

Unobserved suffering of sansāra existence

People perceive sansāra dukhā to be something experienced after death. However sansāra dukhā is something experienced in the past, present, from now till death and then continued on to any other existence after that. Therefore one should experience sansāra dukhā at infant, child, young and old ages equally. So how do one experience jāti dukhā , jarā dukhā and marana dukhā in all stages of life?

In order to understand this, one must understand jāti dhamma, jarā dhamma and marana dhamma. Let's look at how jāti dhamma, jarā dhamma and marana dhamma are explained in Ariyapariyesanā sutta [MN26](#) :

Bhikkhus, what is jāti dhamma? wife and kids are jāti dhamma, servants are jāti dhamma, goats and sheeps are jāti dhamma, pigs and fowls are jāti dhamma, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares are jāti dhamma, gold and silver are jāti dhamma. These dhamma with qualities of five sense pleasures coming into existence is jāti dhamma. one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself a jāti dhamma, seeks what it is also jāti dhamma.... Bhikkhus, what is jarā dhamma? wife and kids are jarā dhamma, servants are jarā dhamma, goats and sheeps are jarā dhamma, pigs and fowls are jarā dhamma, , being himself a jarā dhamma, seeks what is also jarā dhamma.

It goes on to explain byādhidhamma dhamma, maraṇa dhamma, soka dhamma, saṅkilesa dhamma (dhamma that helps develop kilesa). Therefore jāti dhamma entails all living things one is acquainted with such as friends, family, dogs and cats. As well as all non-living things. So aren't all these living and nonliving jāti, not jāti dhamma?

If one is attached to any of these jāti dhamma that one comes into contact with, when they are perished or no longer available, one is left with sorrow. Let's investigate how a 3-4 year old child would experience jāti dukhā . If you give a

child a toy, the child would get attached to different features of this toy. Child would develop desire for the toy. Slowly when the toy starts to deteriorate and lose some of its functionality child would feel dukhā . In this way the child in association of the toy would go through jāti dukhā , jarā dukka and marana dukhā (toy stops functioning). Similarly think of giving a new bicycle to a 15 year old teenager. If the bicycle breaks down or when it starts to deteriorate the teenager would feel sorrow. If a household pet get sick or die, wouldn't everyone in that house attached to that pet feel jarā dukhā and marana dukhā? How much are we attached to our possessions (nonliving jāti)? If any of these gets destroyed wouldn't anyone attached to them feel dukhā?

Coming into contact with these living and nonliving jāti, seeking them out and getting attached to them would give rise to jarā maraṇa sokaparideva dukhā domanassa upāyāsā. Therefore one should grasp that seeing jāti dukhā only in reference to the time of one's birth is a very narrow view of jāti dukhā. Also if we limit the meaning of jāti to childbirth, we will not be able to explain jāti dukka of opapātika beings (beings that are born without the aid of a mother's womb. Deva, Brahmā.. etc)

Similarly we should understand, marana dukhā cannot be limited to the death of a living being. If we only consider the last moment, the pain one feels when he's about to die is not that significant. A person who is expected to live up to 80, only contemplating about the pain felt at the dying moment would likely underestimate marana dukhā. Also one might have experienced last moments of some beings are peaceful . One must grasp associating with jāti dhamma, jarā dhamma and marana dhamma brings suffering that is spread across one's entire life.

After we have gained much more in depth understanding of jāti, jarā, marana dukhā, let's try to grasp a more detailed view of other dukhās.

Soka is suffering felt by the mind mixed with sorrow and not hard to understand. For example the dukhā one feels when a loved one passes away or becomes

distant, is soka. One desires to associate with things one desire, throughout one's life . Not succeeding the mind feels soka.

Parideva is a deeper state of soka (lamentation). In other words weeping, crying and wailing with soka. We can see such people at funerals at times, where they roll on the floor screaming and crying with sorrow.

Dukhā - among all other sankara dukhā, another dukhā is mentioned to highlight a special subset of dukhā. Pain felt by the body. Such as physical pain felt by the body when it's injured or sick.

Domanassa is the colliding nature of the mind. Even though it is a form of dukhā felt in the mind similar to sorrow, it's important to see the difference. It's the dual nature of the mind, where recognising something that it is attached to, is taken away and collides with it. It arises with an angry state of mind. When sorrow arises in the mind, it's free of anger. Domanassa is displeasure felt in the mind mixed with anger.

Many grasp upāyāsā as another form of deep sorrow, despair. However upāyāsā is the effort one puts to live or maintain a given state of existence. All beings tries to survive from the moment they are born till death. They put effort to maintain their lives to their liking. However in each cycle of birth these efforts are wasted and all their attempts end in the ultimate failure of death.

An infant would cry when they are hungry because they are trying to survive. Even for a small sickness one might search for medicine since they are trying to survive. One would run away from enemies as an attempt to survive. We collect food and money because we are trying to survive. One animal would chase another animal to kill because it wants to survive. Animal been chased would run and hide because it wants to survive. Throughout one's life they try to survive and they need to put constant effort into it. However all these attempts ultimately fail in the final outcome of death. This also clearly shows the anicca nature of the world.

All this time we were discussing the dukhā that anyone can perceive. Now let's focus on the dukhā that come to us hiding beneath sukhā (pleasure).

Let's look at a sutta that describes how what mind perceives as sukhā end up in dukhā, and how associating with dukhā can give the perception of sukhā. It's described in the Cūḷavedalla sutta [MN 44](#)

sukhā kho, āvuso visākhā, vedanā t̥hitisukhā vipariṇāmadukhā; dukhā vedanā t̥hitidukhā vipariṇāmasukhā;

When sukhā vedana remain persistent it's sukhā, but it changing and not remaining to our liking is dukhā. If dukhā vedana remain persistent it's dukhā. dukhā vedana changing and ending is sukhā.

All living beings desire for sukhā vedana to persist. However given they are unable to maintain it to their liking it creates dukhā. This is the anicca nature of sukhā vedana.

No one wants dukhā vedana to remain persistent. They desire for dukhā vedana to end. However dukhā vedana being persistent and not being able to change it, as per one's liking creates even greater dukhā. This is the anicca nature of dukhā vedana.

Lord buddha never said there are no pleasures in the world, what he said was beings chasing after these pleasures end up in dukhā. It's the ādīnava (loosely meaning cause and effect. Ādī + nava or old->new) of pleasure. He asked one to grasp pleasure as pleasure and ādīnava of pleasure as dukhā.

Let's look at an example of how beings chasing after pleasure end up in dukhā. Think of a man fishing. The fisherman would use a small fish or a worm to catch a bigger fish. Given this bait attached to the hook gives the bigger fish pleasure, it tries to consume it. The pleasure that the fish feels would be the

fleeting-moments of enjoyment of consuming the tasty bait. However due to chasing after this pleasure it would die or go through dukhā similar to it. Let's think of some young couples chasing after endless pleasures in today's society. When they are unable to get what they desire they end up committing suicide. (In some very painful ways). This helps one grasp the pain felt by someone, when they can't maintain something to their liking is more painful than the physically painful methods they decide to end their lives. (Author goes into gore details of some of these cases to emphasize the pain felt in the mind is much more painful)

Dukhā is created by getting attached to something that is anicca (cannot maintain as you like):

“yadaniccā tan dukkham”

If by indulging in pleasures and as a result (ādinava) dukhā is created, one must understand that's the anicca nature of pleasure.

Let's contemplate how pleasures are anicca. We cannot maintain pleasures as we desire. We cannot acquire pleasure as we desire. We have expectations to feel pleasures by coming into contact with external world that is anicca. For that we use eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body that is also anicca. We enjoy these pleasures due to being tied down by raga and moha. By developing raga and moha, we extend saṁsāra existence that's filled with dukhā. Even that is not to our liking. Extending saṁsāra existence is not what a person who desire nīvana wants. For such beings falling back to saṁsāra existence is anicca.

This is known as “khāyattena anicca” we should take khāyā as the low side. In other words the side that extends the saṁsāra existence. If we are still maintaining activity that's seeking for pleasures which would increase the saṁsāra existence, this fall onto the khāyā side. This is the most serious ādinava of pleasure.

Trying to enjoy pleasures in day to day life and having to endure suffering must be seen as the ādinava of trying to enjoy pleasures.

