174279 - Ruling on using hormonal contraceptive and methods that prevent the fertilised egg from attaching to the wall of the uterus

the question

My question has to do with contraception using modern methods, which is done by using a rubber ring containing hormones that prevent pregnancy, by preventing the egg that has been fertilised from attaching itself to the wall of the uterus. Please note that other types of contraception prevent ovulation, and they differ from the first type by preventing fertilisation. Is the modern method mentioned above halal or haram? Please note that my question is not about contraception in and of itself; rather it is about this modern method.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The contraceptive rings work like pills, meaning that they prevent ovulation and prevent the fertilised egg from attaching to the wall of the uterus. On the website *Tabib al-Web* it says:

The vaginal ring is a flexible transparent copolymer ring, the diameter of which is 54 mm.

The woman herself places the ring in the vagina, where it remains for three weeks. In fact this ring contains a hormonal substance that is similar to what is found in contraceptive pills. The ring may remain in the vagina for three weeks, but the woman may remove it and wash it, then put it back in place easily. At the end of three weeks, the woman removes the ring, then waits for one whole week, like any woman who takes the contraceptive pill, then she inserts a new ring.

The way in which this method works is like the contraceptive pill, even though it is placed in the vagina; its effect is not localised, like other, local contraceptive methods; rather it works like the contraceptive pill, and placing it in the vagina is no more than a method of introducing the pharmaceutical substance into the body. In other words, these rings prevent ovulation from

occurring, and make the interior of the uterus unreceptive to implantation of the egg. It also makes the cervical mucus unreceptive to the passage of sperm. End quote.

These rings share with other contraceptive methods – such as the IUD – the effect of preventing the fertilised egg from implanting in the uterus.

In the source quoted above it says: The way in which the IUD prevents pregnancy is by preventing the fertilised egg from implanting in the uterus.

The principle on which the copper IUD works is based on producing an inflammatory reaction that is not caused by germs; rather it is caused by the copper inside the uterus, as if the uterus is defending itself against the copper, so its make-up changes and it becomes unreceptive to implantation of the fertilised egg. This is in contrast to the hormonal IUD, which works by means of the pharmaceutical substance that the IUD releases inside the uterus and causes it to shrink.

In either case, the interior of the uterus becomes unreceptive to implantation of the fertilised egg. End quote.

We have previously explained that it is permissible to use the IUD to prevent pregnancy. Please see the answer to question no. 22027 .

Preventing the egg from implanting in the uterus is not regarded as abortion, because abortion has to do with the fertilized egg that is implanted in the uterus, and this method prevents that from happening.

Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his *Tafsir*: The nutfah (fertilised egg) is nothing, for certain, and no ruling is applied to it if the woman gets rid of it when it has not yet settled (implanted) in the womb, as it is regarded the same as if it is in the man's loins. But if the woman gets rid of it when it is an 'alaqah (embryo), then in that case we are certain that the nutfah had settled and begun to develop, in the first stage of development that leads to the formation of a child. End quote.

Al-Ramli said in *Nihayat al-Muhtaj* (8/342): al-Muhibb al-Tabari said: The scholars differed

regarding the fertilized egg before the completion of forty days, and there are two views. It was said that it is not subject to the rulings on abortion and infanticide, and it was said that it has sanctity and it is not permissible to harm it or cause it to be expelled after it has settled (implanted) in the womb. This is in contrast to ‘azl (coitus interruptus), because that happens before the sperm is deposited in the vagina… The more correct view is that it (abortion) is haram after the soul has been breathed into the foetus in all circumstances, but it is permissible before that. End quote.

The action of the IUD and the rings asked about is not regarded as abortion. Moreover, some of the jurists permit abortion of the fertilised egg before forty days, as was stated by al-Ramli and as has been explained previously in the answer to question no. 171943 .

Hence some contemporary scholars permitted the use of contraception based on the fact that ‘azl is permissible, and it is permissible to abort the fertilised egg before forty days, as if that indicates that it is permissible to use the IUD and similar methods.

It says in *Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Da’imah* (19/297): If contraception is used for a definite necessity – such as if the woman is not able to give birth naturally and must undergo a surgical procedure to extract the child, or if it is done to delay pregnancy for a while due to a valid reason that the spouses deem to be important – there is nothing wrong in that case with preventing or delaying pregnancy, based on what is narrated in the sahih hadiths and what was narrated from a number of the Sahabah about the permissibility of ‘azl, and in accordance with what the jurists have stated about it being permissible to take medicine in order to abort a fertilised egg before forty days have elapsed, and in fact it may become necessary to use contraception when it is proven that there is a strong reason for doing so. End quote.

And Allah knows best.