3474 - Is Test-tube Baby Allowed in Islam?

the question

What is the ruling on so-called test-tube babies?

Summary of answer

There are two methods of test-tube babies which are acceptable as a last resort in cases of necessity: 1- When the sperm is taken from the husband and an egg is taken from the wife, fertilization is done externally, then the embryo is planted in the womb of the wife. 2- When the sperm of the husband is taken and injected into a suitable place in the cervix or womb of the wife so that fertilization may take place internally.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The issue of test-tube babies has been studied by the Islamic Fiqh Council which issued the following statement:

- “One: The following five methods are forbidden according to Shari`ah. They are forbidden either in and of themselves, or because of their consequences such as mixing lineages, not knowing who the child’s mother is, or other reasons that are objectionable according to Shari`ah.

1. When fertilization takes place between sperm taken from the husband and an egg taken from a woman who is not his wife, then the embryo is placed in his wife’s womb.
2. When fertilization takes place between sperm taken from a man who is not the husband, and an egg taken from the wife, then the embryo is placed in the womb of the wife.
3. When fertilization is done externally between the sperm and egg of the couple, then the

embryo is placed in the womb of a woman who volunteers to carry it (“surrogate motherhood”).

4. When fertilization is done externally between the sperm of a man who is not the husband and the egg of a woman who is not the wife, then the embryo is placed in the womb of the wife.
5. When fertilization is done externally between the sperm and egg of the two spouses, then the embryo is placed in the womb of another wife (of the husband).

- Two: The sixth and seventh methods are acceptable as a last resort in cases of necessity, when it is certain that all necessary precautions have been taken. These two methods are:

1. When the sperm is taken from the husband and an egg is taken from the wife, fertilization is done externally, then the embryo is planted in the womb of the wife.
2. When the sperm of the husband is taken and injected into a suitable place in the cervix or womb of the wife so that fertilization may take place internally.

Other reservations that pose a concern in this matter include: the uncovering of the woman’s `Awrah and most private parts; the possibility of mistakes in the laboratory; the possibility that some weak-minded people in some hospitals may breach their trust and deliberately switch eggs or sperm in order to make the operation a success and earn more material gains. So we have to be extremely cautious when dealing with this matter.”

And Allah knows best.