

Does use of ultrasound to determine gender negate Allaah's knowledge of unseen?

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allaah the most Kind the most Merciful

Question: May Allaah bless you. The listener named Majdee 'Abdul-Ghanee from Iraq, in the Salahud-Deen Province has a question, O Shaykh Muhammad; we hope that you can shed additional light on it. His question says: To the Noble Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen: We see within these latter times that which has spread regarding the actualisation of determining the type of the child, male or female by way of the scholars of medicine in America and Japan doing works which determine that. Is this Haraam and what is the connection of the noble verse wherein Allaah says:

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ۚ ۳٦ أَلَمْ يَكْنُطْهُ مِنْ مَنِيِّ يُمْنِي ۚ ۳٧ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةَ فَخْلَقَ فَسَوَّى ۚ ۳٨ فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ
الرَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى ۚ ۳٩ أَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ

[Does man think that he will be left aimless? Was he not a Nutfah (mixed male and female discharge of semen) poured forth? Then he became an 'Alaqa (a clot); then (Allaah) shaped and fashioned (him) in due proportion. And made him in two sexes, male and female. Is not He (Allaah Who does that), Able to give life to the dead? (Yes! He is Able to do all things).]¹

Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ)²: This question which the questioner has mentioned, can be interpreted to be that he intends by his statement “determining the type” the male gender or the female gender. Meaning, having knowledge that this one is a male or (that one) is a female. It is also interpreted to be that his intent is determining the gender, male or female; by them making this Nutfah into a male or making it into a female.

As for the first; which is knowledge of the child in the womb being male or female, this—as the questioner has said—it has become well-known that they know this. This knowledge does not negate that which has come within the texts from Allaah (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ)³, knowing that which is within the wombs. For Allaah (سُبْحَانَهُ)⁴ knows that which is within the wombs, without doubt. His knowledge of that does not negate that one of His creation may know it. So Allaah knows it, likewise other than him knows it.

¹ سورة القيامة - Soorah al-Qiyamah [75:36-40]

² (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

³ (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) (Subhanahu wa-ta'ala) The Exalted, The Most High

⁴ (سُبْحَانَهُ) (Subhanahu) The Exalted

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However, that which is known as it is related to the child within the womb is divided into two categories. A category which is tangible; it is possible for the creation to know it; such as being male or female; large or small; the colour and the likes. This is known by Allaah (عزوجل)⁵ and it is known by those whom the knowledge has reached him by way of the modern day means. There is no contradiction between the two matters.

As for the second type of that which is known regarding the child in the womb, it is the knowledge which is not tangible or known. It is knowledge of what will be the fate of this child. Will it come out alive or dead? If it comes out alive will it remain for a long time within the Dunyaa or not? If it remains will its actions be righteous or evil? Also, if it remains, will its provisions be expansive or tight; and what resembles that from the hidden knowledge which is not tangible. This knowledge that is connected to the child, none knows it except Allaah. None is able to know it; and he who claims to know it is a liar. He who believes him in that has belied the statement of Allaah:

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

[Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghayb (unseen) except Allaah"]⁶

As for the second interpretation which the questioner bears, that they have reached the point wherein they can make the male into a female or the female into a male, this is impossible. This is because it is connected to the creation of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic. He is the One in whose Hand is (making children) male or female. So it is not possible for one to make that which Allaah willed to be male into a female and it is not possible for one to make that which Allaah willed to be female into a male. Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنَاثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ الذُّكُورَ ٤٩ أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَإِنَاثًا وَيَجْعَلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ عَقِيمًا إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ

[To Allaah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills. He bestows female (offspring) upon whom He wills, and bestows male (offspring) upon whom He wills. Or He bestows both males and females, and He renders barren whom He wills. Verily, He is the All-Knower and is Able to do all things.]⁷

There is also the verse which the questioner quoted:

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ٣٦ أَلَمْ يَكْنُطْفَهْ مِنْ مَنِيِّ يُمْنَى ٣٧ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّى ٣٨ فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ الزَّوْجَيْنَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى ٣٩

[Does man think that he will be left aimless? Was he not a Nutfah (mixed male and female discharge of semen) poured forth? Then he became an 'Alaqa (a clot); then (Allaah)

⁵ (عزوجل) (Azza wa Jaal) Mighty and Majestic is He

⁶ سورة النمل - Soorah an-Naml [27:65]

⁷ سورة الشورى - Soorah ash-Shoorah [42:49-50]

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shaped and fashioned (him) in due proportion. And made him in two sexes, male and female.]⁸

That which I say now is that this affair is not possible. Just as they are not able to make the one born a male into a (true) female and the one born a female into a (true) male, likewise, it is not possible to make the child in the womb that Allaah willed to be male to be a female or vice-versa. This is that which I believe regarding this issue.⁹

⁸ سورة القيامة - Soorah al-Qiyamah [75:36-40]

⁹ Source: Silsilah Fataawaa Noor ‘Alaa Ad-Darb Tape no. 160