

## Suicide in Islam

A brother writes asking why suicide is forbidden in Islam. Is it not written in Surah Al-Baqarah that “Allah does not burden a soul except what it can carry”. The person committing suicide feels that he/she is facing a tragedy or difficulty that they cannot bear.

### Do not Even Wish for Death

Not only one should not commit suicide but prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

“Lest one not wish to die because of trouble that befell him and if he must then he should say:

Oh, Allah, give me life as long as life is good for me and let me die when death is good for me.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “No one of you should wish for death or pray for it before it comes, for when one of you dies, his good deeds come to an end and for the believer a long life will not increase him in anything but good.” Narrated by Muslim, 2682

The prophet (PBUH) also said: “No one of you should wish for death. Either he is a doer of good and will do more, or he is a doer of evil but perhaps he may stop.” (Bukhari)

### What if Terminally Ill or Become Dependent on Others

Some ask what if one is diagnosed with a terminal disease like an advanced stage of cancer. One may not want to go through the pain of therapy or put their family through the ordeal of taking care of them.

First, no one truly knows how long anyone has to live. There has been many documented mistakes and misdiagnosis by doctors that the patient lived years past the prognosis.

Second, prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said “Seek medicine for Allah created a medicine for every disease except old age” (Al-Turmithi among others)

Third, the suffering one is going through maybe is to erase his past sins. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “For any adversity a Muslim suffers, Allah erases some of his sins, even though it may be no more than a thorn pricking him.” (Al-Bukhari)

Lastly, the family of the sick gain immense rewards for taking care of their loved ones and, while difficult, should feel blessed to be given such an opportunity.

### The Ruling on Suicide

Allah SWT states in the Quran: “It is He Who giveth life and who taketh it, and to Him shall ye all be brought back”. [10:56]

Life, one's own or others, is sacred in Islam and it is not the property of anyone. Allah SWT states:

“Take not life, which God hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom.” [6:151]

Also: “if any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people.” [5:32].

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said: “Whoever throws himself down from a mountain and kills himself will be in the Fire of Hell, throwing himself down therein for ever and ever. Whoever takes poison and kills himself, his poison will be in his hand and he will be sipping it in the Fire of Hell for ever and ever. Whoever kills himself with a piece of iron, that piece of iron will be in his hand and he will be stabbing himself in the stomach with it in the Fire of Hell, for ever and ever.” (Bukhari, 5442; Muslim, 109).

Furthermore, it was narrated that Jaabir ibn Samurah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: A man who had killed himself with a broad arrow-head was brought to the Prophet (PBUH) and he did not offer the funeral prayer for him.” (Muslim, 978).

### **What is the Reason for Such Severe Punishment?**

The one who commits suicide had reached a level of despair in their own situation that they do not see any way out. Allah SWT considers despair as a lack of belief in Allah's mercy and ability to lift the calamity:

“The only ones that despair of the mercy of Allah are the non-believers (Kafiroon)” (Yusuf)

Suicide also indicates not believing in many of the promises Allah SWT made. We will discuss a few shortly.

### **What to do When Faced with a Difficult Situation?**

One needs to think of the following:

#### *1- Life is a test and Difficulty is Part of Life but they are not Insurmountable*

Allah SWT said “Do people think that they can say we believe without being tested”.

Allah also states: “We will test you with something of fear; hunger; loss of money, lives and fruits; and give glad tidings to those patient ones who say when faced with a calamity: we are unto Allah and to Him we shall return”.

The Ayah the brother quoted “Allah does not burden a soul except what it can carry” indicates that one should be able to weather the situation albeit with a great deal of patience and pain.

#### *2- A Way Out is Soon to Come*

Allah SWT says: “There is ease with every difficulty” (Inshirah)

### *3- A Quick Out for those with Fear of Allah (Taqwa)*

Allah SWT says: “He who fears Allah then Allah will give him a way out and give him income (Risq) from places he did not foresee” (Al-Talaq)

Allah SWT says: “He who fears Allah then Allah will make his matters easiers” (Al-Talaq)

### *4- Allah Answers Prayers (Dua’a)*

Allah SWT says that “Who will answer the needy if he prayed unto Him and who will alleviate the bad”

### *5- Do Something Exceptional Early in Life*

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) tells the story of three men climbing a mountain when it rained. They sought refuge in a cave when a huge rock fell and closed the opening of the cave. Realizing that they were doomed they decided to pray to Allah with the best things they did in life.

The first told a story of how good he was to his parents and that he would not eat or feed his family till he gives food first to his parents. One day he worked late and when he came to his parents they were asleep. He stayed at their door till they woke up and drank the milk. He said “Oh, Allah, if I did this for your sake then grant us riddance of this trouble”. The rock moved a little that they could see the sky.

The second one said: “O Allah, I had a female cousin whom I loved more than the men love the women. I wanted to have a relationship with her; she refused but on the condition of getting one hundred dinars. It was with very great difficulty that I could collect one hundred dinars and then paid them to her and when I was going to have my way with her, that she said: Servant of Allah, fear Allah and do not break the seal (of chastity) but by lawful means. I got up. O Allah, if Thou art aware that I did this in order to seek Thine pleasure, rid us from this trouble.” The rock moved even more.

The third one said: “Allah, I employed a workman for a measure of rice. After he had finished his work I gave him his dues (in the form of) a measure of rice, but he did not accept them. I used these rice as seeds, and that gave a bumper crop and I became rich enough to have cows and flocks (in my possession). He came to me and said: Fear Allah, and commit no cruelty upon me in regard to my dues. I said to him: Take away this flock of cows and sheep. He said: Fear Allah and do not make a fun of me. I said: I am not making a fun of you. You take the cows and the flocks. So he took them. O Allah, if Thou art aware that I did it for Thine pleasure then ease the situation for us.” And Allah relieved them from the rest of the trouble. (Muslim)

### *6- Help Others to Gain Allah’s Help*

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said “Allah is in the help of someone who helps others”

## Conclusion

Taking one's own life or even those of others unjustly is punished by eternal stay in the hellfire. One must think that all difficulties are temporary except eternal damnation.

One must believe in the promises of Allah SWT as stated in the Quran and believe that the situation, no matter how bleak, will surpass by the will of Allah.