11875 - Is Early Abortion Allowed in Islam?

the question

I have five children, praise be to Allah. Allah decreed that I should conceive a sixth child, but I took some pills to abort it, approximately one and a half months after conception, and it was aborted. Now I greatly regret what I did. What should I do? Do I have to offer any expiation?.

Summary of answer

If the pregnancy is still forty days or less, and if aborting it will serve a Shar`i interest or ward off some harm that may affect the mother, it is permissible to abort it. No expiation is required because expiation is only required for abortion of a foetus into whom the soul has been breathed.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is early abortion allowed in Islam?

“The basic principle is that it is not permissible to abort a woman’s pregnancy at any stage except for a legitimate Shar`i reason. If the pregnancy is still a Nutfah (drop), i.e., forty days or less, and if aborting it will serve a Shar`i interest or ward off some harm that may affect the mother, it is permissible to abort it in this case . That does not include fears of hardship incurred by raising children or not being able to pay their expenses or to educate them , or being content with a certain number of children, or other excuses that are not acceptable according to Shari`ah.

But if the pregnancy has lasted for more than forty days, it is prohibited to abort it , because after forty days it becomes an `Alaqah (clot) which is the beginning of a person.

It is not permissible to abort it after it reaches this stage , unless a trustworthy council of doctors

agrees that continuing the pregnancy poses a threat to the life of the mother, and there is the fear that she may die if the pregnancy continues.

Therefore, your aborting the pregnancy after one and a half months on the basis of your own justification means that you committed a forbidden action, so you have to repent sincerely from that and not do such a thing again in the future." (Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da'imah, 21/450)

Any expiation for early abortion?

With regard to expiation, no expiation is required of you, because expiation is only required for abortion of a foetus into whom the soul has been breathed , which is after one hundred and twenty days have passed since conception.

It says in Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da'imah (21/434):

"If the soul had been breathed into the foetus that was aborted, i.e., four or more months had passed, then expiation must be offered, which is to free a believing slave; if that is not possible then you have to fast for two consecutive months. If the soul had not yet been breathed into the foetus then it was a sin to abort the foetus, but no expiation is required. Rather what is required is repentance and praying for forgiveness."

For more details, please see the following answers: 315513 , 40269 , 147435 , 12118 , 103423

And Allah knows best.