

## Chapter 5: Starting Life as a Mother

When the sperm of the man enters the womb of the woman and fuses with the ovum, the process of fertilization and the woman becoming a mother commences. The fertilized egg (the ovum) starts fast metamorphosis and ultimately takes the final shape of a human being. In fact the age of a person can be counted from the day the process of fertilization takes place.

One intellectual writes:

“When a person arrives in this world, he would already have completed nine months of his age. And in these preliminary nine months he passes through a metamorphosis which determines the shape he gets ultimately as a complete human being for a complete lifetime.”

When a woman is pregnant, she becomes a mother from that moment. She bears the responsibility for the child developing in her womb. It is a fact that the father’s germ has a bearing on the legal inheritance, the physical and psychological make up of the person but the new arrival’s future depends more on the care of the mother. The father’s germ is like the seed but the development depends much on the developing environment it gets.

Another intellectual writes:

“The parents of a child can provide a growth environment which is ideal for its progress and can also give an environment which may be deleterious to its optimum development. If the growth environment is not proper it is not congenial for the immortal spirit of the off spring. This is the reason that the parents bear a heavy responsibility for the upbringing of the child.”

Every person’s welfare, illness, strength, weakness, looks, character take shape in the mother’s womb. The rudiments of the child’s morals and fate are established from the very womb of the mother.

The Holy Prophet says:

“The Fate, good or bad, of a person is determined when he is in the womb of the mother.”<sup>1</sup>

The pregnancy is a very delicate period and puts tremendous responsibility on the expectant mother. A woman who is aware of her responsibility does not consider the pregnancy as an ordinary time and doesn't indulge in careless behavior. She knows that slight carelessness might affect her health badly and the baby she is carrying might get damaged. This damage could be so severe that the child arrives with irreparable defects that it may have to carry for the life.

Another intellectual writes:

“The mother's body and the events connected with it have an effect on the child she is carrying. The child in the mother's womb is very sensitive to the changes her body is undergoing. This is because the mother's body is complete and the child is developing to take the final shape. Therefore it is the duty of every expectant mother to keep a good environment at the house.

She can succeed in this if she knows what events can have salutary effect on the child and what will not. A careful mother can provide the right environment for the ideal development of the child in her womb. An ideal environment for the child in pregnancy and immediately after birth is an utopia.

But the parents make their best effort to see that they provide an environment as near to perfect as possible. But the accidents of ignorance cannot be ruled out. If people are not aware of the consequences of carelessness, they may be faced with problems during pregnancy and after delivery of the child. One should realize that coming into the world without any physical defect is the right of every human being.

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1. Bihar al-anwar, v 77, p. 115

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