

QUESTION BANK

A bank of questions students have asked or might ask on this topic accompanied by appropriate and sample answers.

Q: If a person commits suicide, why is he or she blamed or subject to punishment when Allah (swt) allows it to happen?

A.

a. We acknowledge committing suicide is a major sin and, in the hereafter, s/he will be punished.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِحَدِيدَةٍ فَحَدِيدَتُهُ فِي يَدِهِ يَتَوَجَّأُ بِهَا فِي بَطْنِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَمَنْ شَرَبَ سُمًّا أَوْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ فَهُوَ يَتَحَسَّاهُ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَمَنْ تَرَدَّى مِنْ جَبَلٍ فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ فَهُوَ يَتَرَدَّى فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا

Abū Hurayrah reported: The Messenger (pbuh) of Allah (swt), said, “Whoever kills himself with a piece of iron, his piece of iron in his hand will be thrust into his stomach in the fire of Hell forever and ever. Whoever drinks poison and kills himself, he will consume it in the fire of Hell forever and ever. Whoever throws himself off a mountain and kills himself, he will tumble into the fire of Hell forever and ever.” (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 109)

b. Indeed, everything that happens to us is with the will of Allah (swt). It demonstrates the omnipotence of Allah (swt).

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

And you do not will except that Allāh wills. Indeed,
Allāh is ever Knowing and Wise.

(Sūrah Al-Insan 76:30)

c. If suicide can occur without the power of Allah (swt), then it suggests that Allah (swt) is not all-powerful. It is not the reality, as we see, that not all suicide attempts are successful.

d. If all suicides occurs with 100% success, then we might say humans have no free will to control the action.

e. Therefore, within Allah (swt)’s wisdom, some suicides happen, to demonstrate human free will, and others fail, to demonstrate the power of Allah (swt)’s interference.

f. The blame on human beings is due to the choice of disobedience to Allah (swt). As mentioned in Sūrah al-Kahf,

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفِرْ

And say, “The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills—let him believe; and whoever wills—let him disbelieve.”

(Surah Al-Kahf 18:29)



g. Nevertheless, only Allah (swt) knows the final judgment of a person. As mentioned in a ḥadīth, Allah (swt) forgives Al-Tufayl ibn 'Amr though he seemed to have committed suicide by cutting his fingers. He was forgiven because he emigrated with the Prophet (pbuh).

Jābir ibn 'Abdallāh reported: When the Prophet (pbuh), emigrated to Medina, Al-Tufayl ibn 'Amr also emigrated along with a man from his people. They strongly disliked the climate of Medina, and the man became sick and suffered from anxiety. He took some of his arrowheads, cut the joints of his fingers, and his hands bled out until he died. Al-Tufayl saw him in a dream looking as if he were well, but his hands were covered. Al-Tufayl said, "How has your Lord treated you?" The man said, "He has forgiven me due to my emigration to His Prophet." Al-Tufayl said, "Why do I see your hands covered?" The man said, "I was told that 'we would not repair what you yourself have ruined.'" Al-Tufayl told the story to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), and he said, "O Allah, forgive his hands as well." (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 116)