**The 4 & 8 Sufferings (part 3)**

4. The Suffering of Death

There is nothing that brings as much suffering as dying. Of all things that exist in our future, this is the one that’s so dreadful we try to avoid thinking about it. Death is so dreadful that it is used as the worst punishment, the death penalty, for the worst crimes. Hideo Kishimoto, a professor of religion at Tokyo University who passed away from cancer wrote, *“Death comes when by rights it has no business coming. It goes cooly where by rights it has no business going, like a desperado striding with dirty boots into a freshly cleaned parlor. Death’s behavior is outrageous. You may ask it to wait awhile, but in vain. Death is a monster beyond human power to budge or hold in check.”* We hate think about it, and we are so frightened of even the idea of death that high rise buildings have no 13th floor, just because it is considered unlucky. We are scared of things such as, heights, being in an airplane, going to the doctor, because of the fear of death.

We are in the midst of a health boom that borders on the excessive. Colds rouse barely a ripple of attention, but the words cancer and AIDS are red flags. That is because they represent diseases that are often fatal. The German born Philosopher Paul Tillich wrote that human beings cannot bear even for an instant the naked anxiety of death. A straight-on confrontation with death itself would be too terrifying, and so instead we battle illness or environmental problems. Fear or nuclear war, or earthquakes, or depression, is based ultimately on the threat of death (REASON).

There are said to be 5 stages of the suffering of dying:

1. Denial and Isolation: It is usually a temporary shock response to bad news. Isolation arises from people avoiding the dying person. People can slip back into this stage when there are new developments or the person feels they can no longer cope.

2. Anger:  "Why me?" Feeling that others are more deserving. Envy of others: Other people don't seem to care, they are enjoying life while the dying person experiences pain. Others aren't dying. Anger towards doctors, nurses, and families.

3. Bargaining: A brief stage that is hard to study because it is often between patient and the spiritual beliefs. But there might be the attempt to postpone: For example, the person might say "If only I could live to see . . ."

4. Depression: Mourning for losses, such as loss of job, hobbies, mobility, and those losses yet to come, like separation from one’s family.

5. Acceptance: This is not a "happy" stage, it is usually void of feelings. It takes a while to reach this stage and a person who fights until the end will not reach it. It consists of basically giving up and realizing that death is inevitable.

5. The Suffering of Parting From Those or Things We Love

“Parting is such sweet sorrow” wrote Shakespeare. “To say goodbye is to die a little,” wrote the novelist, Raymond Chandler. Parents, brothers/sisters, friends, Boy/girlfriend, pets, wife/husband... How great it is to have a deep meaningful relationships. It’s one of the great happiness’s in life. But when we are separated from the one we love the pain can be all consuming, and at times, too much to bear. The sudden loss of a loved one drives some over the edge into despair. What was once their greatest joy, has now become the source of their deepest pain.

We experience pain also when we cannot do the things we once loved to do, such as sports or a hobby. To be able to do the thing you love, for many, is the greatest feeling. To be prevented from doing it, and having just a memory of what was, can be the worst feeling, too. “How terrible is wisdom when it brings no profit to the wise,” wrote the ancient Greek playwright Sophocles in his play *Oedipus the King*. How terrible is the memory of the enjoyment of doing something you loved when we can no longer participate.

“In the *Sorrows of Young Werther*, Goethe laments “must it ever be thus, that the source of our happiness must also be the fountain of our misery. The very thing that contribute most to human happiness -- love, health, possessions, fame -- are also the cause of unhappiness and tears. The great impressionist painter, Renoir suffered in his declining years from crippling arthritis. Even so, he continued doggedly to paint by holding the brush in his twisted fingers and wrapping it in place with a long bandage. In a letter to a friend dated 1919, he expressed the frustration of not being able to use his talent: ‘Now that I can no longer count on my arms and legs, I would like to paint large canvases. I dream only of Veronese, of his *Marriage at Cana*. What misery!’” (REASON).

6. The Suffering of Encountering Those We Dislike

Includes having to go through something we don’t enjoy such as surgery or taking an exam. Include traffic jams, the morning alarm clock, washing dishes, doing laundry, waiting in lines, our partner’s irritating habits, a visit to the dentist.

As adults we find ourselves in situations where we have to work or study alongside someone we don’t like. We find ourselves disliking someone without knowing why we dislike them. We all have our own pet peeves and phobias. As children we prefer to anything than have to go to school. In fact there are too many things to enumerate that annoy us in different ways and to different degrees. We all have our peculiar dislikes and annoyances.