



# Death THE HOLIEST MOMENT POSSIBLE

**T**he first thing: when death is there you have to be very respectful because death is no ordinary phenomenon, it is the most extraordinary phenomenon in the world. Nothing is more mysterious than death. Death reaches the very centre of existence, and when a man is dead you are moving on sacred ground: it is the holiest moment possible. No, ordinary curiosities cannot be allowed. They are disrespectful.

In the East particularly, death is respected more than life -- and the East has lived long to come to this conclusion. In the West life is more respected than death; hence so much tension, so much worry and so much anguish, so much madness. Why? If you respect life more, you will be afraid of death, and then death will look antagonistic, the enemy; and if death is the enemy, you will remain tense your whole life, because death can happen any moment. You don't accept it, you reject it -- but you cannot destroy it. Death cannot be destroyed. You can reject it; you can deny it; you can be afraid, scared, but it is there, just at the corner, always with you like a shadow. You will be trembling

your whole life -- and you are trembling. And in the fear, in all fears if searched deeply, you will find the fear of death.

Whenever you are afraid, something has given you an indication of death. If your bank goes bankrupt and you are filled with fear and trembling, anxiety -- that too is anxiety about death, because your bank balance was nothing but a security against death. Now you are more open, vulnerable. Now who will protect you if death knocks at the door? If you become ill, if you become old, then who is going to take care of you? The guarantee was there in the bank, and the bank has gone bankrupt.

You cling to prestige, power, position, because when you have a position you are so significant that you are more protected by people. When you are not in power, you become so impotent that nobody bothers in any way who you are. When you are in power, you have friends, family, followers; when you are not in power, everybody leaves. There was a protection, somebody was there to care; now nobody cares. Whatever you are

afraid of, if you search deeply you will always find the shadow of death somewhere.

You cling to a husband, you are afraid he may leave; or you cling to a wife, afraid she may leave you. What is the fear? Is it really the fear of a divorce, or is it a fear of death? It is a fear of death... because in divorce you become alone. The other gives a protection, a feeling that you are not alone, somebody else is with you. In moments when somebody else will be needed, you will have somebody to look to. But the wife has left, or the husband has left, and now you are left alone, a stranger. Who will protect you? Who will care for you when you are ill? When people are young, they do not need a wife or a husband so much, but when they are old their need is more. When you are young it is a sexual relationship. The older you become the more it becomes a life relationship, because now if the other leaves you, immediately death is there. Wherever you are afraid, try to explore, and you will find death hiding somewhere behind. All fear is of death. Death is the only fear source.

In the West people are apprehensive, worried, anxious, because you have to fight continuously against death. You love life, you respect life -- that's why in the West old people are not respected. Young people are respected, because old people have moved further towards death than you; they are already in its grip. Youth is respected in the West -- and youth is a transitory phenomenon, it is already passing from your hands.

In the East old men are respected, because in the East death is respected; and because in the East death is respected, there is no fear about death. Life is just a part; death is the culmination. Life is just the process; death is the crescendo. Life is just the moving; death is the reaching. And both are one! So what will you respect more, the way or the goal? The process or the flowering?

Death is the flower, life is nothing but the tree. And the tree is there for the flower, the flower is not there for the tree. The tree should be happy and the tree should dance when the flower comes.

So in the East death is accepted; not only accepted, welcomed. It is a divine guest. When it knocks at the door, it means the universe is ready to receive you back. In the East we respect death. And this young man Zengen just came in without even expressing a word of death is childish; one has to be respectful, silent. That is

sympathy or respect. He simply became curious. Not only that, he was very disrespectful -- he tapped on the coffin and asked Dogo, 'Is he really dead?' His question is beautiful, but not in the right moment. The question is right but the moment he has chosen is wrong. To be curious before death is childish; one has to be respectful, silent. That is the only way to have a rapport with the phenomenon. When somebody dies it is really something very deep happening. If you can just sit there and meditate many things will be revealed to you. Questioning is foolish. When death is there, why not meditate? Questioning may be just a trick to avoid the thing, it may be just a safety measure so as not to look at death directly.

I have watched when people go to burn or to cremate somebody -- they start talking too much there. At the cremation ground they discuss many philosophical things. In my childhood, I loved very much to follow everybody. Whoever died, I would be there. Even my parents became afraid; they would say, 'Why do you go? We don't even know that man. There is no need to go.'

I would say, 'That is not the point. The man is not my concern. Death... it is such a beautiful phenomenon, and one of the most mysterious. One should not miss it.' So the moment I heard that somebody had died, I would be there, always watching, waiting, witnessing what was happening.

And I watched people discussing many things, philosophical problems such as: What is death? And somebody would say: 'Nobody dies. The innermost self is immortal.' They would discuss the Upanishads, the Gita, and quote authorities. I started feeling: 'They are avoiding the real issue. By just becoming engaged in a discussion, they are avoiding the phenomenon that is happening. They are not looking at the dead man. And the thing is there! Death is there, and you are discussing it! What fools!'

You have to be silent. If you can be silent when death is there, you will suddenly see many things, because death is not just a person who has stopped breathing. Many things are happening. When a person dies, his aura starts subsiding. If you are silent, you can feel it -- an energy force, a vital energy field, subsiding, getting back to the centre.

- *And the Flowers Showered, Is He Dead?*



*You have to be silent*