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# BIBLE TALK

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This week the question is: **What does the Bible say about suicide?**

In the Bible there were only seven people who committed suicide and every one of them were acting out of step with God's will when they did so:

- 1) Abimelech (Judges 9:54)
- 2) Samson (Judges 16:30)
- 3) Saul (1 Sam 31:4)
- 4) Saul's armor-bearer (1 Sam 31:5)
- 5) Ahithophel (2 Sam 17:23)
- 6) Zimri (1 Kings 16:18)
- 7) Judas (Mt 27:5)

Suicide was wrong for all of these men and it is wrong for anyone today. Let me give you some reasons for this conclusion.

1) **Suicide is wrong because it violates the command, "Thou shalt not murder."**

**Exodus 20:13**

13 "You shall not murder.

This is the sixth commandment and it applies to one's self just as much as to the lives of others.

**1 Corinthians 6:20**

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

God gave us our lives and our bodies to use in service to Him. Suicide is not honoring God with our bodies, but rather is a destruction of the gift God gave us.

## 2) Suicide is wrong because it is often an effort to avoid repentance.

Many people who contemplate suicide are people that have wrecked their lives with foolish living. They have wasted their lives seeking after material possessions which cannot satisfy their soul (Ecc 5:10). Some have wasted their lives selfishly living for themselves and hurting and violating the rights and property of others.

What these people need to do is *repent* of their selfish and greedy living habits, but instead, they kill themselves. Suicide is just another selfish act on their part. Repentance is the Biblical solution to selfishness and greed.

### **Acts 26:20**

20 [I] declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.

Rather than feeling sorry for ourselves and thinking only of ending our own disappoints, we should repent, and seek after God's will.

## 3) Suicide is wrong because it has a distorted view about suffering and pain.

A common idea is that pain and suffering are the worst things a person can endure and it would be better to die than to suffer. Often when we pray our prayers, we pray that the Lord would end our suffering and when it's our turn to die, we pray that the Lord would allow us to pass on peacefully without suffering.

But the scriptures have a different perspective about suffering and pain than this. The Bible does not picture suffering as the ultimate enemy. In fact, the Bible indicates that suffering brings out the better qualities of men and women.

### **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Suffering, according to this, reminds us of our dependency upon God. Suffering reminds us that we are in need of divine help and we cannot make it on our own. Suffering keeps us humble and we need humility because pride is the first sin ever committed (1 Tim. 3:6).

### **John 21:18-19**

18 [Jesus said to Peter] Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."

19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

The Lord said Peter would glorify God by the suffering and death which he would eventually endure. Jesus did not advise Peter to commit suicide to avoid suffering, but he told Peter to view his suffering and death as a way of honoring God.

### **Acts 5:41**

41 So [the apostles] departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

The apostles and early Christians did not consider suffering as the ultimate tragedy. They did not think that suicide was better than suffering. They counted suffering on behalf of Christ as a privilege and a way to glorify God.

How could they look at suffering like this? Because they were living their lives by faith and trusting in God.

### **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

## **SUMMARY**

In summary, thoughts of suicide are often the result of two common problems:

**1) People are selfish and disappointed in how their lives have turned out.**

In this case, rather than committing suicide, they ought to repent of sin. They ought to repent and change their lives and begin living for God and for others rather than selfishly thinking just about themselves.

**2) Others are suffering and in pain and they think suicide would be better than enduring suffering.**

In this case, rather than suicide, they should study the Bible passages which teach that suffering can be used as way of glorifying God. Strength and encouragement can be found in reading of those saints who suffered and endured to the end.

**3) Some are not thinking clearly because of depression.**

We live in a time when the *"insanity plea"* is used to excuse everyone from every responsibility. We tend to go to the other extreme and think there is no such thing as being insane at all.

Yet the Bible does seem to indicate there are some people who are insane and doing things they would not otherwise do if they were in their right minds.

### **Luke 8:35**

35 Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and **in his right mind**. And they were afraid.

This indicates that before the demons were cast out, the man was insane. He was not responsible for his actions done while insane.

Nebuchadnezzar was truly insane (Dan 4:33-36). When people are truly insane, the actions they commit while insane is not generally held against them.

Whether a person is truly insane or not – only God may be able to judge. Remember this, however: ***A person is not going to be saved in heaven simply because he was insane in the last days of his life.***

The question which will determine his eternal destiny was: *How did this person live his life before becoming insane? Did he obey the gospel? Did he serve God faithfully?*

## **CONCLUSION**

When a man in his right mind takes his own life, he is sinning. God did not give our lives to live as we ourselves choose to live them. We were given our lives to serve God and glorify Him. We are not free to do as we think best – including when to end our lives.

### **1 Corinthians 10:31**

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or **whatever you do**, do all to the glory of God.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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