even those in the hand of a little child.

Narrated that he disliked, not prohibited, flutes and drums, except for drums of war, which are not for frivolity.

Allowed tambourines in weddings and rejected the practice of Ibn Mas'ud's students of tearing them. Saw this as too strict. Disliked but did not prohibit selling tambourines.

Imam Ahmad - Singing

Disliked singing and forbade it being done openly.

Singing sows hypocrisy in the heart.

The songs of Ayesha's singing-girls were like a rider's songs. Such singing is not rejected.

Invalidated any increase in price for a slave-girl due to her singing talents.

The Four Imams - Summary

Abu Hanifah: music & singing are intensely disliked (*makruh tanzih*), but not prohibited (*haram*)

Malik: intense dislike (*makruh*), but not prohibition (*haram*)

Shafi'i: intense dislike for instruments except the *daff*, but not prohibition. Did not prohibit singing, but disliked too much of it. Allowed it in moderation.

Ahmad: Prohibited musical instruments and disliked singing.

Example of Poetry

The Prophet occasionally listened to poetry and even quoted it, although his status as Prophet was too exalted for him to be described as a poet, an ascription that the Qur'an categorically denies. Furthermore, whilst some of his Companions such as Abu Bakr rarely composed poetry, others such as Hassan bin Thabit and Abdullah bin Rawaha mastered it and were employed by the Prophet in psychological and propaganda warfare to accompany the military responses to his enemies. The Prophet famously observed that there is wisdom to be found in poetry, but cautioned against filling one's heart and

mind with it, since that would detract from prayer and the remembrance of God.

Example of Laughter & Humour

Similarly, the Prophet would often smile, laugh modestly and joke with his companions. However, he cautioned against excessive laughter, for it “deadens the heart” and leads to a frivolous approach to life and one’s responsibilities. He even occasionally listened to music and singing and recommended these in moderations for joyous occasions such as weddings and two Eid celebrations. None of this detracted from his constant devotion to God, his sense of the sacred in all of creation and his sense of responsibility in serving God’s creatures.

The Companions - Balance

Abul-Darda’ said, “I strengthen myself for a night of worship with an hour of entertainment.”

An eyewitness reported that “The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) were neither dry-natured nor morbid. They would chant poetry to each other in their gatherings, and mention some of the matters of their Days of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*). However, if any of them was asked to do something against the command of Allah, the pupils of his eyes would revolve as though he were mad.”

Bukhari, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*

The Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) used to play with water-melon, but when it came to serious realities, they were the real men.

Eyewitness, recorded by Imam Bukhari in Al-Adab al-Mufrad

Sheikh. Juday’s Fatwa on Music & Singing

These are sounds that are permitted in principle. If they are used for good, they are good. If they are used for evil, they are evil. If they are used for “neutral” matters, they remain in the basic category of permitted matters.