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on the suffering of the world:

Suffering little children

A historical painting depicting a scene of war. In the foreground, a young child is crouching on the ground, looking towards the viewer. Behind the child, several soldiers in military uniforms are standing, some holding rifles. The background shows a landscape with buildings and a hazy sky, suggesting a war-torn environment.

Gassed
John Singer Sargent - 1919

When can one be considered a truly happy person? By examining the life of the man, not much consistent happiness can be found. This makes us ask ourselves: does happiness really exist? While the pleasures of the world pass quickly before man's eyes, the pain and suffering linger on much longer. Also, the effect of pain on man's heart is more profound than of joy. Pleasures of life, both physical and spiritual, pass by the man's eyes so suddenly and briefly, making it rare and, its rarity makes joy and happiness more valuable to the man. One will try to compensate for this lack of quality by increasing the quantity of pleasure. By jumping from a whim to another, the man is doomed to run on a hedonistic treadmill in this capricious journey. This process seems unnecessary, therefore making it more like a problem that requires to be solved. In this writing, we examine the origin of pain and joy, trying to understand human life more clearly and hopefully reaching a solution for this problem.

It is tempting to consider pain as a passing phase that appears at a certain stage of life and diminishes after a while, only to return at a later period of life. One must be aware that the pain is a feeling of discomfort caused by not satisfying his need. And needs are fundamental appurtenance of life. One can only deny the existence of needs in their life either by exterminating life, death, or going beyond life and claiming to be divine, omnipotent beings. In other words, only a dead man and God can't have any need, and since the object of study is the suffering of the man, we can assertively claim that need is an objective truth peculiar to all living beings.

Furthermore, the suffering is caused because these needs are not being fulfilled. Whether financial, emotional, or spiritual, these needs, if not satisfied, will cause immense suffering in the man's life. Naturally, one will try to solve this issue either by limiting the actual needs just as Diogenes the Cynic did or by distracting oneself from these needs with over-indulging in other irrelevant activities. Although we can clearly define pain and suffering, as we just did, we can't define happiness easily. The best thing we can come up with is that happiness is a state of momentary and unstable satisfaction due to either lack of pain or ignorance of pain. So one can boldly claim that there's no happiness and a happy person has slightly deviated from the norm, that is a life constantly filled with suffering, or even worse that they are not aware of it.

The certainty of pain and suffering human's life must not convey this message that the pain is a bad event and suffering a torment. On the contrary, pain is a good thing, and it is alarming us of something which went wrong. Inconvenience accompanying the suffering directly results from a certain problem that needs to be solved and eliminated. So one can say that suffering is the mother of all innovations. Inventions

were created because a human was in need and was suffering from that particular need. Hence the creation of a new device or discovery of a new method occurred. It's not hard to find similar instances in history.

Clearly, the suffering caused by different needs is the main reason behind important movements in human history. So doesn't it make more sense for humans to increase their sensitivity towards pain? In today's society, suffering is looked at as something to be frowned upon, and usually, people look at a miserable person with a sense of pity. On the other hand, happiness is the main goal for almost everybody. Yet that doesn't exist, and happiness is only an absence of pain or lack of understanding of pain. It's not a surprise to see drugs and alcohol make someone happy. In fact, they don't make anyone happy, they don't solve or take away any problem, but they make the person forget about their issues.

Instead of distracting oneself from the pain, one simply should meditate and reflect on it. Cultural traditions and religious beliefs that emphasize achieving happiness and having a happy life don't consider that by shying away from pain and suffering, they are stopping the progress of humanity. This stagnation and lack of movement will prove to be the end of human life. Not only it won't end the suffering, but it will also make people more ignorant of these pains, which is honestly worse. This way, one is suffering but doesn't know why and the social norms and religious beliefs will prevent him from pondering further and figuring out the real reason for his suffering. Instead, by increasing his sensitivity towards suffering, he will become aware of it much faster, and by deep reflection upon suffering, he can find its roots and then use his intellect to find a solution.

