42321 - Ruling on aborting a pregnancy in the early stages

the question

What is the ruling on aborting a pregnancy in the early months (1-3) before the soul is breathed into the foetus?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Council of Senior Scholars issued the following statement:

1 – It is not permissible to abort a pregnancy at any stage unless there is a legitimate reason, and within very precise limits.

2 – If the pregnancy is in the first stage, which is a period of forty days, and aborting it serves a legitimate purpose or will ward off harm, then it is permissible to abort it. But aborting it at this stage for fear of the difficulty of raising children or of being unable to bear the costs of maintaining and educating them, or for fear for their future or because the couple feel that they have enough children – this is not permissible.

3 – It is not permissible to abort a pregnancy when it is an ‘alaqah (clot) or mudghah (chewed lump of flesh) (which are the second and third periods of forty days each) until a trustworthy medical committee has decided that continuing the pregnancy poses a threat to the mother’s wellbeing, in that there is the fear that she will die if the pregnancy continues. It is permissible to abort it once all means of warding off that danger have been exhausted.

4 – After the third stage, and after four months have passed, it is not permissible to abort the pregnancy unless a group of trustworthy medical specialists decide that keeping the foetus in his mother’s womb will cause her death, and that should only be done after all means of keeping the

foetus alive have been exhausted. A concession is made allowing abortion in this case so as to ward off the greater of two evils and to serve the greater of two interests.