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### Using euthanasia to end suffering

**Fatwa no. 19165**

**Q: I am requesting a Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) in regard to a subject that was discussed on a medical program that I listened to. The subject was: Is it permissible for a patient who has no hope in recovering to request to die and should their request be fulfilled to end their suffering? The speaker said that if a cancer patient, for example, has no hope of recovery it is better for them to die. Is it permissible to fulfill a patient's wish and kill them to end their continual pain? The speaker mentioned a book called, "Al-Huquq (Rights)", and said that it is a human right to decide when their life should end, if their life has become a source of pain and suffering to them and others. What is the opinion of Islam on this matter? May Allah reward you with the best!**

**A:** It is Haram (prohibited) for a patient to hasten their death, whether by committing suicide or by taking medication to kill themselves. It is also Haram for a doctor or nurse, or any other person to carry out the patient's request, even if their disease is incurable. If anyone assists in this, they have shared in the sin, because they have intentionally killed a human, whose life is protected by Shari'ah (Islamic law), without a right. There are clear Nas (Islamic texts from the Qur'an or the Sunnah) prohibiting the killing of a human being without a right. Allah (Exalted be He) says (what means): **﴿...and kill not anyone whom Allâh has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islâmic law).﴾**

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Allah (Exalted be He) also says: **﴿And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allâh is Most Merciful to you.﴾** **﴿And whoever commits that through aggression and injustice, We shall cast him into the Fire, and that is easy for Allâh.﴾**

Also, it was authentically reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: **﴿Anyone who kills themselves with a piece of iron (a weapon) will have that piece of iron in their hand and will be stabbing their stomach with it in the Fire of Hell forever, abiding eternally therein. Anyone who drinks poison and kills themselves will be drinking it in the Fire of Hell forever, abiding eternally therein. And anyone who throws themselves from (the top of) a mountain and kills themselves will be throwing themselves down in the Fire of Hell for forever, abiding eternally therein.﴾** (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

It was also related on the authority of Abu Qilabah on the authority of Thabit ibn Al-Dahhak (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: **﴿Anyone who kills themselves with something, will be punished with it on the Day of Resurrection.﴾** (Related by Al-Jama'ah [the Six Hadith Compilers: Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah]) Also, on the authority of Jundub ibn 'Abdullah Al-Bajaly (may Allah be pleased with him) who

reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(Amongst those who came before you there was a wounded man who grew impatient.](#)

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So, he took a knife and cut his hand with it. The blood did not stop flowing until he died. Allah (may He be Exalted) said, 'My slave hastened to bring about his demise; I have forbidden Paradise to him.'<sup>﴾</sup> (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim; this is the wording of Al-Bukhari)

Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade people to wish for death to put an end to their suffering. In a Hadith reported by Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him), he reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(None of you should wish for death because of a calamity which has befallen them; but if it is unavoidable to do so, let them say, 'O Allah, make me live as long as life is better for me and make me die if death is better for me.'](#)) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim; this is the wording of Al-Bukhari) Al-Bukhari also narrated this Hadith with a different wording on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) who heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say: [\(None of you should wish for death: if they are a good-doer, perhaps they may increase in goodness, and if they are an evil-doer, perhaps they may repent.\)](#)

As it is forbidden for a person to merely wish for death or to ask Allah for this, committing suicide or assisting in it is considered a violation of Allah's Laws and a transgression of the sacred Boundaries set by Allah. Doing this is inconsistent with being patient with what is decreed by Allah.

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It challenges Allah's Divine Decree and Predestination, and shows dissatisfaction with Allah's Wisdom of testing His servants with evil and with good as trial for them; Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(...and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good.\)](#) Allah may try and afflict some of His servants with illness and He is the All-Wise in what He does and the All-Knowing of what is best for His servants, as this may bring goodness for a servant, increase their Hasanat (rewardable good deeds), the strength of their faith, and get them closer to Allah (Glorified be He) through their resignation (to His Will), entreaties, submission, Tawakkul (putting one's trust in Allah), and supplications to Him. If someone is afflicted with an illness, they should hope for Allah's Reward and bear with patience their affliction. Showing patience over affliction can gain Allah's Good Pleasure and increase heavenly reward and elevate to a high degree in the Hereafter. This is supported by the Hadith reported from Suhayb (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(I am amazed at the matters relating to a believer! All matters relating to a believer are good, and that only applies to a believer. If something good happens to them and they give thanks for it, that is good for them; and if something bad happens to them and they bear it with patience, that is good for them.\)](#) (Related by Imam Muslim in his Sahih [Book of Authentic Hadith] and by Imam Ahmad in Al-Musnad [Hadith compilation]; this is the wording of Imam Ahmad)

Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(...and As-Sabirûn \[who patiently bear whatever may befall them \(of calamities\)\]\)](#)

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He (Exalted be He) also says: [\(...but give glad tidings to As-Sâbirûn \(the patient\).\)](#) [\(Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "Truly! To Allâh we belong and truly, to Him we shall return."\)](#) And: [\(...the men and the women who are patient \(in performing all the duties which Allâh has ordered](#)

and in abstaining from all that Allâh has forbidden)) up to: (Allâh has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. Paradise).) Also, the Hadith on the authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) who reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Verily, greatness of reward is with greatness of trial. Indeed, when Allah loves a people, He tries them (by affliction). Whoever is content (with Allah's Decree) will win His Good Pleasure, and whoever is discontent (with Allah's Decree) will earn His Wrath.) (Related by Imam Al-Tirmidhy in "Jami' Al-Tirmidhy" and he said that it is a Hadith Hasan Gharib [a good Hadith that is strange to come from this chain of narration])

It was also narrated that Mus'ab ibn Sa'd on the authority of his father (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: (I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Which people are most sorely tested?' He (peace be upon him) said, 'The prophets, then those who are similar and then those who are similar. A person will be tested in accordance with their Din (faith), if their Din is solid, they will be tested severely, and if their Din is flimsy, they will be tested in accordance with their Din. Calamity will keep troubling a servant until it leaves them to walk on the earth with no sins.') (Related by Al-Tirmidhy, who said that this Hadith is Hasan Sahih [a good authentic Hadith])

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It was also narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Adversity will continue afflicting the believing man and the believing woman in his (her) self, children, and property until he meets Allah sinless.) (Related by Al-Tirmidhy)

Subsequently, it is Haram for a person suffering from some kind of illness to seek to kill themselves, because a person's life is not their own; rather, it is owned by Allah Who decreed fates and times of death. Every person's deeds come to an end by their death; therefore, the life that a believer lives gives them hope of good. Perhaps they make Tawbah (repentance to Allah) for the sins they have committed and increase their good deeds, such as Salah (Prayer), Sawm (Fasting), Zakah (obligatory charity), Hajj, Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah), Du'a' (supplication) to Allah (Glorified be He), and so Allah elevates them to the highest ranks (of the righteous in Paradise). Moreover, a sick person continues to have rewards recorded for whatever good deeds they used to perform at the time they were healthy, as authentically reported in the Hadith Sahih (a Hadith that has been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish).

As for those doctors and others who agree with fulfilling the request of a sick person to kill themselves or assist them in this, they are committing a sin by doing so. Their view is limited and it shows their ignorance.

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They regard human life and its continuation from the aspect of having animalistic power, authority, fun, and vanity. They do not see it as a life where servants can live connected to their Lord, taking provisions of good deeds (for the afterlife journey). Their hearts have mellowed; have felt humility and peace, and are making prayers to Allah (may He be Exalted and Praised), which will make the servants the dearest and closest they can ever be to Allah, unlike those who act haughtily and oppressively, and use their animalistic power to commit what displeases Allah (Exalted be He). Moreover, Allah is Able to grant recuperation and what may seem impossible to people today may be treatable tomorrow, by the Power of Allah, for Whom nothing is impossible on this earth or in the heavens.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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**Source: Fatwas of the Permanent Committee**