

Lessons Learned in Suffering





Buddhism 4 Noble Truths

- Life is marked by suffering (dukkha)
This includes not just obvious pain, but also dissatisfaction, and that worldly things do not provide lasting fulfillment.
- The cause of suffering is craving (tanha) Clinging to pleasure, possessions, relationships and even ideas of self leads to suffering.
- There is an end to suffering (Nirvana)
By letting go of craving and attachment, suffering will end.
- The path to the end of suffering is the Eightfold Path.



Types of Suffering

- **Dukkha-dukkha:** Obvious pain, illness, grief, old age, death.
- **Viparinama-dukkha:** Suffering from change—when pleasant experiences end, or when life shifts unexpectedly.
- **Samkhara-dukkha:** The more subtle suffering of existence itself—our restless sense of impermanence and lack of a solid, lasting self.



The Eightfold Path

- **Wisdom:** Right View, Right Intention
- **Ethics:** Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood
- **Meditation:** Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration

Perspective on Suffering

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- Unlike some traditions that see suffering as punishment or as inherently meaningful, Buddhism views it more as a **teacher**—a fact of existence that, when understood deeply, can point the way toward awakening.



Lessons Learned

- A socially respectable life does not guarantee fulfillment or peace.
- Suffering strips away illusion and can lead to spiritual awakening.
- Since suffering is an individual experience there is an overriding bias.
- It is difficult to establish a Biblical explanation for suffering.



Summary

- Theologians separate God from evil by arguing that evil comes from creaturely freedom, distortion of the good, or as a temporary but necessary part of the journey toward greater goods and ultimate redemption. God is not the direct author of evil but is the one who limits it, works through it, and will ultimately defeat it.

A Reshaping through Suffering

- Prayer life and relationship with God
- Worldview towards suffering
- Not Fearful (but not cavalier)
- Mindful and more aware of people and individual moments.



Some Final Suffering Thoughts

“When you find yourself invited into a space of suffering whether or not it is your own, go because it is a sacred space.”

“When the day breaks and the suffering appears to have subsided, you are stepping into a new day and a new way of seeing the physical and non-physical creation.”

“I have never experienced God removing a suffering moment, even though I have cried out, yet His presence and sustaining love is palpable.”

“Suffering touches on every fear one has removing the possibilities of what once was while stepping into the absolute unknown.”

“As one takes their first breath, they are stepping into their own suffering.”

“On the other side of suffering comes new possibilities.” New experiences and opportunities await. Things that once were never a conceived thought.”

“Life is never more present and real than in the midst of suffering.”