

Suicide  
An Islamic Prescriptive  
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The recent reports on the suicide rate in the United States, where every 12 minutes someone commits suicide, is shocking, especially when people of fame, celebrity and high profile commit suicide and shock the world. It clearly tells us that the worldly achievements is not an answer for happiness. Of course there are many reasons and factors for suicide, but the most important cause according to Islamic studies is to not know the real purpose of life and oneself.

Islam has two meanings: literal and allegorical. The literal meaning is derived from the word *salama*, which means peace. The allegorical meaning of Islam means submission to the Will of Allah(God). Interestingly enough, one cannot have peace in his heart until he submits to His Creator. But the question is, while we cannot see God, and cannot touch Him; how can we submit? The answer lies the fact that we should try to learn about our own selves. Where do we come from? What is the purpose of life? Why am I getting old? Why do I die? What is the purpose of death? Is death vain? Rene Descartes, the French philosopher said “ I think, therefore I am.” This translates in reality that if we cannot think then we don't exist either. This way of thinking will face us with an emptiness and this emptiness will cause us to float like astronauts in the space with no gravity.

Human being, according to Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, are a hylo-morphic entity. This means that a human being is made of spirit and matter or body. We may know a lot about the body, but not much about the spirit. All we know about spirit is mere speculation but not a scientific fact. Regarding the spirit, the Qur'an says, “They will ask thee concerning the Spirit. Say: The Spirit is by command of my Lord, and of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little.” (Qur'an 17-85).

Muslims also believe that the spirit within the body is breathed by God into mankind. And this is what the Qur'an says: “ So, when I have made him and have breathed into him of My Spirit, do ye fall down, prostrating yourselves unto him” (Qur'an 15-29). If this is the case that the spirit of God has been breath into our body, then the only way for solace is to remember Him. The Qur'an says, “ Who have believed and whose hearts have rest in the remembrance of Allah. Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.” (Qur'an 13-28). So, according to Islam, we find satisfaction and rest in remembering our Creator that He is the source of all good, love and peace in our hearts.

Understanding the above fact makes understand the purpose of our own creation.

The purpose of our existence according to Islam, is to worship God.

But worshipping is not just praying or meditating, but entails following His guidance based upon sound intellect and comprehension of the universal system of which we are part of it, not apart of it. It is important to understand the fact that we have a mission in this life. According to Islam, law of nature and the law of God are one and the same. There is only One God, one mankind, one universe and one knowledge that gives us total unity. This understanding of unity will lead us to understand the fact that we have a responsibility not only toward ourselves as vicegerent of God on earth but we have higher responsibility toward God that gives us all this opportunities, beauties, abundance and possibilities to reach our goals and objectives of making Him pleased with us when we leave this world. Hence life is a gift of God to us that we need to enjoy, love, achieve , and prosper for His sake only. That is why suicide is *haram* (forbidden) in Islam and considered a sin because we ignore His mercy on us. The Qur'an says, “ Do not kill or (destroy) yourselves for verily God has been to you most Merciful.” (Qur'an 4-29). When we commit suicide we forget His mercy upon us. Not only that, Islam prohibits us to even not endanger our life because life is a trust of God to humanity. Here is what the Qur'an says, “And spend of your substance in the cause of God, and make not your own hand contribute to your destruction but do good for God love those who do good.” (Qur'an 2-195). Moreover, suicide is self-murder, which leaves no chance of repenting and making amends and seeking the forgiveness and mercy of God, and thereby only ensures damnation in the Hereafter.

Our life in this world is very temporary but our mission can be eternal for the sake of God and humanity. Taking our life by suicide means that we have not fully understood the meaning of our life nor our purpose of creation.

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