



Complete Buddhist Path of Enlightenment

Meditating on true sufferings



**Why do we need to meditate on True Sufferings?**

## Meditating on true sufferings



- Realize that whole Samsara is the nature of suffering
- Generate a strong wish to attain liberation
- By meditation, develop renunciation with respect of our own suffering and compassion of others' sufferings.



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## Meditating on True Sufferings

# 1 Meditating on true sufferings



**Meditating on true sufferings is presented in three parts:-**

- A) *The general sufferings of samsara (See 1.1)*
- B) *The particular sufferings of each state of samsaric rebirth (See 1.2)*
- C) *The three types of suffering (See 1.3)*



## **1.1** *The general sufferings of samsara*

## 1.1 The general sufferings of samsara



**The general sufferings that are experienced in common by all beings in Samsara are:-**

1. **Uncertainty (See 1.1.1)**
2. **Having no satisfaction (See 1.1.2)**
3. **To leave our body over & over again (See 1.1.3)**
4. **Having to take rebirth over & over again (See 1.1.4)**
5. **Having to lose status over & over again (See 1.1.5)**
6. **Having no companionship (See 1.1.6)**

## 1.1.1 Uncertainty



1. In Samsara, **no condition is certain**.
2. Our **experiences** and our **relationships** quickly change
3. Our **beauty** is fragile
4. Our **physical health** is never stable
5. Our **wealth** and possessions are easily lost
6. Good **fortune** and prosperity are uncertain
7. **Friendship** are unstable

*Since relationships are so changeable, no reason to become overly attached to our friends and relatives or develop hostility towards our enemies....relationship alters .....it is just a matter of time*



## 1.1.2 Having no satisfaction



- 1. Seek satisfaction without realizing these pleasures never give us what we want, we create compulsive bad habits and cause problems for ourselves and others (e.g., alcohol)***
- 2. We destroy health, hurt, deceive others and break law.***
- 3. Difficulties in relationships with others becous we are not contented (marriage, nations go to war)***
- 4. Without contentment, we are spiritually improvised even if we posses great wealth.***

***(Story of poor man Telwa who found jewel)***

### 1.1.3 Having to leave the body over and over again



- 1. Throughout all our lives, we have taken countless different bodies, and have to depart from each other.**
- 2. Each time we have had to experience the pains of death.**

#### *Essence of Nectar... Yeshe Tsondru*

*“If the flesh and bones of all the bodies we have taken in the past still remained, they would form a mountain as large as Mount Meru.*

*If the blood and liquids of our past bodies still remained, their volume would be greater than the entire ocean.”*

## 1.1.4 Having to take rebirth over and over again



- 1. The continuum of our very subtle mind has no beginning and we have taken rebirth countless time.**
- 2. Since we have taken repeated birth in samsara, we have to endure:-**
  - ✓ Pains of rebirth over and over again**
  - ✓ Sufferings of various states of existence**

## 1.1.5 Having to lose status over and over again



### 1. In Vinaya Sutras, Buddha says:

*The end of collection is dispersion*

*The end of rising is falling*

*The end of meeting is parting*

*The end of birth is death*

### 2. Whoever gains a good reputation or high social status will eventually experience a decline

### 3. Geshe Sangpuwa:

*“ In Samsara we change constantly from low states to high ones, and from high states to low ones again. This situation fills me with pity”.*

## 1.1.6 Having no companionship



### 1. In **Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life**, **Shantideva says:**

*At birth I was born alone*

*And at death I shall have to die alone*

*Since I cannot share these sufferings with others*

*What use are friends who prevent me from practising  
virtue?*

**2. When we die we cannot be reunited with our friends  
of this life. In the next life, there are no familiar  
faces**

**3. Fearing misery of having to endure these experiences  
in future lives, we should be encouraged to seek  
liberation now.**

## 1.1.7 Summary



1. **If we meditate on these six general sufferings of samsara, we shall develop a strong determination to find release from samsaric rebirths.**

**We shall think to ourself:**

*I must be mindful and apply the methods for attaining liberation.*

*If I do not apply these methods right now, when shall I ever again find the opportunity to attain liberation?*

*Once I have taken lower rebirth again, it will be impossible for me to develop even the thought of becoming free from samsara.*

2. **When this determination arises clearly and definitely in our mind, we do placement meditation to become more and more familiar with it.**

## 1.2 *The particular sufferings of each state of samsaric rebirth*



**Particular sufferings of each state of samsaric rebirth has 2 parts:-**

- 1. *The sufferings of the lower realms (See 1.2.1)***
- 2. *The sufferings of the higher realms (See 1.2.2)***

## 1.2.1 *The sufferings of the lower realms*



**The sufferings of the lower realms (*Animal; Hungry ghost / spirits and Hell realms*) have already discussed under *Initial Scope of Lamrim.***





## **1.2.2**

### ***The sufferings of the higher realms***

## 1.2.2 *The sufferings of the higher realms*



**The sufferings of the higher realms has 3 parts:-**

- 1. The sufferings of human beings (See 1.2.2A)**
- 2. The sufferings of demi-gods (See 1.2.2B)**
- 3. The sufferings of gods (See 1.2.2C)**



## **1.2.2A** Sufferings of Human beings

## 1.2.2A Contemplation of human sufferings



**Contemplate the following sufferings experienced in human realms:-**

- Birth (See 1.2.2Aa)***
- Sickness (See 1.2.2Ab)***
- Ageing (See 1.2.2Ac)***
- Death (See 1.2.2Ad)***
- Other types of suffering (See 1.2.2Ae)***



## 1.2.2Aa Birth



**Our birth gives rise to the sufferings of :-**

- ❑ Moments after conception, develop and experience pain**
- ❑ Body / limb grow as if stretched out on a rack**
- ❑ Mother's womb, hot and dark; sensitive to mother's actions / activities**
- ❑ Emerging from mother's womb, feels forced thru' a narrow crevice bet 2 hard rocks**
- ❑ Continuous sufferings till death**



## 1.2.2Aa Birth



**Our human rebirth is the basis of our human suffering, without birth then there is no human problems.**

**Pains of birth lead to pains of sufferings, ageing and death**



## 1.2.2Ab **Sickness**



**Our birth gives rise to the sufferings of sickness**

- Incapacitated***
- Dependent upon others (pride)***
- Inability to control our bodily functions***
- Frustrated and feeling pains***
- If sickness incurable – suffer anxiety, fear, regret, depressed and suicidal***



## 1.2.2Ac Ageing



### Our birth gives rise to the pains of ageing

- ❑ ***Ageing steals beauty, health, good figure, fine complexion, vitality and comfort.***
- ❑ ***Ageing turns us into objects of disgust and hatred***
- ❑ ***Ageing brings many unwanted pains***
- ❑ ***Mobility and past enjoyment no longer possible (travel, food, memory)***
- ❑ ***Ageing takes us swiftly to our death.***





## 1.2.2Ad **Death**



**Our birth gives rise to the sufferings of death**

- Attachment and having to leave all precious possessions behind***
- Part from close friends and family***
- If no inner protection of spiritual experience, at time of death – fear, distress and physical pains***
- Consciousness departs.....nothing taken along except Karma***





## 1.2.2Ae **Other Sufferings**

**Our birth gives rise to other sufferings**

- ❑ ***Misery of separations, encounter what we do not like, failing to satisfy our desires***
- ❑ ***Encounter unpleasant, frustration or dangerous situations (bankruptcy, flood, earthquake, war)***
- ❑ ***Suffering of dissatisfaction due to changing environment (jobs, weather, govt)***





## **1.2.2B** Sufferings of Demi-Gods

## 1.2.2B The sufferings of demi-gods



1. Demi-gods are similar to gods, but their bodies, possessions and environments are inferior.
2. Although status higher than human beings, they do not experience pure happiness
3. Strong karmic obstruction, cannot realize ultimate nature of reality
4. Demi-gods problem is mental affliction – jealousy
5. Perpetual battle with Gods and they always lose



## **1.2.2C** Sufferings of Gods

## 1.2.2C The sufferings of Gods



### Gods of desire realm

- 1. We may think it is wonderful to be a god, but gods do not enjoy real happiness.**
- 2. Gods of desire realms have to defend themselves against demi-gods**
- 3. Overwhelmingly depressed when meeting other Gods with higher merit**
- 4. Lives of gods full of conflict and experience dissatisfaction.**
- 5. Even they experience enjoyment, desires continue to grow stronger.**

## 1.2.2Ca The sufferings of Gods



- 6. Gods of desire realm have more mental suffering than human beings.**
- 7. Human beings, sufferings of ageing is long and death is brief. For gods, rebirth is short and death is long.**
- 8. Knowledge of their next rebirth brings anguish at time of death becos most of them fall into lower rebirths.**

## 1.2.2Cb The sufferings of Gods



### 9. When god die, they experience 10 specific signs:-

- 9.1 *Magnificent bearing and fine complexion begins to degenerate*
- 9.2 *Feel uncomfortable on their usual seat or couch*
- 9.3 *Flower garlands they wear begin to fade and wilt*
- 9.4 *Feel uncomfortable on their usual seat or couch*
- 9.5 *Garments begin to smell, whereas normally they have no odour*
- 9.6 *Bodies radiant with light, now grows dim*
- 9.7 *When they bathe, bodies become wet, normally bodies never retain moisture*



## 1.2.2Cc The sufferings of Gods



- 9.8 *Clothing and ornaments make unpleasant sounds*
- 9.9 *Began to blink, normally eyes are wide open*
- 9.10 *At time of death, their attention is attracted to only one object such as a particular friend or place*
- 9.11 *When experiencing signs of death, feel fear*
- 9.12 *Receive no sympathy and other gods treat him or here as outcast*

## 1.2.2Cd The sufferings of Gods



### **Gods of Form and Formless realms**

- Do not experience sufferings like those of gods in desire realm
- Do not experience signs of death
- Do not engage in battle
- Do not experience dissatisfaction and any kind of painful feeling
- But, they do experience pervasive suffering and lack freedom
- They too have to take rebirth in lower realms
- No pure and lasting happiness



## 1.3 Three Types of Sufferings

## 1.3 *The three types of suffering*



### **External true suffering:**

Not within the continuum of body and mind of a sentient being  
(environments)

### **Internal true suffering:**

Within continuum of body and mind.

### **Divided into:**

1. *The suffering of manifest pain (See 1.3.1)*
2. *Changing suffering (See 1.3.2)*
3. *Pervasive suffering (See 1.3.3)*

### 1.3.1 The suffering of manifest pain



- 1. The suffering of manifest pain is any unpleasant bodily or mental feeling**
- 2. This kind of suffering is easily recognized by everyone.**

## 1.3.2 Changing suffering



- 1. For samsaric beings, every experience of happiness or pleasure that arises from samsara's enjoyments is changing suffering.**
- 2. If we increase the cause of our worldly happiness, our happiness will change into suffering, but if we increase the cause of suffering, our suffering will never change into happiness.**

*E.g., eating food – continue eating will never destroy the pain of eating but diminishing pleasure*

*Other examples: Sitting or worldly pleasure*

### 1.3.3 Pervasive suffering



1. Pervasive suffering: Covers or pervades all the three realms from the lowest of the desire realm, Unceasing Torment Hell, to the highest formless realm (peak of samsara), and it is the basis from which all true sufferings, external and internal arise.
2. Example, pervasive suffering is our present contaminated aggregates
3. Appropriate aggregates are nature of Samsaric suffering and contaminated for 3 reasons:
  - ✓ *Produced by contaminated causes, “Delusions”*
  - ✓ *Depend upon delusions*
  - ✓ *Basis of developing delusions*

### 1.3.3A Pervasive suffering



4. If we want freedom from the various sufferings of samsara, need to develop the determination to abandon all aggregates
5. When we think of our body and mind, we develop self-cherishing
6. But, if we meditate repeatedly upon pervasive suffering, realize that all contaminated or appropriate aggregates have the nature of suffering
7. We should then develop renunciation – wish to abandon contaminated aggregates, the basis of all suffering.



### 1.3.3B Pervasive suffering



**8. By engaging in each analytical meditation on general and particular sufferings of samsara, we generate a strong determination to cut the continuum of samsaric rebirth, thinking**

***“I must abandon appropriate aggregates”***

**9. When this thought of renunciation – a mind determined to attain liberation – arises clearly in the mind, we should practise placement meditation so that we never lose it.**

#### **Appropriate aggregates**

- **Called “aggregates” because composed of many parts**
- **Are said to be “appropriated” because they have developed or been appropriated in dependence upon deluded causes.**



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