2160 - Ruling on surgery that causes sterility

the question

What is the ruling on operations that prevent pregnancy?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not permitted to carry out operations on men or women that will lead to complete sterility, such as cutting the vas deferens (vasectomy) in men, or removing the ovaries or womb (hysterectomy) in women. This is because cutting off all possibility of future offspring with no valid reason is haraam, as it goes against what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) wanted for his ummah, and is a source of shame and humiliation for the Muslims. The more the Muslims increase in number, the more this is a source of pride and status for them. Allah has guaranteed to provide for His slaves, as He says (interpretation of the meaning): “And no living, moving creature is there on earth but its provision is due from Allah. And He knows its dweeling place and its deposit (in the uterus, grave, etc.). All is in a Clear Book.” [Hood 11:6]. So cutting off all possibility of future offspring for no good reason goes against this teaching. However, if it is necessary to carry out an operation of the kind mentioned – such as a case where the mother’s life will be in danger if she becomes pregnant, or she is suffering from a disease in her womb which it is feared could spread and kill her (such as cancer), so she has no choice but to have her womb removed – then there is nothing wrong with carrying out these operations in such cases of necessity. And Allah knows best.

Fatawaa al-Mar’ah al-Muslimah (2/974); Fatawaa li’l-Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (2/975); Fatawaa al-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem.