

What Saith the Scripture?

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from the series

What the Bible Says About...

What the Bible Says About Suicide

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"

(1Corinthians 6:19-20).

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Preface

To those who are morally able to choose, a True Christian will **not** commit suicide, because suicide is the sin of self-murder. "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1Corinthians 3:17). Jesus is presently in Heaven preparing a "place for you" (John 14:2). And, if Heaven is to be your future Home, then you must "continue in the Grace of God" (Acts 13:43) and "hope to the end for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1Peter 1:13). For, if we do not avail ourselves of God's "Grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16), then we will most assuredly **not** "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the LORD" (12:14).

Look at it from God's point of view. He has already made ample provision for every conceivable circumstance of your spiritual and physical life. [See our article, "[Christ Is All](http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/The.Holy.Bible/Christ.Is.All.html)" -- <http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/The.Holy.Bible/Christ.Is.All.html> -- .] "His Divine Power hath given unto us **all** things that pertain unto life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2Peter 1:3). To ultimately run out of hope and commit suicide is unpardonable, because it is supreme defiance and "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 12:31), and "hath never forgiveness" (Mark 3:29). The sin of suicide will never take you to the Heaven where Jesus is. "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come" (John 8:21).

What Is Suicide?

The term *suicide* -- which is generally defined as the "act or an instance of intentionally killing oneself" -- is not specifically used in the Scriptures; however, the injunction against killing embodied in the Ten Commandments, i.e., "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13), dealing with the unlawful homicide of another human being, would also forbid the *murder of self*. The very fact that the Almighty is the Giver Of All Life and "formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1), tells us that it is not within our right to arbitrarily terminate our own life, against His permission. "Because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: Or ever the silver cord be loosed,

or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the Earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:5-7).

To understand suicide to be sin against God and against self, is in keeping with the LORD Jesus Christ's statement concerning the Spirit of the Moral Law, where "love is the fulfilling of the Law" (Romans 13:10). "37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the First and Great Commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour **as thyself**" (Matthew 22:37-39). God requires, both in His Law and Gospel, that all moral agents choose the highest good of God, and of our being in general, for its own sake, as our ultimate purpose in life, i.e., a supreme love for God and an equal love of our neighbour as we would love ourselves. "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the LORD the Church" (Ephesians 5:29).

Neither the modern legal nor medical definitions of suicide entail the Scriptural aspect of suicide being the transgression of the Moral Law, where both God and man are denied the love that are rightfully due them. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother [much less, himself], he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother [or, himself] whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?" (1John 4:20). The supreme hatred of one's self and life, where a morally capable individual voluntarily terminates his own life, is also preeminent contempt of the "God [Who] Is Love" (4:16). Especially for True Christians, the very idea of disposing of our own lives as if we were the masters of them, is unthinkable. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Romans 14:7).

What Is Not Suicide?

Suicide is not to be confused with accidental, unwitting, or unwilling death of any sort. For though they would be unintentional on our part, that form of death would entirely be under the Merciful Providence of God. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). Neither should the selfless act of sacrificing one's life that others may live, be considered suicide. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). What Professed Christian would dare to accuse the Sinless Son of God of having committed the sin of suicide? "17 Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. **I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.** This commandment have I received of My Father" (10:17-18).

That willingness to die rather than to deny Christ, i.e., "whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew 10:33), is the picture of the martyrdom of the early Christians or of the soon-to-be Tribulation Week Saints. Though their death is inexplicably suicidal to the worldly onlookers of Vanity Fair, it should never be mistaken for suicide. Most likely, the Christian Martyrs were and will be greeted with the derision given their Master. "He saved others; Himself He cannot save" (Mark 15:31). But, be it forever remembered that whatever act transacted by the True Saints, that has the signature of supreme love of God, and an equal love of our neighbour *as ourselves*, **can never be suicide**. "7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God;

for God is love. 9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His Only Begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another [i.e., as ourselves]. 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. 13 Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit" (1John 4:7-13).

Why Suicide?

Even the world professes that "depression" is numbered among the "strongest risk factors for attempted suicide." Scripturally speaking, depression is the condition of hopelessness that the world and Backslidden Christianity share, when they refuse to trust God. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). We need firmly to understand that, especially for the Christian, the LORD Jesus Christ "is our Hope" (1Timothy 1:1). We have been given the divine certainty of Scripture that deliverance from the "risk factors for attempted suicide"-- any and all separations, isolations, limitations, pains, sufferings, injustices, and abuses-- comes only from "Christ in you, the Hope of Glory" (Colossians 1:27). Though the Godly have been warned that we will "suffer" (2Timothy 3:12) while in this world, Jesus has assured us, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Whether or not we presently see the mitigation or removal of all of what the world calls "risk factors", our confidence in the LORD Jesus Christ, Who performs "all things well" (Mark 7:37), restrains us from contemplating, attempting, let alone, successfully committing suicide. "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:25). Our faith that overcomes the "world" (1John 5:4), overcomes suicide, because Jesus is the "Author and Finisher" (Hebrews 12:2) of it. And, our hope in Christ sustains us from all "risk factors" until He comes for us. "Looking for that Blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

How Have the Saints Dealt With Suicide?

The Scriptures contain some unflattering and frank depictions about how the Saints have been tempted to commit suicide; but, our God presents the Truth for the benefit of those who will profit by It. "12 For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him With Whom We Have To Do" (Hebrews 4:12-13). Since no man can enter Heaven, dying in impenitence from the sin of suicide, the lack of success of an attempted suicide may yet indicate that the despondent one is elect. "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come" (John 8:21).

Elijah's Thoughts of Suicide. Elijah had successfully encountered, defeated, and slain the prophets of Baal (1Kings 18:19-40), but then the wicked Queen Jezebel quickly threatened to kill Elijah. "2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. 3 And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. 4 But

he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers" (19:2-4).

But, why would Elijah flee from this wicked woman, much less to seek the LORD to end his life, when he had already defeated 450 prophets of Baal? Because the "spirit and courage he had before were of the Lord, and not of himself; and that those who have the greatest zeal and courage for religion, for God, and his worship, his truths and ordinances, if left to themselves, become weak and timorous" (from "An Exposition of the Old and New Testament" by John Gill, commenting on 1Kings 19:3). "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength" (Isaiah 40:29). The secret of the strength and power in the life of the Saints, is that it comes from God-- and, is willingly received by faith. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness" (41:10).

The question of how Elijah dealt with his suicidal thoughts is more of a description of how God restored spiritual equilibrium to His fearful and despondent prophet.

- First, the LORD mercifully sustained Elijah. "5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. 6 And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again" (1Kings 19:5-6). Likewise, "it is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not" (Lamentations 3:22).
- Second, the LORD majestically demonstrated His power to Elijah. "And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire" (1Kings 19:11-12). We also recall that it is "not by [our] might, nor by [our] power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).
- Third, the LORD calmly spoke to Elijah with a small, comfortable voice. "And after the fire a Still Small Voice" (1Kings 19:12). In like manner, the Father has comforted us with the gentleness of His powerful hands. "18 I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. 19 I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him" (Isaiah 57:18-19).
- And, finally, the LORD humbled Elijah with the Truth that Elijah was not alone. "Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1Kings 19:18). Only when we have been humbled by the Almighty, are we truly turned back to Him. "Turn thou us unto Thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old" (Lamentations 5:21).

Christian and Hopeful's Struggle With Suicide in Doubting Castle. John Bunyan's allegory of "[The Pilgrim's Progress](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Stories/Bunyan.Pilgrims.Progress.html)" (1678) -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Stories/Bunyan.Pilgrims.Progress.html> -- brought both CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL into Doubting Castle after having taken an ill-advised shortcut

through By-Path Meadow, i.e., "said CHRISTIAN, 'here is the easiest going'". "And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way" (Numbers 21:4). Their newly acquired traveling companion, "VAIN-CONFIDENCE, by name", walked before them until the "night came on", and "not seeing the way before him, fell into a deep pit." "For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed" (Isaiah 9:16). Immediately, both CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL sensed that they had inadvisedly chosen their way. They began to struggle their way back, but with little success. "Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard" (Proverbs 13:15).

Sleep overtook them, and when they awoke, GIANT DESPAIR had snared them. "You have this night trespassed on me, by trampling in and lying on my grounds; and therefore you must go along with me'... The giant, therefore, drove them before him, and put them into his castle, into a very dark dungeon, nasty and stinking to the spirit of these two men." "Lover and friend hast Thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness" (Psalm 88:18). "Here then they lay, from Wednesday morning till Saturday night, without one bit of bread, or drop of drink, or any light, or any to ask how they did." Then, GIANT DESPAIR's wife, DIFFIDENCE, advised the Giant that "he should beat them without any mercy." "Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand" (Micah 2:1).

"Then he falls upon them, and beats them fearfully, in such sort, that they were not able to help themselves, or to turn them upon the floor. This done, he withdraws and leaves them, there to condole their misery, and to mourn under their distress." "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee" (Jeremiah 2:19). "The next night, she talking with her husband about them further, and understanding that they were yet alive, did advise him to counsel them to make away with themselves. So when morning was come, he goes to them in a surly manner, as before; and perceiving them to be very sore with the stripes that he had given them the day before, he told them that since they were never like to come out of that place, their only way would be, forthwith to make an end of themselves, either with knife, halter, or poison: 'For why,' said he, 'should you choose life, seeing it is attended with so much bitterness?'" "5 Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, **cast Thyself down:** for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:5-6). In the same way that the devil would have had an eternal victory in securing the soul of Jesus by the sin of suicide; in like manner, the Giant's wife, as the devil's advocate, would have secured the souls of CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL in a devil's hell, through the sin of suicide.

"'Brother,' said CHRISTIAN, 'what shall we do? the life that we now live is miserable: for my part I know not whether is best--to live thus, or to die out of hand. 'My soul chooses strangling rather than life'-- 'So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life' (Job 7:15)-- and the grave is more easy for me than this dungeon. Shall we be ruled by the Giant?' Hopeful replied, 'Indeed our present condition is dreadful, and death would be far more welcome to me than thus for ever to abide; but yet let us consider, the Lord of the country to which we are going hath said, 'Thou shalt do no murder,' [Matthew 19:18] no, not to another man's person. Much more, then, are we forbidden to take his counsel to kill ourselves. Besides, he that kills another can but commit murder upon his body; but for one to kill himself, is to kill body and soul at once. And, moreover, my brother, thou talkest of

ease in the grave; but hast thou forgotten the hell, whither for certain the murderers go? 'for no murderer hath eternal life' [1John 3:15]. And let us consider again, that all the law is not in the hand of GIANT DESPAIR; others, so far as I can understand, have been taken by him as well as we, and yet have escaped out of his hand: who knows but that God who made the world may cause that GIANT DESPAIR may die that, at some time or other, he may forget to lock us in?--or, but he may in a short time have another of his fits before us, and may lose the use of his limbs? And if ever that should come to pass again, for my part I am resolved to pluck up the heart of a man, and to try my utmost to get from under his hand. I was a fool that I did not try to do it before; but however, my brother, let us be patient, and endure awhile; the time may come that may give us a happy release; but let us not be our own murderers."

"Well, on Saturday, about midnight the pilgrims began to pray; and continued in prayer till almost break of day. Now a little before it was day, good CHRISTIAN, as one half amazed, break out in this passionate speech: 'What a fool,' quoth he, 'am I, thus to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty! I have a key in my bosom called Promise; that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting Castle.' Then said HOPEFUL, 'That's good news; good brother, pluck it out of thy bosom, and try.' Then CHRISTIAN pulled it out of his bosom, and began to try at the dungeon door; whose bolt (as he turned the key) gave back, and the door flew open with ease: and CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL both came out."

And so, **good Bunyan delivers CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL from Suicide, GIANT DESPAIR, and DOUBTING CASTLE with the Key of Promise.** "3 According as His Divine Power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto Life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us Exceeding Great and Precious Promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having **escaped** the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2Peter 1:3-4). The secret to the Promises is that they are "according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). "For all the Promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2Corinthians 1:20). So then, deliverance from despair and suicide comes from Christ Jesus. "He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).

Conclusion

A True Christian will not commit suicide because True Saints do not "die in [their] sins" (John 8:21). Only "he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22). And, Murderers of Self are reserved for the Lake of Fire. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the Second Death" (Revelation 21:8). The Saints do not die in their sins because the Faithful God has already made provision for their success. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is Faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able **to bear it**" (1Corinthians 10:13). For one to succeed with the sin of suicide, would be to utterly spurn the Grace of God. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20).

The only way to recover yourself from committing the sin of suicide, is to return to trusting God. "In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and His children shall have a place of refuge" (Proverbs

14:26). "7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His Seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: **whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God**, neither he that loveth not his brother [or, himself]" (1John 3:7-10).

Let Christ Jesus "destroy the works of the devil" through allowing Him to keep you from committing the sin of suicide. "I can do **all** things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Amen, and Amen.