



Unit 3: Freewill and Determinism

Question Bank

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

1. If a person committed suicide, why is he or she blamed or subject to punishment when Allah swt permitted it to happen?

Answer:

- 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 فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَمَنْ شَرَبَ سُمًّا فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ فَهُوَ يَتَحَسَّاهُ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَمَنْ تَرَدَّى مِنْ جَبَلٍ فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ فَهُوَ يَتَرَدَّى فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, 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.”

- B. Indeed, everything that happens to us is with the will of Allah swt. It demonstrates the omnipotence of Allah.

30 وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

And you do not will except that Allah wills. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Wise. (76:30)

- C. If suicide can occur without the power of Allah, then it suggests that Allah is not all-powerful. Nevertheless, it is not the reality as we do see not all suicides ending in success.
- 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’s wisdom, some suicides happen, to demonstrate human free will, and others fail, to demonstrate the power of Allah’s interference.
- F. The blame on human beings is due to the choice of disobedience of Allah swt. As mentioned in surah al-Kahf, فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ

And say, "The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe;
and whoever wills - let him disbelieve." (18:29)

- G. Nevertheless, only Allah swt knows the final judgment of a person. As mentioned in a hadith, 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 sallahu ‘alaihi wassalam.

Jabir reported: When the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, 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, peace and blessings be upon him, and he said, "O Allah, forgive his hands as well." (Sahih Muslim)