

Natural Justice



The Law of Karma and Reincarnation

*How it Operates and
Affects Your Life*

Emmanuel Ebah

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Prologue

This book provides an energetic discussion embracing the entire breadth and full depth of the law of karma or cause and effect, with respect to its *raison d'être*, its nature, mechanisms of operation, various forms of its manifestation, its dimensions of jurisdiction, its relationship with freedom of choice; and the secret of how to utilise karma as a means to sustainable happiness and success. It constitutes a comprehensive response to all the questions related to ***why things happen the way they do***; from an individual to a global scale.

Freewill or freedom of choice is one of the most prominent inherent privileges with which humans are endowed. On the whole, life is characterised by virtually innumerable choices. It would be entirely impossible for anyone to espouse and exhaust all these choices. Therefore, freewill is the birthright, ability and unrestricted privilege for humans to voluntarily embrace a particular set of choices, as opposed to numerous other available options. Alongside freewill, humans are also endowed with conscience and reasoning, which are the vital tools that provide the moral impetus and rational basis in the manner freedom of choice is exercised.

The four inborn fundamental means by which humans exercise their freewill comprise: **thought, speech, emotion and action**. Therefore, when ever humans exercise their freedom of choice by means of a thought, speech, emotion or deed, corresponding legitimate consequences are generated, which would ultimately be assumed by the person who has exercised that freedom of choice. Thus, the privilege to exercise freewill is naturally associated with the obligation to shoulder the consequences that stem from the exercise of that freewill. This implies that humans are entirely responsible for the results that accrue from their exercise of freewill.

The law of karma or the law of cause and effect is the natural, immutable, infallible and rigorous regulatory mechanism, which ensures that the consequences or fruits yielded by our exercise of freewill by means of a thought, speech, emotion or action, are delivered to us with the highest degree of faithfulness and infallibility.

The rigour, immutability and infallibility of this impeccable law of karma warrants that the consequences stemming from a particular cause, are such that those causes and their consequences are reconciled in mathematical exactitude; such that this law can be interpreted in the light of Newton's third law of motion, which states that: ***For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction***. Or that: ***action and reaction are equal in magnitude but opposite in effect***.

The law of karma gives no regard to the moral and rational content of a choice exercised. Its cardinal duty is to faithfully deliver the results arising from the exercise of freewill. Thus, the law of karma is like the delivery agent of the universe, which faithfully delivers the goods you have ordered from the menu of infinite choices available to you. Again, the law of karma can be likened to a fruit juice machine, which simply delivers the juice of the fruit you have placed in the machine. If you place mango fruits in the fruit juice machine, you obtain mango juice. No more, no less. Karma just delivers the fruits of our choices, regardless of whether they are gainful or painful.

Therefore, karma is neither punishment nor reward; just a devoted servant of the universe, who ensures that your choices are respected to the highest possible degree, by kindly delivering to your doorsteps, the fruits that have been generated by such choices.

Therefore, this book critically deliberates upon the manner in which the law of karma operates and how it affects our lives. It then provides judicious advice, on how to employ the law of karma in the most skilful way possible, in order to avoid suffering and achieve sustainable happiness for ourselves, family and friends.

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The fundamental rationale of the law of karma

The law of karma is not some far-fetched mysterious concept beyond the reach of both logic and common sense. Instead, the rational foundation for this infallible law is quite easy to grasp; because the law of karma holds that when you exercise your freewill by any means and for what ever reasons, it's imperative that the fruits generated by your exercise of that freewill be faithfully delivered to you, by the unfailing and expeditious delivery express of the universe called karma.

When you exercise your freewill by triggering a **thought, speech, emotion** or an **action**, corresponding vibrations are set into motion, which invariably gravitate towards the object of your freewill. Once these vibrations reach the object of your freewill, the corresponding magnitude of consequences are generated, which eventually rebound to you the person who orchestrated such vibrations through your exercise of freewill.

When a farmer sows apple seeds, that deed by itself instructs the law of karma that the farmer is desirous of apple fruits. Ultimately, this faithful law delivers apple fruits to the farmer who sowed those apple seeds. Suppose the farmer sows apple seeds and ends up reaping mango fruits, this would be deemed unfair because the farmer's freewill has not been respected. It's only when the farmer harvests the exact fruits of the seeds he sowed that he actually understands that his freewill is valid and faithful to his demands. The law of karma is not a mechanism designed to offer rewards or dish out punishment. Indeed, the law of karma never examines the moral content or quality of the fruits yielded by your exercise of freewill. It simply delivers results, with the highest degree of faithfulness and rigour.

Veritably, the law of karma is akin to a supermarket teller, who never ever questions your choice of the items contained in your shopping basket. The duty of the supermarket teller is to pack up your selected items and faithfully hand them to you. The teller never questions why you have selected a particular item and not the other. In the like manner, life is tantamount to a vast supermarket with an extensive spectrum of choices. The type of items you select in the supermarket of life is a matter of your freewill and absolute discretion. Once you have exercised your freewill by selecting your preferred goods in the vast supermarket of life, this universal supermarket teller called karma, simply packs up the goods and faithfully hands them to you; without judgement, criticism or objection. Therefore, the law of karma can be viewed as a servant of freedom of choice. It's truly a faithful attendant of your freedom of choice.

Hence, whenever you exercise your freewill by mobilising a thought, speech, emotion or deed, then you have, in effect, set into motion a cause, which then translates into effects that accrue to you. Therefore, we exercise our freewill by setting into motion a cause; and the fruits of the freewill so exercised, return to us in the form of effects. It's for this reason that the law of karma is also called ***the law of cause and effect***.

The rigour, immutability and infallibility of this impeccable law of karma warrants that the consequences stemming from a particular cause, are such that those causes and their consequences are reconciled in mathematical exactitude; such that this law can be interpreted in the light of Newton's third law of motion, which states that: ***For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction***. Or that: ***action and reaction are equal in magnitude but opposite in effect***.

This law of karma constitutes an imperative theme in virtually every religion, with only slight differential in their respective styles of articulation; but without an alteration of the fundamental basis for this faithful servant of nature. Provided below are specimen excerpts about the law of karma, from a variety of sources:

You can't escape karma ... It is what it is. It doesn't judge, it's neither good nor bad like most people think. It's the result of all the actions, positive and negative--a constant balancing act of events--cause and

effect--tit for tat--reaping and sowing--what goes around comes around ... However you phrase it, it's the same in the end.

ALYSON NOËL, *Shadowland*

Your believing or not believing in karma has no effect on its existence, nor on its consequences to you. Just as a refusal to believe in the ocean would not prevent you from drowning.

F. PAUL WILSON, *The Tomb*

Karma isn't fate. Nor is it a punishment imposed on us by some external agent. We create our own karma. Karma is the result of the choices that we make every moment of every day.

TULKU THONDUP, *Peaceful Death, Joyful Rebirth*

Karma is like the fruit of a mango tree. The mango will yield the tree and the tree will yield the mango and the cycle continues.

NIRUBEN AMIN, *The Science of Karma*

The law of karma is neither fatalistic nor punitive; nor is man a hapless, helpless victim in its bonds. God has blessed each one of us with reason, intellect and discrimination, as well as the sovereign free will. Even when our past karma inclines us toward evil, we can consciously tune our inclination towards detachment and ego-free action, thus lightening the karmic load.

J. P. VASWANI, *What Would You Like to Know about Karma*

When we cross the gates of death, our karma is all we take with us. Everything else that we enjoyed in this life we leave behind... Our karma is the only thing that will count in determining our rebirth, for our next life is nothing but the effects of our karmic tendencies that materialize in our perception.

TULKU THONDUP, *Peaceful Death, Joyful Rebirth*

When we begin to understand the concept of Karma, we will never ever blame God for anything that happens to us. We will realise that we are responsible for all that happens to us. As we sow, so shall we reap. Rich or poor, saint or sinner, miser or philanthropist, learned or illiterate ... This is the Universal Law that applies to individuals, to whole communities, societies, nations and races. As we sow, so shall we reap.

J. P. VASWANI, *What Would You Like to Know about Karma*

Karma is not fate, for man acts with free will, creating his own destiny. The Vedas tell us, if we sow goodness, we will reap goodness; if we sow evil, we will reap evil. Karma refers to the totality of our actions and their concomitant reactions in this and previous lives, all of which determines our future.

SATGURU SIVAYA SUBRAMUNIASWAMI, *Dancing With Siva*

Karma is a key that we may use to organize our lives, rather than endlessly agonizing over the seemingly unexplainable and often unexpected events forming the fabric of our lives... Karma is not about fate, fatalism, or destiny; nothing is pre-ordained--rather everything is a sequential happening emerging logically from antecedents. Karma is a way of viewing existence that brings about a harmony of both fatalism and free will, resulting in increased mental health and self-responsibility.

JOHN MUMFORD, *Karma Manual*

As no cause remains without its due effect from greatest to least, from a cosmic disturbance down to the movement of your hand, and as like produces like, Karma is that unseen and unknown law which adjusts wisely, intelligently, and equitably each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer.

H. P. BLAVATSKY, *The Key to Theosophy*

Karma is justice. It does not reward or punish. It shows no favoritism because we have to earn all that we receive. Karma doesn't predestine anyone or anything. We create our own causes, and karma adjusts the effects with perfect balance.

MARY T. BROWNE, *The Power of Karma*

Karma applies itself in the most exacting and clever of ways. If we deprived another human being of freedom in a previous life, we'd probably have our freedom curtailed in this life. This experience would give us time to reconsider our views and learn the Law of Love.

TODD CRAMER, *Eckankar: Ancient Wisdom for Today*

What brings the karmic result from the patterns of our actions is not our action alone. As we intend and then act, we create karma: so another key to understanding the creation of karma is becoming aware of intention. The heart is our garden, and along with each action there is an intention that is planted like a seed. The result of the patterns of our karma is the fruit of these seeds.

JACK KORNFIELD, *A Path with Heart*

One has to reap the fruits of his karma. The law of karma is inevitable and is accepted by all the great philosophies of the world: 'As you sow, so shall you reap.

SWAMI RAMA, *Living with the Himalayan Masters*

Something of the feeling expressed by the poet is experienced by every soul when it first realizes the depth and grandeur involved in the idea of Karma, or the law of Cause and Effect; for this is all that Karma is--the law, or the truth (law and truth are synonyms in nature) that each cause is inevitably followed by its appropriate effect. Our very familiarity with this law has blinded us to its majesty; we lightly assign it as an explanation for the most inscrutable mysteries, because it is such an absolutely necessary corollary to all we conceive of life or nature, without recognizing that it itself is beyond all comprehension. Yet it contains the beginning and the end of all philosophical speculation; it demonstrates a causal relation between the Infinite and the finite, for Karma is that Infinite Power which adjusts each effect to its originating cause.

JEROME A. ANDERSON, *Karma: A Study of the Law of Cause and Effect*

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

(Luke 6:37-38)

They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no head; it will produce no flour. Were it to yield grain, foreigners would swallow it up.

(Hosea 8:7a)

And about the law of karma, the noble Buddha provided a thorough elocution of the exact karmic consequences that arise from particular transgressions. To the four *Devarajas*, The noble Buddha declared:

O Devarajas, to those who kill, Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha would speak about the retribution of early, untimely death for such misdeeds. To those who steal, he would talk about the retribution of distress, destitution and indigence. To those who indulge in perverted lust, he would talk about the retribution of being born as peacocks, pigeons and mandarin ducks in future lives. To those using harsh words, he would speak about the retribution of quarrels and fights in the family. To those who defame, he would speak about the retribution of dumbness or ulcer-sores in the mouth. To those who are angry and hateful, he would talk about the retribution of ugliness in the form of a hunchback or a cripple. To those who are

niggardly, he would talk about the retribution of unanswered prayers. To those who eat or drink to excess, he would talk about the retribution of thirst, starvation or throat diseases. To those who indulge in hunting, he would talk about the retribution of death from fright or mental derangement. To those disobedient to their parents, he would talk about the retribution of calamities and destruction from the sky or the earth. To those who commit arson by setting forests ablaze, he would talk about the retribution of death or crazy delusions. To those who abuse their stepchildren, he would talk about the retribution of being likewise abused in future lives. To those who trap and catch live fledglings with nets, he would talk about the retribution of separation from their blood relatives. To those who defame the Three Jewels, he would talk about retribution in blindness, deafness and dumbness. To those who slight the Dharma and religion, he would talk about the retribution of permanent banishment to the evil paths of existence. To those who abuse the properties of the Sangha establishment, he would talk about the retribution of transmigration in hell for millions of kalpas. To those who blemish religious practices and wrong the Sangha, he would talk about the retribution of permanent existence as animals. To those who harm lives by boiling, fire, cutting or chopping, he would talk about appropriate retributory repayment in transmigration. To those who violate the precepts and break abstinences, he would talk about the retribution of thirst and starvation as fowls and beasts. To those who destroy things or spend money unreasonably, he would talk about the retribution of the deficiency or the complete extinction of the necessities they seek. To those who are haughty and self-conceited, he would talk about the retribution of being lowly and mean. To those who use double tongues to instigate trouble, he would talk about the retribution of dumbness or having one hundred tongues. To those with perverted views, he would talk about the retribution of rebirth in the hinterland.

Such are the results yielded by evil deeds-the physical, verbal and mental karmas of the sentient beings in Jambudvipa, as well as the hundreds of thousands of ways of encountering their proper retribution. I have talked about them only roughly and briefly. The sentient beings in Jambudvipa, such as those described, will induce various and different karmic response and results. Those sentient beings will first receive such different sorts of retribution as described and afterward fall into hell, most probably remaining there for quite a number of kalpas without a date for acquittal or release. However, Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha will resort to hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of expedencies to teach, convert, deliver and liberate them. Therefore, you protectors of people and of countries, help him and do not let those various causes and results of sin lead sentient beings astray.

(The Sutra of Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha's Fundamental Vows; Chapter 4: The Karmic Retribution of Sentient Beings in Jambudvipa): Translated into English by Upasaka Tao-tsi Shih and Edited by Dr. Frank G. French:

<http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/clubs/buddhism/ksitigarbha/chap4.html>

...Now when we look at our human stand-point, the laws are made by humans. But when we look from a transcendental view, which is above human capacity, then we see sometimes, even though laws are made by people, they are governed by some other kind of invisible force. This invisible force we call in Sanskrit "karma." Karma is the Sanskrit name for the law of causes and retributions. Like we say in the Bible, in Christian terminology, "As you sow, so shall you reap." So when some Christian people question me that only the Buddhists believe in karma, I smile and tell them the Christians also believe in karma.... Then now we consider that when we live in every nation, we have to follow that nation's law. So now when we are in the universe, we must also follow our universal law. That law will protect us from degrading into a lower grade of existence. For example, when we are in a country, and we commit some crimes or transgress some law, we will be put in jail or have some kind of fine. No? (Audience: Yes.) Now if we live in this universe and we commit something that is not suitable to the law of the universe, then

we also have to be put in some kind of other existence, which is not very pleasurable for us. That is what we call karma, the law of retribution, "As you sow, so shall you reap.

Therefore, when we want to live in harmony and do not incur displeasurable situations for ourselves, we should study some universal law. Universal law is not made by man, and is not changeable like human's law. When we see the human's law, it varies from country to country. And even the standard of morality varies from country to country. So it is hard to tell people in one country to accept the other country's law. But the universal law is always and always the same. For example, in the Bible it is stated that, "Thou shall not kill. Thou shall not commit adultery. Thou shall not steal. Thou shall love thy neighbour; love thy enemy, etc...." These will never change.

Supreme Master Ching Hai: *the ETERNAL LIFE AND THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE*; Harvard University, Boston, U.S.A. October 27, 1989: <http://godsdirectcontact.us/com/teachings/LECTUREeternal1.html>

This law of karma also constitutes a governing principle in inter-human transactions and other social phenomena; for instance; in trade by barter, it amounted to the underpinning for the square deal; in contemporary commercial transactions, it is depicted as fair trading; in jurisprudence, it improvises the parameters employed by judges in meting out penalties or consigning recompenses; within the employment arena, it's paraphrased as fair pay.

While one might deem it bewildering to imbibe the justification as to why living entities are so helplessly subjected to this very astringent and fatiguing mandate of karma, it would be compelling to capture the veracity that the universe is a very orderly and harmonious sphere, with intrinsic mechanisms for the preservation and restoration of that orderliness and harmony.

So, when an individual exerts a thought, an emotion, a speech or a deed, the corresponding content thereof is discharged into the spiritual ecology of the universe. If the content there discharged is concordant with the intrinsic harmonious rhythm of the universe, then favourable consequences would be generated from such a thought, emotion, speech or deed. Nonetheless, more often than not, the content of human exertion is mostly in dissonance with the intrinsic harmonious rhythm of the universe; and following that dissonance, the universe's self-regulatory mechanisms are activated and geared towards the restoration of its intrinsic harmony, by ejecting the object of discord. The ultimate result of that ejection is that, the individual who generated the object that induced such dissonance in the spiritual atmosphere, must then be the legitimate recipient of the content thereof, which manifests upon him as consequences. Upon his full assimilation of the consequences thereof, the intrinsic harmony of the universe is restored. In so doing, the universe upholds justices among its citizens, while enforcing its sustainable welfare.

This account is just as factual and scientific as can be stated that the sum total of energy within a closed system always remains unalterable; and should there arise a displacement within that enclosure, this would occasion a displacement of an equal and opposite effect in the other parts of the system. When the venerable Masters such as Jesus, Buddha and Supreme Master Ching Hai construct their moral code of practice, which is then prescribed to their disciples, they do so, taking full cognisance that the precepts so prescribed are compatible with the preservation of the intrinsic rhythm and natural order of the universe; such that through adherence to these ethical prescriptions or moral recommendations, the disciples would effectively refrain from summoning upon themselves, calamities and other distressful scenarios, which might otherwise arise from a rather careless way of life, which disregards the established natural order of the universe; prompting the culprit to reap bitter consequences. Everyone will harvest the consequences of their deeds, as certainly as one cannot fail to wet one's feet upon stepping into a swimming pool. For example, the Spanish philosopher, Spinoza, posited that the ego-ordained and slavish pursuit of self-interest constitutes the foundation of human state of puzzlement

and discontent, in which they permit their passions and imaginations to be blended with their perceptions, and gives everything false colour and perspective. He continued that it is therefore imperative for humans to meticulously exterminate such unwarranted shackles, which impinge upon truth, even as a scientist endeavours to eliminate all sources of error, to enable the realisation of a fruitful experiment with legitimate and satisfactory results.

The means by which karma is generated

At this juncture, it is indebted to pinpoint the sources of human karma. In this regard, there prevails four principal means by which humans generate karma; enumerated as follows:

1. Karma is generated by thoughts
2. Karma is generated by Speech
3. Karma is generated by emotions
4. Karma is generated by deeds

Now, every thought, speech, emotion and deed generates a correlated consequence. But the execution of a thought, speech, emotion or deed, is preceded by an intrinsic urge; and when that urge or tendency is yielded to, it soon amplifies into a habit. The habit then moulds into behavior, which in turn crystallises into character, and character then hardens into a pattern that directs one's life. The karmic consequences that arise from every thought, speech, emotion and deed become aggregately blended into a dreadful karmic tapestry in the sub-conscious mind, and constitute the blue print of one's inclinations for particular courses of action, as opposed to others.

The aggregate individual karma can thus be regarded as one's invisible but active personal history, in view of thought, emotion, speech and deed; blended in an intricate tapestry, moulded in the appropriate pattern, which exerts substantial impact on one's inclinations and preferences in life.

Now, it is entirely critical to provide a summary of the mechanisms via which karma is generated within humans, because awareness of this mechanism can improvise one with the alacrity and endurance in militarising and scrutinising one's conduct to good effect. It has been intimated that the key principal agencies, means by which karma is generated comprise thoughts, emotions, speech and deeds. Nonetheless, since one of the seven Hermetic principles entails mentalism, for which the mental arena and its associated processes are antecedent to each and every exertion manifested by humans, it follows that grasping the mental mechanism that occasions speech, emotion and deed, is cardinal in ascertaining the intrinsic modalities of karmic generation.

Whenever an action is to be executed, it is preceded by a thought that corresponds to the execution of that particular action. The thought in question would vibrate at a certain frequency, and upon its initiation, it enshrines an imprint on the mind, which can be termed a groove. The action so executed by the individual would unleash the corresponding magnitude of consequences, and the intrinsic regulatory mechanisms of the spiritual ecology of the universe would ensure that these consequences are assimilated by the dispenser of that deed.

But whenever a groove is enshrined on the mind, the mind becomes established in that groove, and it is more readily prone to entertaining thoughts of the same frequency as that which constructed the initial groove. This would then develop a tendency in the individual to incubate similar thoughts, which then instigate the performance of action with which one is accustomed, as mapped out by initial thought exertions. Each subsequent repetition of that thought form and of its begotten action would reinforce both the former and the latter. The groove hosting that thought form is then subjected to systematic enforcement and reinforcement, until that particular thought pattern becomes tenaciously embedded in the mind to the degree of one's enslavement to it. The aggregate and intricate blending of all the

grooves yield a very complex pattern, which crystallises into one's character; and this character would constitute the channel and triggering force of one's subsequent thoughts and deeds; which in turn yield their own consequences; such that the individual becomes entrapped in an insurmountable vicious cycle of cause and effect. This self-administered mental incarceration persists until death, when the individual must proceed with the full magnitude of his mental baggage to the next realm, until his time of repose or penance elapses; and the reliable agency of reincarnation once more closes down upon him. His mental baggage is again submerged into his sub-conscious mind, there to serve as the architectural framework of his destiny. Those who formulated the maxim that ***man is the architect of his own destiny***, must surely have been the great spiritual adepts, who can directly witness the mechanisms of human karmic unfoldment.

So, the sub-conscious mind depicts that colossal depository of the summation of the imprints of one's previous lives thoughts, speeches, emotions and deeds, there condensed as tendencies awaiting the conducive moment for their germination onto the conscious mind, which depicts the instrument via which one's personal reality can be materialised. The conscious and sub-conscious minds can be equated to an uncultivated agricultural terrain, in which case the conscious mind depicts the topsoil; while the sub-conscious mind poses as the sub-soil within which are embedded dormant seeds; such that given conducive meteorological factors, these dormant seeds would sprout onto the topsoil, with such uninhibited profusion, and to the farmer's delight or discontent, depending on their desirability or undesirability.

En passant, it should be intimated that the law of karma governs all those territories and universes where mind poses as the mediating agency between the soul and its subject of experiences; and this comprises those planes of existence from the mental or intellectual dimension via the astral abode, right down to the physical realm; including the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms. This cosmic adjudicator spares none of these realms indeed. In these regions of its mandate, adherence to the law is dictatorial and irrevocable. Nonetheless, in the realms of pure unblemished spiritual energy, for instance; from the third dimension of consciousness, which is just above the intellectual realm, the mandate of the law of karma lapses into cessation. This is because on those exalting realms, an entirely different law applies; and that is, the law of unconditional love and grace. That is why the scriptures state:

If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.
(1 Corinthians 13:3)

Factors that determine the magnitude of karma

Cardinal to this law of karma is the condition or circumstance under which a thought, speech, an emotion or a deed is executed; for example, deliberate execution of a thought, speech, emotion or deed, infused with intent and forceful willfulness, geared towards achieving a desired outcome, conventionally fulfils the requirement for yielding karmic fruits. It is usually held that the gravity of karmic consequences is correlated to the following factors: persistence, consistency and the ferocity of determination; non-display of remorse in the event of an unwholesome deed, action dispensed towards those with supernatural qualities and deeds dispensed towards those from whom one had derived favour in the past.

A very persistent and ferocious deed would amplify the corresponding favourable or unfavourable karmic consequences, while wholesome or unwholesome deeds dispensed to an advanced spiritual being, would magnify the corresponding productive or detrimental consequences.

Indeed, this law of karma is too simplistic, immutably equitable and exacting that, it is veritably hard to contemplate that an inundated proportion of men and women have not yet assimilated this law to their innermost being, and rendered it the governing authority within the regime of their personal principles; and the golden rule in their daily operations. Utter mastery and unflinching obeisance of this law would spare numerous individuals many a heart ache, mental anguish, emotional turmoil and physical distress. The sympathy about the matter is that, ***ignorance cannot render one immune to the dictates of this dependable servant of nature.*** The law admits of no concession, no bargain and no retraction. Its justice is entirely exacting to the point that everyone obtains the precise proportion of their meritorious or demeritorious consequences; and such consequences would certainly be reaped with a fair degree of immediacy, or perhaps in the medium or long-term. Regardless of the time of karmic maturation and manifestation, one can be assured that legitimate consequences will materialise. In one of his essays which he referred to karma as ***The law of compensation***, the American philosopher, Rudolf Emerson, intimated that no one can ever obtain something for nothing; and that what might superficially appear to be something for nothing is only a postponement of one's liabilities; and that in the long run, one is certain to run into one's debts. Also, karma is neither punishment nor recompense, but simply the fruits that have ripened from the choices we subscribe to. Thus it is stated:

Karma is not punishment or retribution but simply an extended expression or consequence of natural acts. The effects experienced are also able to be mitigated by actions and are not necessarily fated. That is to say, a particular action now is not binding to some particular, pre-determined future experience or reaction; it is not a simple, one-to-one correspondence of reward or punishment.... Karma is not a theory that says you do this, you will get that, whether good or bad. It says do good work, I'll decide when you'll get good results, when you need it, and not when you want it.

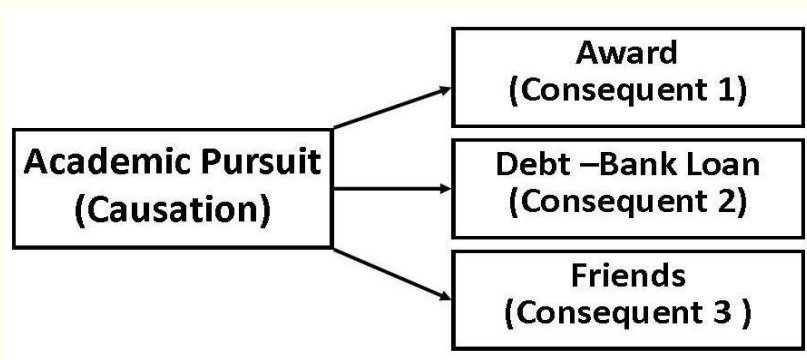
PARVESH SINGLA, *The Manual of Life*

A sagacious application of the law of karma can constitute a formidable remedy of all social, political and economic predicaments that now beset mankind. For instance, in seeking to derive benefits from a service, one would first of all conceive a means of effecting adequate payment, in proportion to the utility derived from the service. Likewise the service provider would seek to levy only that amount which justifies the value of the service rendered. When the law of karma emerges as the unanimously acclaimed adjudicator in inter-human transactions, such that it becomes engraved on everyone's conscience with self-enforcing consistency, then a new socio-economic era will emerge, underpinned by the principle of unpretentious fair dealing in every arena of inter-human transactions. Under such a scenario, an individual might be beholden to recourse to legal remedy in protesting that they have derived more benefits than due in a particular transaction; and urging the judge to permit them to reimburse that additional share which they do not consider to constitute their due.

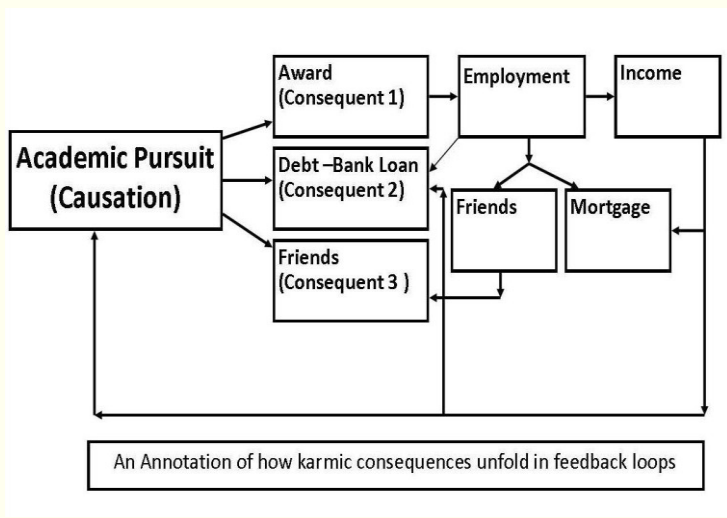
Pathways of karmic manifestation

An obsolete notion generally lingers; which purports that karma unfolds in linearity; in which case, the past is envisioned to determine the present, and the present determines the future in a straight forward and predictable manner. While such a postulation is veracious to a recognisable degree, it can be comfortably posited that such a conception is but partial truth. Karmic consequences unfold in feed-back loops, as postulated by the noble Buddha. Under the feedback loop mechanism, contemporary circumstances are moulded by both past and current factors; while the future is determined by a complex blend of past, present and even prospective factors. The following illustration attempts to elucidate the complexities that characterise karmic unfoldment:

Suppose a student enrolls in an academic establishment and embarks upon a certain discipline of study, geared towards the acquisition of the relevant award. Suppose also that in the course of that academic pursuit, the student incurs a debt as a bank loan to enable funding of his/her studies. In the course of the studies, the student had also established a healthy entourage of friends. Now, upon the successful completion of that academic programme, the following consequences become associated to the student. Firstly, the student has secured the relevant award; secondly, the student is indebted to the bank following the procurement of a bank loan; and thirdly, the student now boasts an exuberant entourage of credible friends. All these three consequences are ramifications of the same causation; which is, the undertaking of an academic pursuit, annotated as follows:



Suppose now that one of the consequences manifests upon that individual, for which the individual secures employment by virtue of having acquired an award. This in turn will generate secondary consequences for the student; for instance, remunerations, interaction and relationship with work colleagues, securement of a mortgage etc. Thus, the manifestation of the consequence of the award has enabled the student to generate revenue for settling the consequence of the bank loan (debt). But the manifestation of the secondary consequence of employment also ramifies into other consequences such as new friends at work; and this sub-consequence reinforces the initial consequences, for instance, numerical increase in the cycle of friends. Suppose having been in active employment for a considerable timeframe, the individual develops the impulsion to derelict employment in favour of further studies. In this case, the income generated during employment now enables the individual to fund this particular episode of academic pursuit, such that the scenario can be annotated as follows:



This annotation portrays the intricacies and complexities that characterise the mechanism governing the generation of karmic consequences; and hence qualifies the postulation that karma manifests in

feedback loops, as always rightly enunciated by the noble Buddha. While linearity is not entirely deniable, feedback loops constitute a more feasible fashion by which karmic consequences manifest.

From the above annotation, while the initial episode of academic pursuit can be considered the primordial causation of the karmic chain, the second episode of academic pursuance now poses as a consequence of a consequence of another consequence, which itself was a consequence of the initial causative chain.

Now suppose again that upon the resumption of further academic pursuit, this individual is met with the rosy fortune of romance with a classmate; and that his/her spouse is an expatriate; and following their mutually consented lawful matrimony, the pair then settle in the spouse's country of origin. The pattern of karmic unfoldment of the individual becomes even more colourful and complex, as fresh horizons of cause and effect now surface onto his personal arena.

Now contemplate that the aggregate of an individual's hundreds, thousands, millions and even eons of previous lives karma is submerged in the sub-conscious mind, as an eclectic tapestry of karmic entanglements, all awaiting conducive circumstances for manifestation into reality. Then, attempt to envision the spiritual stance of an average mortal.

Depending on the severity of the previous lives' karmic burden, the soul becomes entirely inundated; and lapses into chronic mundane fatigue, unable to shoulder the cumbersome baggage that it has summoned upon itself. Hence, the able hand of a capable friend becomes a warrant of necessity; and one of such compassionate, graceful and highly capable dependable friends is Supreme Master Ching Hai. Supreme Master Ching Hai will alleviate your karmic burden to a degree that is manageable, and also liberate your soul from the fatiguing monotonous cycles of reincarnation; compassionately delivering it to the splendiferous abode of eternal glory. She will liberate five generations of your family from the arena of struggle, and deliver them to eternity. She can also rescue some of your deceased relatives that might have fallen into the dreadful penance of hell; and deliver them to more desirable and blissful spiritual realms.

Types of Karma

There is good Karma, there is bad Karma, and as the wheel of life moves on, old Karma is exhausted and again fresh Karma is accumulated. Although at first it may appear that nothing can be more fatalistic than this doctrine, yet a little consideration will show that in reality this is not the case. Karma is twofold, hidden and manifest, Karma is the man that is, Karma is his action. True that each action is a cause from which evolves the countless ramifications of effect in time and space.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, *The Path*, Sep. 1886

Karma is the generic appellation assigned to the cosmic adjudicating mechanism, which reconciles causes and consequences with exacting justice. There is an erroneous conception in circulation, which purports that karma is exclusive and restricted to malicious deeds and their corresponding consequences. Contrary to this illusory concept, karma embraces the full spectrum of causes and corresponding consequences for every thought, speech, emotion or deed; whether they be benign or malign. Thus, two types of karma can be distinguished as follows:

1. Good or wholesome karma
2. Bad or unwholesome karma

Each of these types of karma will speedily be highlighted as follows:

Good or wholesome karma

Good or wholesome karma can be viewed as the totality of the causes, consequences and ramifications of the wilful, purposeful, intentional and deliberate exertion of a thought, speech, emotion or deed, such that embedded in that exertion are constructive and wholesome properties such as wisdom, positive knowledge, selfless love, compassion, humility and unassuming general purity of intent; such that the product yielded by the execution of such an exertion will be desirable and beneficial to both the executor of that exertion and to associated recipients of the consequences thereof.

There prevail certain dispositions or tendencies whose incubation and eventual manifestation possess the viability for yielding wholesome or good karma. Such inclinations encompass purity and sincerity of any exertion; abstinence from undesirable desires such as exaggerated lust, avarice, vainglory; and the concerted adoption of wholesome dispositions such as non-judgmentality, generosity, selflessness, tolerance, forgivingness, perseverance, equanimity, temperance, fortitude, habitual assimilation of spiritual literature, devotion, meditation, just to mention a few. Generally, all that is canopied by the designation virtue has that viability for yielding positive karma. In Buddhism, the noble Buddha alluded to exertions that generate wholesome karma as skilful. By this denotation, a skilful event implies an activity that is performed and devoid of craving, resistance and delusion. On similar basis, as regards good karma, the bible also states:

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

(Galatians 5:16-18)

And also, it is stated:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

(Galatians 5:22-23)

Contrary to popular subscription, happiness cannot be harvested from exterior sources as implied by certain counterfeit social dictums. The seed that yields happiness must be germinated and fostered from inside; then and only then can its bountiful harvest overflow the bounds of interiority and exteriorise its delicious fruits. Therefore, the venerable Masters do not by any means advocate the express dereliction of one's social milieu and redundancy from one's role in society, in favour of asceticism in some cave in the Himalayan Mountains. Rather, the noble Masters intimate that individuals should uphold the status quo of their responsibilities; but that they should master the spiritual art of discharging one's functions in such a highly effective and efficacious manner, and in a fashion that generates productive consequences both for one self and to society at large.

Bad or unwholesome karma

Bad or unwholesome karma can be viewed as the totality of the causes, consequences and ramifications of a wilful, purposeful, intentional and deliberate activity, whether such an activity be of the character of a thought, speech, emotion or deed; and such that within the content of that activity is embedded destructive properties such as debauchery, wrath, attachment, vainglory, egoism, agitation, intolerance, vindictiveness, impatience, recklessness in conduct, callousness or antagonism to spiritual literature or spiritual practice. Thus, the fruits that accrue from such an activity are naturally undesirable and unbeneficial to both the executor of that activity and to others.

In Buddhism, events of the character of unwholesome karma are alluded to as unskillful, because such events are accompanied by craving, resistance and delusion, and by virtue of such accompaniment, they naturally beget anguish for their perpetuator. Thus, it is stated:

Bad karma is the spiritual debt one has accumulated for one's mistakes from all previous lives and this life. It includes killing, harming, taking advantage, cheating, stealing, and more. On Mother Earth, when you buy a house, you take out a mortgage from a bank. This mortgage is your debt to the bank. You pay every month for fifteen, twenty, or thirty years to clear your financial debt. In the spiritual realm, if you have bad karma, you may have to pay for many lifetimes to clear your spiritual debt.

ZHI GANG SHA, *The Power of Soul*

Unwholesome karmic causes and consequences pollute the spiritual ecology of the universe and induce alienation to its intrinsic harmonious rhythm; and hence, prompt discordance. Nonetheless, considering the efficacy of the intrinsic self-regulatory mechanisms of the universe, the agents of that discordance are speedily ejected from the spiritual ecology of the universe, and redirected to their originator; such that the perpetuator of unwholesomeness will certainly be the final recipient of its perilous products; reaping dissatisfaction and distress in due time.

The physiology of the human spiritual instruments is such that spiritual energy travels in a circular pattern within specific ethereal vehicles known as magnetic fields. The persistent generation or incubation of unwholesome karma poses as a hindrance to that natural pattern of energy circulation within these magnetic fields. This hindrance in the circulation of spiritual energy then ramifies onto the physical realm, and its symptoms become manifest as physical illness. Therefore, physical ailment can only be viewed as intense symptoms of spiritual discordance. The scenario regarding impediment in the circulation of spiritual energy in relationship to physical ailment can be analogised to a pipe conveying water.

Now, a water pipe is designed such that its internal cavity poses as the medium via which water can flow. Suppose the cavity of that water pipe is obstructed by a piece of rock; hence, hampering the smooth flow of water within that pipe. The eventuality is that, pressure will mount within the water pipe to the degree that the pipe would puncture, bursting out forceful splashes of water. Suppose the pipe is repaired by sealing the perforation engendered by the hindrance, without disposing of that solid rock that obstructs the internal cavity of the pipe, the inextricable implication is that, another puncture will be imminent, simply because the causation of the puncturing and puncture has not been addressed. Thus, the enduring remedy to this bewilderment would be to dispose of that solid rock within the pipe. Thus, to re-establish the wholesomeness of the pipe, the obstructing material must be disposed of, simultaneously as the puncture on the pipe is sealed.

Attempting to remedy physical ailments without tackling their causation is tantamount to the above illustration of sealing the perforation on the pipe without disposing of the primordial cause of the puncture. Therefore, the phenomenon of mind cure advocates that through the adoption of a constructive mental attitude, one can diminish the gravity of certain physical ailments. Nonetheless, mind cure is more effective for those who are well versed in mind culture than those who are not.

Now, on a recap of this phenomenon of karma proper, it should hereupon be accentuated that regardless of the apparent inconsequentiality of a thought, speech, emotion or deed; irrespective of its apparent triviality and regardless of space and time, its legitimate consequences must follow in due time. To imagine escapism from the consequences of one's deeds is entirely indefensible. Sooner or later, the proper magnitude of legitimate consequences must catch up with the individual. Thus, in the bible, it is stated:

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

(Galatians 6:7-9)

It will amount to unproductive self-deception to sow oranges and aspire towards reaping bananas. Such a possibility is simply implausible. Therefore, in the Buddhist Dhammapada, it is stated:

Not in the sky, not in the mid-ocean, or entering a mountain cave is found that place on earth where one may escape the consequences of an evil deed.

Below is a poetic depiction of the law of karma:

*The liberty to maketh what thy desireth is yours,
The necessity to desireth what thy maketh is invasive;
If thy desires and maketh that which is desirable,
the desirable shall be reaped;
But if thy maketh that which is undesirable,
the undesirable will desire to be desired by thee;
Undesirable though it might be because thy maketh.
To desire that which is spiritual is to desire the desirable,
And to desire the desirable,
will beseech salvation and eternal bliss.
An appetite for the undesirable is the causation of expatiation;
Therefore desire the desirable;
and detest the undesirable with all thy might.*

Differentiating good and adverse karmic causes

As regards the criteria for ascertaining the wholesomeness or unwholesomeness of a thought, speech, emotion or deed, it should be intimated that a deed is neither wholesome nor unwholesome by virtue of the deed itself, but by virtue of the consequences engendered by that deed. For instance, the noble Buddha enunciated that since the execution of an activity must inevitably result in consequences, it follows that the wholesomeness or unwholesomeness of a deed is determined by the product yielded by that deed. If the product of the deed is that of suffering and unhappiness, then it can be deduced that the cause that eventuated into that harvest was unwholesome. For instance, when a smoker is reaping the nasty fruits of lung cancer, it can then be deduced that the habit of smoking that yielded such a debasing harvest is unwholesome; and by virtue of that wholesomeness, deserves instant abandonment. By this same token, it can be adduced that when a vegetarian and spiritual practitioner acquires such qualities as equanimity, emotional stability, physical rejuvenation and general spiritual buoyancy, all of which are manifestations of the joyfulness and merits of rigorous spiritual cultivation, it can then be deduced that the cause that yielded such desirable fruits is itself wholesome. Therefore in the bible, it is stated:

By their fruit you will recognise them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad

fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

(Mathew 7:16-19)

No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognised by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn bushes, or grapes from briars. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

(Luke 6:43-45)

Herein lies the justification for one to abstain from judgemental inclinations, because with the exception of the noble Masters of the highest order, every mortal generates a certain dose of unwholesome karma; whether or not he is aware of that reality. Now, the proportion of that stock of unwholesome karma varies from mortal to mortal. How can one then hasten to broadcast the vices of someone else, when the scale of his own shortcomings is a case of utmost clemency? Thus, in the biblical scriptures, it is stated:

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

(Luke 6:41-42)

The time and effort utilised in assassinating other peoples' characters and broadcasting their deficiencies could be better expended in self-analysis, self-appraisal, self-scrutiny and the warranted rectification of one's own deficiencies. Failure to do so in favour of injecting mental and emotional injury upon others can only be regarded as *a pot calling a kettle black*, or a lion blaming a tiger for being a carnivore. More so, the scriptures and the noble Masters unequivocally instruct one to love one's counterparts; and judgmentality and love are entirely incompatible. In this respect, both the law of love and the law of karma unambiguously disapprove of uncharitable and unwarranted adjudication of another person's personal circumstances. Moreover, every soul has a unique mission to fulfil in this life, and the fulfilment of that particular mission warrants specific circumstances; and therefore, it would be indeed naïve or even ignorant to pass unsolicited verdict on another person's situation. What may appear to be miserable circumstances for a casual observer can turn out to be the circumstances necessary for someone to deliver one of the noblest missions assigned by heaven. Therefore, heavenly beings and human beings have very different perspectives about the nature of things.

Apart from wholesome and unwholesome karma, neutral karma is another type, which is so-called because the performance of certain deeds is of the nature as not to yield any moral consequence. For instance, eating, walking, seating etc. Nonetheless, neutrality only applies with respect to the deed itself, and not with respect to the manner and motive for performing the deed. For instance, while eating can itself be deemed morally neutral, insofar as eating is employed for the satisfaction of hunger, the eating of meat begets unwholesome karma; likewise eating for any reason other than for the satisfaction of hunger cannot be regarded as devoid of moral consequences; because it might result in the tendency of being passionate about food, and passion enslaves the individual; and such enslavement can only be viewed as strings of delusion; and by the noble Buddha's discernment, any deed which is accompanied by craving, resistance and delusion is deemed unwholesome and unskillful. Also, the implication for the exaggerated love of food can subject one to associated unwholesome deeds, such as gluttony; with attendant health repercussions.

A considerable deal of individuals adhere to the *partitio principil* that wholesome and unwholesome karma are reciprocally compensatory. Nonetheless, an energetic scrutiny of the law of karma divulges that such a hypothesis is simply a *reductio ad absurdum*, entirely wanting in tenability. This hypothesis equates the mechanism of karmic operation to the mechanisms by which an individual’s bank account is conducted. The format of a typical bank account might appear as follows:

DATE	DEBIT (£)	CREDIT (£)	BALANCE (£)
		1000	
	100		900
		600	1,500
	400		1,100
		2000	3,100
	700		2,400
		800	3,200
	100		3,100
			3,100

This hypothetical bank account divulges that when deriving a bank balance, debits are deducted from credits, resulting in either a positive or negative balance, such that the credibility or liability of the subject of the account will be a product of whether or not the bank balance is respectively positive or negative. In the above hypothetical example, the bank balance is a positive value of £ 3,100. Therefore, the individual’s credits have automatically compensated his debits without further accounting.

The mechanism of karma, however, operates in a more complex pattern than a straight forward reconciliation of wholesome and unwholesome deeds, like the reconciliation of the credits and debits of a bank account. Within the arena of karmic transaction, a wholesome deed cannot just directly compensate an unwholesome deed of almost equal magnitude. This is because unwholesome deeds generate what can otherwise be referred to as a network of primary, secondary, tertiary and ramified consequences, such that the performance of a wholesome deed of equal magnitude cannot reconcile the entire network of consequences generated by the unwholesome deed. For instance, five days of permanent starvation cannot be squared by five days of over-eating. The two episodes do not abide by diametrical compensatory compatibility. In other words, the summation of the consequences of one cannot be exactly reconciled by the summation of the consequences of another.

Also, suppose an individual is to attend two separate meetings on the same day but at different times. Now, suppose in one of the meetings, the individual arrives ten minutes earlier than the designated time of commencement of the meeting. Suppose for the second meeting, the individual arrives ten minutes late. In this case, his ten minutes early arrival in one meeting cannot compensate the ten minutes late arrival in another; neither can he reconcile the consequences arising from one and the other.

If wholesome and unwholesome karma were mutually and reciprocally compensatory, then some individuals would benefit from a positive karmic balance of wholesome karma, such that never again will they experience an instance of misfortune, as their positive balance of wholesome karma would surely protect them against such misfortune. In reality, wholesome and unwholesome karmic consequences coalesce, such that the individual experiences both fortune and misfortune in various proportions, and the disparity between individuals in this regard, determines the relative proportion and magnitude of fortune and misfortune experienced.

Categories of Karma

As regards categories of karma, the great Masters usually fragment them into three identifiable segments as follows:

1. Fate or destiny Karma
2. Stored karma
3. New or future Karma

An encapsulation of each of these will now follow:

Fate or destiny karma

The notion of fate karma provides a valid espousal for the concept of predestination. Throughout one's successive previous lives, a substantial amount of karma has been generated. Of that totality of one's previous lives' karma awaiting resolution, a certain fraction is extracted and apportioned to the bearer for this contemporary life; and it is this fate karma that patterns the course of one's life, as well as governs the conditions and circumstances that unfold from that pattern. No one can abscond from the dictates of fate karma. The prescriptive authority of one's fate karma deciphers one's country and city of birth, time of birth, gender, physiognomy, parents, associations, benevolent and malevolent tendencies, aspirations etc.

Stored Karma

Throughout one's previous lives, a colossal amount of karma has been generated and amassed in the sub-conscious mind. The volume of karma amassed in the sub-conscious mind is so exorbitant that it cannot possibly be consummated in a single lifetime. Therefore, for each successive reincarnation, a certain quantity of karma is extracted from the sub-conscious mind and precipitated upon the bearer, as the governing framework of his contemporary life. The remainder of the karma is stored in the individual's karmic depository, waiting to be apportioned piecemeal, during subsequent successive lives.

New or Future Karma

This depicts the sum total of karma fabricated during this contemporary life. Some of the karma generated during the current life might yield all or some of their legitimate results during this contemporary life; for instance, a child who is tenacious in academic pursuit might subsequently obtain convenient employment opportunities. On the other hand, the dispensation of deeds of altruism might not eventuate into fruition during this lifetime; but the individual can be fully assured that he will reap the full scale of those consequences during another lifetime.

Karma can also be segmented into another format, which is ancillary or perhaps complementary to the initial segmentation. Thus, it is common to speak of:

1. Instant Karma and,
2. Mass Karma

Instant karma implies that the deed executed has yielded an instantaneous consequence; for instance, when one drinks water, one's thirst is instantly quenched. Also, when one sanitises one's mouth through brushing, the instant effect is clean teeth, a tidy tongue and fresh breath.

Mass karma is the karma that prevails on a wider collective scale, and can apply to the entire globe, a particular continent, nation or region. This category can assume either a wholesome or an unwholesome character. Instances of mass unwholesome karma had been observed to unleash such agonising consequences upon humanity; for instance, in the form of seismic calamities and other natural disasters such as floods, drought, famine, and even aeroplane crashes etc. The gruesome massacre of animals also generates collective karmic retributions in the form of wars; and the resultant massacre of substantial numbers of people in battle grounds.

Past karma versus destiny

In recognition of the rigid mandate of the law of karma, it is sometimes postulated that human destiny is implacably confined and restricted by karmic circumscription; and that an irrevocable and unalterable capitulation to its dictates *in situ*, is the only option that be, as regards one's fate. Thus, fervent proponents of that conception equate karma to fatalism; some form of a mechanistic, preordained and deterministic arrangement, whereby the individual simply poses as a bystander or a helpless spectator, destined to passively submit to the currents of the karmic storm. While the fundamental tenet of that advocacy cannot be fulminated and entirely discounted on grounds that fate karma, at least patterns the overall course of the contemporary instalment of one's life, it can also legitimately and comfortably be emplaced that karma by no means amounts to fatalism or rigid determinism. Unlike a machine whose exertions and functions unfold in a rigidly predetermined manner as conditioned by its intrinsic mechanisms, a human specimen is endowed with inventiveness, imagination, freewill, reason and conscience; and a sagacious amalgamation of these capabilities can enable judicious management and modification of one's fate karma to a reasonable degree. Therefore it is stated:

Many people think there's nothing they can do to change their karma--it's preordained so why bother trying to change their situation? This is what scares people. These folks think that to accept the reality of karma one must be passive. It simply isn't true. Karma is active. We can--in the blink of an eye--make decisions that will shape our futures and transform the parts of our lives that are causing us unhappiness.

MARY T. BROWNE, *The Power of Karma*

Karma differs from fate or destiny because it encourages us to take an active role in life. The Law of Karma requires the spiritual seeker to follow the highest code of ethics.

TODD CRAMER, *Eckankar: Ancient Wisdom for Today*

Karmic modification implies that while the fundamental pattern of karma remains unalterable, the severity of one's karma can be modulated and diluted through the sagacious exercise of freewill, wisdom and effort. Freewill implies that humans can exercise a considerable deal of discretion in their choices, preferences and aspirations. These novel choices would then generate their associated consequences, which then coalesce with one's contemporary scheduled karma to generate a slightly different karmic admixture. If fresh choices are exercised with due prudence, this then has the tendency for lubricating one's karmic burden. The remodelling of one's karma can be met with enhanced grasping, against the backdrop of the following analogy:

Suppose a farmer cultivated lettuce on his agricultural terrain in the preceding season, and that for the contemporary season, the farmer craves to grow spinach. Having carried out a thorough preparation of the land, it once more becomes transformed into conducive conditions for cultivation. So, the farmer is

now geared towards the exercise of freewill by switching from the culture of lettuce to the culture of spinach. Nonetheless, enshrined in the subterranean stratum of the land are lettuce seeds, whose presence there is perfectly justified, considering that the farmer cultivated lettuce in the preceding season. So, as soon as the farmer starts sowing spinach seeds, the lettuce seeds embedded in the subsoil profusely sprout onto the topsoil. A ferocious battle now emerges between the farmer's freewill to cultivate spinach, and the pending consequences of his historically exercised freewill, which translated into the cultivation of lettuce; the consequences of which are in persistent interception of his current instalment of freewill.

It fully comes to the farmer's realisation that he cannot entirely secure escapism from the ramifications of his previous farming activities. The farmer then opts to shoulder the responsibility of deracinating the interjecting lettuce seedlings that are now colonising his spinach seedlings. He embraces this responsibility with consistency and endurance. Doubtless, the endeavour to deracinate all lettuce seedlings is an exceedingly painstaking venture; and yet, the farmer might not quite emerge victorious in deracinating all the intercepting lettuce seedlings; and some might even eventually mature. Even though the farmer has not emerged victorious in annihilating all these undesired lettuce seedlings, nevertheless, he has managed to diminish their germinative effervescence; and hence, has successfully diluted the ferocity of their invasion.

Just like the farmer, a pragmatic and efficacious strategy for modifying one's karma is the total desertion of unwholesome deeds and the unreserved embracement of wholesome endeavours, such as the acquisition of positive knowledge, a passion for wisdom, selfless love, compassion, meditation, devotion, unconditional service etc. The veracity is that, this package of nobility will then produce fresh fruits; and the aggregate of those delicious fruits can then mitigate the intensity and magnitude of the visible effects of one's historically sowed unwholesome deeds. Also, the adoption of this package of nobility can also accord one insight as to the exact nature of karmic unfoldment, and an understanding thereof can enhance one's ability to manage one's karma more durably and effectively; while also offering one the tools necessary for disabling the feasibility of one's currently matured unwholesome karma, in reproducing even more karma.

Therefore, the sagacious exercise of freedom of choice, rooted in positive knowledge, wisdom and love, constitutes the divine agency for modifying one's contemporary karma. Thus, in the biblical scriptures, it is stated:

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive...

(2 Peter 1:5-8)

Herein lies the secrets of salvation because amidst this domineering karmic entanglement, mortals can still be granted deliverance from the trammels of mundane illusion via divine grace. Grace is that unmerited favour granted humans by the supreme Lord, so that they may be redeemed from the penance of mundane illusion. Nonetheless, for the bestowal of grace and the consequent deliverance of one from the vortex of turmoil, one must render oneself receptive to that grace; and such receptivity entails permanent and irreversible dissociation from unwholesomeness. But the grace of God manifests amongst mortals via an objective, visible and recognisable channel. These God-nominated channels of divine grace are the high order living spiritual Masters such as Supreme Master Ching Hai, who are the specially dispatched errands of mercy by the Supreme one, to come and assist many a hurricane-battered soul, unfasten themselves from the captivity of self-manufactured penance. No mortal per se,

can expect to resolve his or her colossal karmic account to completion and gain liberation of the soul without a living Master: Therefore, Jesus stated:

...But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice...

(Mathew 9:13)

Therefore, even the loftiest degree of sacrifice cannot extinguish one's colossal depository of karma; especially unwholesome karma amassed over millions upon millions of previous lives. Thus, to be in receipt of redemption, one must alienate unwholesome deeds, embrace wholesome deeds and render oneself receptive to divine grace by obtaining initiation from a high calibre Master such as Supreme Master Ching Hai.

Karma and human relationships

A considerable variety of explanations have been deployed, as to how karma dictates the essential template of one's entire life. Thus, fate karma that determines and influences the fundamental format of an individual's current life, can be dubbed intra-human karma. Therefore, such karma can only be viewed as an implicit statement, or a quasi-explicit account of an individual's totality of demeanour, inclinations, preferences, aversions, aspirations and pursuits. Nonetheless, since thought, speech, emotion and deed constitute the four cardinal karmic instruments, means by which inter-human relationships are conducted and corresponding consequences thereof generated, it can thus be standardised that when an individual sets into action a thought, speech, emotion or deed, aimed at a designated recipient, upon the receipt of that thought, speech, emotion or deed, a karmic bond is automatically established between the dispenser of that karmic instrument, and the recipient thereof. This encapsulates the modality by which karmic bonds are established between humans, to yield what is referred to as inter-human karma; or between one species and the other, to generate inter-species karma; for instance, the karma between humans and animals, such as that between a pet and the pet owner. Therefore, an intricate mesh of karmic bonds is generated between individuals and among groups of individuals. Per necessity, these karmic bonds must be transacted among the agents involved, until the point of their total resolution; and the consequent attainment of karmic neutrality among them. Then and only then can these individuals be disentangled from their gregarious magnetic karmic field. Insofar as the karmic bonds between these individuals are not entirely resolved, the connections between them remain self-reinforcing, without possibility for any party to voluntarily withdraw therefrom.

This, in essence, is how karma generates an entangling matrix that bonds families, communities, society and even the entire world. The intensity, effervescence and solidity of the karmic ties among karmically connected parties, rests upon the magnitude of the energy that was consigned to that particular karmic instrument, which manifested that particular karmic bond. The greater the degree of ferocity and determination with which the said karmic instrument was executed, the stronger the resultant karmic bond.

As regards the scientific basis for asserting that karma constitutes the entwining matrix for connected parties, it should be recapped that the principal karmic instruments of thought, speech, emotion and deed are all manifestations of energy; or more vividly articulated, they constitute different versions of manifested energy.

Now, **the first law of thermodynamics or the law of conservation of energy** states that ***energy can neither be created nor destroyed, but can be changed from one form to another, such that the total amount of energy in the universe remains constant, merely changing from one form to another.*** Now

when an individual employs the medium of a thought, speech, emotion or deed to mould energy into the corresponding form, the form so generated derives vitality from the energy embedded in it. Upon the release of this form of energy, the designated recipient assimilates the consequences imbued within the form; yet, the form and its consequences remain active even after they have been assimilated by their designated recipient. Thus, when that particular form lands upon the recipient, a karmic bond is established between the originator thereof and the designated recipient. Nevertheless, the law of karma dictates that the originator or moulder of that form must be the final recipient of the consequences thereof. Then and only then is the form entirely consummated and the energy embedded therein prompted into neutrality. So long as the originator of that form has not yet assimilated the full consequences of the form, there remain a karmic connection between the originator and the recipient of the form; and the necessity for the settlement of karmic scores between karmically bonded agents will orchestrate an encounter or a scenario, which will provide a conducive occasion for the settlement of karmic scores among karmically bonded agents. Therefore it is stated:

Karma is one of those topics that many people know a little about, but it is often more complex than most people realise. The second law of thermodynamics is that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. On the universal scale, this is the law of karma. The law of karma basically states that every action has a reaction and whatever you do to others will later return to you, either in this life or a future life. Furthermore, ignorance of the law is no excuse. We are still accountable for everything we do, regardless of whether we understand it or not. We cannot escape it, even if we do not believe it. Therefore, the best thing is to learn how it works. If everyone understood the law of karma, we would all be living a happier life in a brighter world.

STEPHEN KNAPP, *Reincarnation and Karma*

As to the mode via which karmic energy rebounds to its originator, it can be enunciated that the conventional character of energy is to motion in a circular pattern like a whirlpool. Thus, upon the initiation of an energy imbued form, the energy assumes a concentric motion, proceeds to and attains the designated recipient; and finally, its initiator. Then and only then has the energy completed a full circular motion; and it can then resume its state of neutrality. Therefore, the originator of the karmically imbued energy is also its final recipient. In other words, the point of commencement of the energy form is also its ultimate destination. Hence the saying that: ***what goes around comes around***.

Relationships constitute the popular agency via which karmically-bonded parties resolve their karmic accounts. A relationship can be defined as a biological, social, commercial or other established connection that enables the parties so related to pragmatically engage in the discharge of mutual karmic indebtedness towards one another; such that the imperative for the discharge of such indebtedness becomes binding among all parties concerned. Prior to encapsulating on the nature of and types of karma-fashioned relationships, it would be useful to briefly acknowledge dimensions of human relationships.

The territorial morphology of the earth is such that it is segmented into continents, and within these continents are contained nations, which are further portioned into regions; and contained in these regions are cities, towns and villages. A city, town or village can only be regarded as a community; and a community can be viewed as an amalgamation of individuals and families; and a family is a composite unit comprising individuals of a common lineage. If this deduction is reversed in incremental sequentiality, then it becomes a keen axiom that individuals create families; and families constitute the units of communities; the fusion of communities produces cities and towns; and cities and towns aggregate into a nation; and a confederation of nations yield a continent; and the summation of continents results in the planet earth. Thus, there are karmic cords that emanate from respective

individuals, and weave their way via all these mediatory agencies, right through to the entire world and vice versa. More so, the individual also maintains express karmic connection with each of these agencies, for instance, an individual can be directly connected to his community, his town or city, his continent and also with the whole world. Conceive then of a colossal and intricate tapestry of karmic interwovenness, involving individuals, families, communities, cities, towns and villages at a national, continental and transnational level, to generate a gigantic karmic matrix, into which is embedded all of mankind; but within this aggregate karmic matrix is also contained sub-units of karmic pattern between various agents. Indeed, the complexity of this karmic network is of such insurmountable bewilderment that it suffices only to concede its prevalence. The critical point was to intimate that every mortal is fastened to this colossal karmic mesh. A handful of inter-human karmic categories will now be examined. The most common of such inter-human karmic bonds encompass the following:

1. Karmic interwovenness by lineage (family)
2. Karmic interwovenness by other previous lives associations
3. Collective karma

Each of these will in turn be examined:

Karmic interwovenness by lineage (family)

This category encompasses members of the same family in a previous life or succession of previous lives, who had established karmic connections; but for which these karmic connections were not entirely transacted and neutralised at the time of the cessations of their respective physical embodiments. Thus, when individuals from that family reincarnate, the unresolved and outstanding karmic forces orchestrate convergence among them, such that, those individuals would again become members of the same family. Nonetheless, in this case, the family structure might undergo a reconfiguration, as dictated by outstanding karmic transactions among the individuals. For instance, a woman's husband in a previous life might take birth in the family as the woman's son. This might for instance arise if in a previous life, the husband loved the spouse very deeply, genuinely and affectionately, but the woman had failed to reciprocate his very intense love; instead treating him in a half-hearted and pretentious fashion. Via the husband's rebirth as the son of the previous life's wife, the woman is compelled to nurture her son with unreserved maternal affection and love. In so doing, the woman is discharging her indebtedness to the love and affection she received from her previous life's husband, who is now her son.

In another episode, individuals who had maintained immense embitterment towards one another in a previous life might reincarnate as perhaps husband and wife, or father and daughter; to afford them the opportunity of exercising love towards one another; since it is only by means of love that their savage karmic bonds of mutual embitterment can be dissolved. Love depicts that one remedial agent that can dilute and even entirely dissolve the fetters of karmic bonds. The real mode of karmic transactions among members of a family is very complex indeed; and dependent on the specific karmic circumstances that typify connected parties. The outline provided here was designed to offer the rational basis and nature of such karmic transactions.

Karmic interwovenness by other previous lives' associations

Throughout successive epochs of one's previous incarnations, one had established a plethora of social, professional, commercial and other categories of karmic connections, with severalty of significance and variation of influence over one's life. Some of these connections were of an antipathetic character and yielded prohibitive discontent, while others might had been of fruitful character and resulted in settled contentment. Nonetheless, it so happens that not all of these established bonds had been resolved in the past and so, when souls with historically unresolved karmic connections reincarnate in the same era,

outstanding and unresolved karmic patterns and forces will orchestrate the convergence of such souls in some particular arena, perfectly suited for the resolution of those pending karmic indebtedness. For instance, if one was unfairly and harshly treated by one's employer in a previous life, the law of karma can then reverse matters in this lifetime, for which, one becomes the employer of his previous life's employer; and this would afford the previously harshly treated employee the occasion to effect amendments. So long as one's past karmic bonds remain unresolved with some individual or individuals, it is of utmost certitude that one will at some point, involuntarily and unconsciously be conducted into the orbit of that individual or individuals, so that outstanding karmic connections can be settled.

Affiliated to this category is the notion of soul mates, which had been professed with unconcealed piquancy. The concept purports that individual souls or groups of souls can subscribe to mutual consensus in fostering each other's spiritual evolution; and that such a group of souls with an agreement to evolve together is known as soul mates. It so occurs that in such instances, soul mates mostly turn out to be lovers or spouses; but soul mates might as well be connected via some other channel than that of lovers and spouses. Thus, when the karmic forces embodying their mutual obligations are activated, it becomes inevitable for circumstances to arise, which will enable the realisation of the mutual obligation that typifies such soul mates.

Collective Karma

Also known as mass karma, this karmic type is collective in character, transcends the personal karmic field of a single or handful of individuals; and can manifest upon substantial proportions of the population of a particular community, region, city, nation, continent or even the entire globe. An example might include economic opulence that might be enjoyed by a particular nation or nations; instances of anarchy and cataclysm in some nations. Seismic calamities and other disasters have been witnessed wiping out vast regions in many parts of the globe; and this in a sense can be viewed as the discharge of collective liabilities. Far too often, when seismic calamities beacon, there are always extraordinary instances of mysterious escapes. Such alleged escapes cannot be held as entirely mysterious, for those perceived fortunate escapees were not destined to discharge their liabilities via that channel. More often, those savaged by such calamities are those whose karmic liabilities assume the character of sudden death, prolonged anguish etc. Regardless of the whereabouts of such individuals prior to the walloping of such calamities, without any real conscious or voluntary exertion, they will by some means be hastened into such scenarios, so that they may be answerable to their liabilities.

Escalation in the transmission of fatal maladies such as HIV/AIDS, typifies the unleashing of global mass karma resulting from perpetual perversions in sexual conduct, and the chronic abuse of sexual energy on the astral realm.

En passant, it's worth underscoring the fact that every nation is entangled by a cluster of thought forms that are typical of the dwellers of that nation from generation to generation. Such a flourishing blanket of thought pattern dictates upon public opinion, values, traditions, and the distinctive mannerism of that nation. Every event, whether national or international, will usually be perceived in the backdrop of this gigantic mass of the nation's thought pattern, in a manner that yields distortions and prejudices. In other words, each nation perceives reality using the disfigured prism of its own thought pattern.

Therefore, in international matters that necessitate the interaction of many nations, such differential in national karmas generate disparities in the frequencies of vibrations among them, with the potential for degenerating into conflict and sometimes savage belligerency. What sociologists and psychologists allude to as culture can simply be termed collective karma by metaphysical investigators and spiritual scientists.

Far too often, the bystander hastens to cantankerously and strenuously petition that perpetrators and nurturers of malignance and other acts of savagery evade retribution and apparently bask in splendour, while those who appear to be the very epitome of sanctimony and morality seem to be deprived of their entitlement for remuneration. In the face of these casual observations, divine jurisprudence, by way of karma, they allege, has miscarried in a clearly visible manner. Such a stance can only be taken from a very superficial observation of the matter; for, the law of karma can never fail to adjudicate to the desired degree. If the issue of perceived injustice is gauged from a very parochial perspective, justice might appear to miscarry; but if examined from the entire scheme of affairs, taking every component into account; that is, from the totality of previous lives episodes of the individual under scrutiny, the observer might be compelled to detract from his parochial stance, and quickly side with reality.

The veracity of the matter is that, the so-called virtuous person might have transformed his life into virtuous inclinations now, but history might furnish a different testimony in that somewhere during his previous lives, that so-called virtuous person was party to some malaise, the acerbic fruits of which have now ripened for his assimilation. If he did not sow those seeds in the past, he would not be harvesting their consequences now. The virtuous person should never consider securing retirement from his sanctimonious inclination, for sooner or later, the corresponding fruits will ripen for him to harvest. Likewise for the vicious individual, legitimate consequences will mature in due time. Karmic justice can never abort. The timing of karmic materialisation might be unknown, but the utmost certainty is that, its mandate is of rigorous immutability. Miscarriage of karmic justice is entirely infeasible. No crafty detour can possibly release one from its tenterhooks. Only the grace of the Almighty, as copiously manifested via a living Master, can unfasten one from its monstrous grip. It cannot be done otherwise.

Karma and Reincarnation

When anyone enters the higher fields of knowledge, he is able to watch the operation of the law of karma and reincarnation. With clear vision, he is able to see its application to others as well as to himself. At that stage, everyone is able to see clearly his own past lives. He distinctively remembers them. It is then that he knows that he has lived before and he knows just where and when he lived. Also, he knows his karma earnings and losses. He can see exactly how the law of karma and reincarnation works out in his long succession of lives. How he came and went, times without number, always bringing with him his unsettled accounts. He remembers just how he suffered or enjoyed according to his debits or credits. He knows that always, he had to pay, pay to the uttermost. The great law is then not mere theory to him.

(Dr. Julian Johnson; The Path of the masters; p.g. 322-323).

The phenomena of karma and reincarnation are two intimately interwoven and inseparable concepts, whose respective mechanisms are of such interfusion that the occurrence of one automatically summons the other, in almost infinite dramatic episodes, in which karma necessitates reincarnation and reincarnation results in the generation of more karma; such that while those two terminologies and phenomena are not transpositional, their relationship, interdependence and mutual reinforcement can never be abrogated or mitigated. Now, in strict accordance with the rigour of the dependability, consistency and equitable adjudication of the immutable, infallible, and inextricable law of karma, each and every mortal must per necessity shoulder the full magnitude of the responsibilities of the summation of his four modes of karma, namely, **thought, speech, emotion and deed**. Also, each mortal is inescapably liable to the resolution of his fate, stored and future karma; and until the exhaustive resolution of even the minutest iota of all these categories of karma, the soul is forever held captive to its karmic entanglement. In view of this factuality, the legendary Jesus stated:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

(Mathew 5:17-19)

In this excerpt, the legendary Jesus unequivocally confirms that the law can neither be mitigated nor altered; and that even he himself as the personal representative of the supreme Lord is called upon to fulfil this law. The most critical sentence in that excerpt reads: *...not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the law until everything is accomplished...*

This can only be construed to imply that the exhaustive resolution of one's karmic account is the only available option, as even the minutest iota of karma in one's karmic account must be resolved. Thus, as regards the maturation of one's karmic consequences, one is beholden to reap the full spectrum of one's magnitude of meritorious transactions, while the compulsion to discharge the liabilities of one's unwholesome transactions is without reconciliation.

Jesus also intimated that while the occasion presents itself, one should hasten to resolve one's karma, before matters become exacerbated. Thus as stated:

Leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

(Mathew 5:24-26)

Now, during death, the soul simply disposes of the physical instrument and proceeds to the astral, mental or pure spiritual realms, where its instruments would respectively constitute the astral, mental and spiritual apparatuses respectively. If it proceeds to the astral abode, there it employs the astral body as its instrument of activity; if it proceeds to the mental body, there it employs the mind and its mental accessories as its apparatus of service; if it proceeds to the immaculate spiritual realms, there it requires no mediatory apparatus. It so happens with frantic sympathy that death overtakes many a soul, when the full scale of their karmic accounts have not been discharged. So when death beacons, the individual simply adheres to the natural impulsion of transference to another arena of action, in the invisible abodes; and upon departure to that novel sphere of action, the karmic account accompany its proprietor, just as a man can never dissociate himself from his own shadow; nor can a dog secure divorce with its own tail. Just as an individual emigrating to another country cannot fail to take along his bodily organs, such as his head, lungs, legs, liver, etc, so does the soul never fails to emigrate with its karma in the abodes of spirit. The emigrating individual may vacate his mansion and its accessories, since a mansion cannot be squeezed into an aeroplane; but as certainly as it should be, he is accompanied by his bodily organs. Therefore it is stated:

When we cross the gates of death, our karma is all we take with us. Everything else that we enjoyed in this life we leave behind.... Our karma is the only thing that will count in determining our rebirth, for our next life is nothing but the effects of our karmic tendencies that materialise in our perception.

TULKU THONDUP, *Peaceful Death, Joyful Rebirth*

My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot escape the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground upon which I stand. (Thich Nhat Hanh)

O youth or young man, who fancy that you are neglected by the gods, know that if you become worse, you shall go to worse souls, or if better to the better. In every succession of life and death, you will do and suffer what like may fitly suffer at the hands of like. This is the justice of heaven.

Plato

So, the fundamental rationale for reincarnation is that, when the soul permanently discards its instrument of physical expression; that is, the physical body, as it is the case during death; and proceeds to the ethereal realms, without having fully resolved its karmic account, that soul will ultimately be reborn on this physical realm, where such karma was generated, to afford that soul the opportunity to resume the resolution of its karmic account. Therefore, reincarnation can be viewed **as the process by which a disembodied soul takes birth in another body, to enable it resume continuity in the resolution of its unsettled karmic account.**

The phenomenon of reincarnation is unambiguously proclaimed even in the most famous religions of the world; for instance:

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone.

(Luke 9:18-21)

For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has ears, let him hear.

(Mathew 11:18-20)

The disciples asked him, "Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?"

Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognise him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

(Mathew 17:10-13)

Lord Krsna declares:

As the embodied soul continuously passes in this body from boyhood to youth, and then to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death.

(Bhagavad Gita 2:13)

Lord Krsna declares:

When one dies in the mode of goodness, he attains to the pure higher planets. When one dies in the mode of passion, he takes rebirth amongst those engaged in fruitive activities; and when one dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth in the animal kingdom.

(Bhagavad-Gita 14:14-15)

And an enquirer asked:

How do I know if reincarnation exists?

And Supreme Master Ching Hai responded:

We can know it, if we get to a certain level in our wisdom. For example, when we pass the second grade of high school, we know many laws of physics. We could experiment with them ourselves in our laboratory. Okay! If you practice the Quan Yin Method, or sometimes another type of method, you can get to the second plane, I mean the second plane of consciousness. There are many levels, the second is not the best, it is one of the worst. There are the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, etc. The higher the wiser, then you'll reach the highest. Now if you get to the second plane, you may know the past lives of yourself and of many people. Then you know reincarnation really exists. I can't prove it to you. Your eyes cannot see further than a hundred meters. But I can help you to develop your heavenly eye, then you can see further, many generations behind and ahead, and then you can prove it to yourself. Okay? But I tell you, this is not a good motive to meditate, because to know the past lives is not so good for you. Suppose you know that your wife was a tiger last life, then maybe you might have a nightmare. Yes? [Laughter] You would be thinking: "My God, what if she becomes a tiger again [Master and all laughed], or suddenly changes back to a tiger?" Yeah? It's no good. Out of God's mercy, He draws the curtain between our life and the past, because we have enough to deal with in this life. No?
(Supreme Master Ching Hai: <http://godsdirectcontact.us/com/teachings/AZreincarnQA.html>)

And an enquirer asked:

Do I have a soul? If not, how is reincarnation possible?

And Supreme Master Ching Hai responded:

Well, the Bible says you have a soul, so you must have one. (Master laughs) In reincarnation, it is not the soul that reincarnates actually. The soul lives forever; doesn't die, doesn't live, doesn't reincarnate. It is the experience of life, the integrating process between the physical and the spiritual when we are experimenting in the so-called life here and which attaches to the knowledge of our existence, that reincarnates. And if we do not detach ourselves from this kind of experiment that we call ourselves, we reincarnate. Actually, we don't reincarnate, we don't die, ever. We are just sick; we are just diseased with these incidents, with these disasters that happen to be attached to us. If we don't cut ourselves asunder from that, then of course, we are forever connected with that. The cause and effect keep changing, keep moving, keep adding, keep diminishing; and that's how we say we reincarnate. If we are not enlightened enough, that's it.

(Supreme Master Ching Hai: <http://godsdirectcontact.us/com/teachings/AZreincarnQA.html>)

And an enquirer asked:

Master, how can I remember my past lives, so that I can retrieve the knowledge I learned then?

And Supreme Master Ching Hai responded:

No, no, it's enough to learn in the present. Because in the present life, we haven't even learned enough yet. The past life is gone, and God has drawn a curtain between the past and present. It's for our own benefit. Therefore, it's not always necessary to trace the past. If we know too many things about the past, without having enough power to handle it, or to improve it concerning the present, then we will be in trouble. That's why people sometimes come into a possessed kind of state of mind. Or knowing too much of the past, they will be miserable living in the present. Suppose you know that in the past life, you were the sultan of such and such country, and now you are driving a taxi. Would you like it? Or suppose that you know that last life, you and your wife had some kind of bloodshed with each other. Now every time you see her, would you be afraid that she killed you last life? Can you ever be loving again to her? It would affect very much your family harmony, your personal relationships, as well as your own happiness. Is that not so? Therefore, we don't need to know the past. We take care of the present, and the future

will come beautifully. Meditate on your inner self, or choose whatever method you like. But I would only recommend the Quan Yin Method, because I know after all the studies, that it's the best; that it's the highest, the quickest, the safest. So we offer that to you, in case you want to gain more knowledge in the present, and for the future. And the past takes care of itself. The past is gone, the past we can just forget it.

(Supreme Master Suma Ching Hai: <http://godsdirectcontact.us/com/teachings/AZreincarnQA.html>)

And an enquirer asked:

Is reincarnation a choice of the soul or spirit, or is it something that will occur without choice by the control and devotion of the Higher Power?

And Supreme Master Suma Ching Hai responded:

We have choice and we do not have choice. For average people, there is no choice. For Buddha, Saints, Christ, they have a choice. They consciously chose their parents, date of birth, place of birth and date of death, of leaving the world. They were conscious before they came to the world. They came by choice. They came to save the world, to help some of their friends, to help those who prayed to them for their help. But other people are compelled to reincarnate by their own deeds, their actions throughout past lives. Our thinking and habits form themselves into an energy, and this forces us to come into an environment to fulfil and to eradicate, if necessary. This already-formed concrete energy has to be diluted.

(Supreme Master Suma Ching Hai: <http://godsdirectcontact.us/com/teachings/AZreincarnQA.html>)

As depicted by the above quotations, Jesus strongly hinted that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah; Lord Krsna proclaimed the legitimacy of reincarnation; Supreme Master Ching Hai supplies an explicit authentication of the phenomenon. These are all very great spiritual Masters of the highest spiritual order, whose pronouncements are devoid of second-hand intellectual hearsay and self-stylised metaphysical speculations; but whose accounts are founded upon authentic spiritual investigation, first-hand knowledge and direct experience of the exact mechanism of the phenomenon of reincarnation. The phenomenon is accorded due validity in such spiritual movements as the theosophical society, Urantia, Gnostic and all Eastern philosophies. Other mainstream religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism are tenacious proponents of this phenomenon of reincarnation.

Thus, when death overtakes an individual and the physical instrument discarded for good, the ethereal components of that individual proceed to the celestial realms, there to make an appearance before the grand adjudicator, together with the full record of every thought, speech, emotion and deed that he had ever exerted during the elapsing life. Even though some of these exertions were conducted in downright secrecy, such that while he was still in physical existence, nobody was aware of them, at that moment, secrecy is brought to abrupt disutility, as his entire karmic account is fully inscribed in his record and hangs over his head, in the like manner that a dog's tail is attached to its body. The account cannot be concealed or falsified. Based on the individual's record, the grand judge pronounces the verdict about the individual's current state of karma. The grand judge's verdict cannot falter in resolution, nor is the verdict subject to appeal. The verdict is immediate, categorical, impeccable and final; and even the recipient of that verdict is fully satisfied; even if it disfavours him. This is because in those realms, justice is clean and clear. Thus, the feasibility for difference in opinion is non-existent.

If the individual's life had been characterised by wholesome deeds, the individual might be assigned another physical birth, which will permit him to resolve any outstanding karmic transactions, and affords the individual the occasion to effect wholesome rectifications to his unhealthy tendencies; and by so

doing, ameliorate his karma. If the individual's life had been characterised by pronounced moral and spiritual degradation, punctuated by grave evil, the individual might be subjected to remedial punishment in one of the custodian chambers in hell or purgatory, prior to reincarnation; to impress upon his innermost consciousness that the wages of evil are weeping and teeth-gnashing. If the individual is subsequently discharged from hell and afforded the occasion to reincarnate, he will automatically shun those tendencies that called upon him unspeakable anguish. The impressions obtained from his experience in hell will be well engraved in his sub-conscious mind, and this will somehow involuntarily and sub-consciously offer him an inner voice, as regards the right choices in his contemporary instalment of reincarnation.

If the individual's life had been saturated with meritorious or wholesome deeds, he is assigned some form of a paradise or heaven, there to reap the full dose of his merits; and upon the consummation of those merits, he once more gets ready for yet, another episode of reincarnation on earth.

For a reincarnating soul, location, parents, time of birth and associated circumstances are all preordained by his karma. Following birth, the soul slowly awakens to physical consciousness, and begins resolving its apportioned karma, while simultaneously generating for itself fresh karma. The great Masters who themselves directly observe the unfoldment of this cosmic spectacle are only too conversant that the individual is a product of alternating embodiment and disembodiment, in monotonous and bewildering cycles of birth, death and rebirth.

The individual becomes enmeshed in this cosmic recycling scheme, until he ultimately beholds the good fortune whereby, the summation of his wholesome karma exceeds the summation of his unwholesome karma, as to permit him to meet a living Master, a real satguru, who, out of immense clemency and selfless love, sureties that individual's karmic liabilities and emancipates him from the arena of befuddling mundane tribulations. Encounter with the living Master of the higher order, is the ultimate and most significant occurrence in that individual's entire spiritual history of thousands upon thousands and even millions upon millions of years.

Some enquirers might be intransigently inclined to questioning why the soul does not resolve the entirety of its karmic account in the spiritual realms following death. Well, as to such an inquisition, it can once more be reiterated that since divine justice is immutable and infallible, it ordains that the soul observes the resolution of its karmic account in the exact circumstances in which such an account was acquired. In so doing, the individual can more readily and somewhat exactly appreciate the consequences and implications of his deeds, thus granting him an incentive to remodel his methods of pursuing spiritual evolution.

Within the arena of reincarnation, a male can reincarnate as a female; someone from one country can reincarnate in an entirely different nation or even a different continent. An individual can reincarnate in circumstances that are entirely diametrical to his previous reincarnation, all dictated by the interplay of his karmic forces. Indeed, the mechanism of reincarnation is very complex and even bewildering.

Some pragmatic cases of reincarnation have been diagnosed and documented by Dr. Stevenson, a professor of psychiatry, who for over three decades, assembled and examined countless testimonials of reincarnation; and contained in his book titled ***Twenty cases suggestive of reincarnation***. Dr. Ian Stevenson makes allusion to cases from numerous nations, encompassing Brazil, Alaska, and Lebanon; where children provided vivid recollections of their lives. Upon verification, the veracity of their previous lives reminiscence was affirmed.

It should hereupon be enunciated with due delight that the disciples of an ultimate high order Master such as Supreme Master Ching Hai can never again take birth in this earthly domain under the compulsion of karma. They will be liberated from the arena of anguish and delivered to the rapturous

abodes of eternal bliss. A disciple of Supreme Master Ching Hai can only again reincarnate if he voluntarily chooses to do so. But why would anyone choose to resume this distorted arena of earthly anguish, when the sublime splendour of the exalted realms is his? Why would anyone voluntarily succumb to the lacerating meanders of earthly life, when they have beheld the prerogative of eternally basking in ultimate divine glory?

En passant, it might appear relevant to encapsulate on the administration of karma in the spiritual realms, since the modality of this karmic administration is entwined with reincarnation.

The Lords of Karma and their duties

The Life of the Soul After Death



Emmanuel Ebah

Divine Spark Publications

Karma is administered by the **Lipika or Lords of karma**, who are inhabitants of the planet **Saturn**. Every human exertion, be it of the character of a thought, speech, emotion or deed, is documented by the administrators of karma on a reflective medium known as **akasha**. On this reflective medium is faithfully enshrined the full spectrum of one's historical, contemporary and subsequent lives' records, generally alluded to as the **akashic records**.

The proportion of stored karma to be extracted and apportioned to an individual during a particular episode of reincarnation is determined following the attainment of mutual consensus between a representative of the karmic Lords, an angel constructor of the human finer bodies and the higher self of the reincarnating individual. Upon the attainment of that mutual consensus, the individual is then apportioned the mutually consented dose of karma.

As the individual's life unfolds, during a particular reincarnation, the dose of apportioned fate karma can be diminished or increased as deemed conducive to the reincarnated soul's evolution. Generally, a soul that has subscribed to hastened spiritual progression and resultant spiritual emancipation, with the ultimate attainment of perfection, can request the augmentation of its fate karma, with potential for supplementary predicaments for that soul. In this scenario, such a soul voluntarily opts to resolve its karmic account sooner rather than later, so as to hasten its spiritual emancipation. Such a soul must necessarily display considerable bravery to confront the challenges aroused by the pursuit of hastened spiritual evolution and its associated emancipation. Nonetheless, for disciples of a high calibre Master such as Supreme Master Ching Hai, the karmic burden orchestrated by accelerated spiritual emancipation is diluted and rendered comfortably bearable by the Master. Without a capable and fully capacitated Master of the very highest order such as Supreme Master Ching Hai, the spiritual path can be quite flexuous with intricate meanders and treacherous potholes, such that venturing onto this path without the corroborated dexterity of a high calibre Master can be tantamount to driving a car on a night with pitch darkness, without headlamps on the car, such that the potential for mishaps cannot be entirely ruled out.

During the period intertwining death and reincarnation, a soul may respectively observe repose in the mental and astral dimensions in an order suitable to the soul's circumstances. The construction of the ethereal bodies that serve as the soul's instruments and agents of expression, is conducted by the angelic hierarchy; and the quality of the ethereal body so constructed, is determined by the reincarnating soul's karma. The vibrations emanating from the permanent atoms of the soul are then discharged onto the abode of required manifestation, thus inducing compatible frequencies of vibrations that are in unison with the individual's karma. Thus, the relevant ethereal body is constructed on each dimension. The soul initially indwells the mental apparatuses, succeeded by its indwelling of the astral and etheric instruments; before finally taking habitation in the physical body; thus concluding the reincarnation process.

How to perform Karmaless Action

A human specimen is a dynamic entity subject to the incessant exertion of creative impulses that translate into thought, speech, emotion and deed. *De rigueur*, the very fact that one is living automatically disables and dispels the notion of inaction. Thus, total abstinence from action or absolute passivity is an entirely infeasible concept. To advocate the cessation of action as a strategy for pursuing and procuring spiritual emancipation is tantamount to the tedious invocation of double Dutch. That inaction is alien to intrinsic human properties is underscored by the Bhagavad-Gita, which states:

Man does not attain freedom by abstaining from work or by renouncing work.

(Bhagavad-Gita 3:4)

It is not possible for anyone to remain inactive even for a moment as the gunas drive everyone hopelessly to perform actions.

(Bhagavad-Gita 3:5)

Action is superior to inaction. Without action, even the maintenance of the body is not truly possible.

(Bhagavad-Gita 3:8)

But it has been solidly established that the performance of action automatically eventuates into consequences, and the deeds and their correlated consequences and ramifications are accorded the appellation karma. But since Karmalessness entails action devoid of retributions or recompense, how then can one perform action that automatically generates consequences (karma), and at the same time remain karmaless? This appears to be a very strenuous conundrum.

An action is deemed karmaless, if that action is executed by its performer for no other reason than for the sake of the action itself, and for which the executor of the action is not desirous of reaping the fruits yielded by such an action. Such an action is then regarded as being performed with total detachment. Performance of action in the mode of detachment impels that the action be devoid of the fetters of vainglory and egoism. Rather, the action should be transacted in an entirely selfless and dispassionate manner, characterised by total detachment; and should be geared towards enhancing the welfare of others. If a deed is discharged in line with these implied parameters, it can then be considered as being of the karmaless category.

Thus, the execution of a deed would generate karma, insofar as the executor of the deed keenly envisages the fructification of the deed, with the passionate expectations of reaping the fruits yielded by the deed. For, a deed performed in this mode beholds the likelihood for fulfilling the criteria sanctioned by the noble Buddha for ascertaining the susceptibility of a deed in generating karma. By the noble Buddha's discernment, a deed would generate karma if the execution of that deed is characterised by **craving, delusion and resistance**. In diametrical terms, it can therefore be deduced that a deed performed in a manner devoid of craving, delusion and resistance can thus be qualified as karmaless.

But the Bhagavad-Gita supplies enhanced clarity on the matter by sanctioning that an individual can secure freedom from wholesome or unwholesome karmic generation by performing action solely as his legitimate duty, entirely devoid of attachment, and in total disregard of its fruits. Thus, it is stated:

True Karma Yoga consists of performing one's duty with detachment and remaining even minded in success and failure.

(Bhagavad-Gita)

Thus, it is acutely observable that both the Bhagavad-Gita and the noble Buddha are in perfect agreement as regards the techniques for attaining the state of karmalessness.

It can thus be etched that the execution of a deed would be prone to the manufacture of karma, if the executor thereof is desirous of the prospective fruits to be yielded by the deed; and by virtue of that desire, the deed is deemed to have been discharged in the mode of attachment, vainglory, craving and delusion.

Thus, Supreme Master Ching Hai stated:

When we regard ourselves as merely a tool arranged by God, then it's fine. However, very few people can do this... many people feel great when they've done a little meritorious act, and boast around using this merit as something to be proud of. Such deeds are performed not out of love, but out of the "ego" to earn praise from others and show people how nice they are. They really aren't loving at heart so they don't understand themselves. If we can do good deeds without thinking that they're good deeds, and without thinking much about doing them for ourselves, then we're truly doing justice to ourselves... so I've

sometimes said, "Doing charity is not the only good thing; when our spiritual practice is good, everything we do is good." You do charity without thinking that you're doing charity. You don't think that you're great. You can't wait to hide yourself, and dread being praised. You don't think that it's your merit alone; you don't think that you have any merit at all! We were born without a single thread on our body so how can we claim any merit? Even the money is merely rotating among us all, as it too belongs to God. Nothing belongs to us! So how can we be proud of anything at all?

(Supreme Master Ching Hai: Japan, October 1, 1991)

Therefore, in the bible, it is also stated:

Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

(Mathew 6:1-4)

Thus, those engaged in altruistic deeds should refrain from deliberately situating themselves as to seek publication by the broadcasting media; otherwise, they would be viewed as employing charity as an agency for procuring eminence and endearment; and hence amplifying their sense of vainglory. In such a scenario, the recipients of such apparent deeds of altruism can only be perceived as victims of one's ego aggrandisement strategy, such that those apparent deeds of benevolence will be libellous to both their charlatan benefactors and to their recipients.

On the other hand, the execution of action as one's legitimate duty, for the sake of duty and duty alone, has the likelihood for yielding karmalessness. Such deeds should be performed with unassuming dedication, devoid of attachment and vainglory, and without display of intense passion towards harvesting their prospective yields. Such deeds are bound to be karmaless, since they are compatible with the harmonious and orderly rhythm of the universe, and by virtue of that compatibility, they are adherent to the preservation of the wholesomeness of the universe. Karma is only a mechanism for safeguarding the wholesomeness of the universe; thus mobilising restorative mechanisms whenever an alien agent such as an unwholesome deed impinges upon that harmonious rhythm and wholesomeness. Since a karmaless deed is in tune with the wholesome rhythm of the universe, when such a deed is disbursed, no restorative and rectificational mechanisms are called for, hence karmalessness. This explains why the noble high order Masters such as Supreme Master Ching Hai have achieved the state of karmalessness, because every transaction executed by such a high order Master is geared towards the preservation or enhancement of the wholesomeness of the universe. During the process of attaining mastership, these wondrous and supernormal specimens have entirely annihilated the state of egocentric individualism. Though the noble Masters still behold the property of individualism, such is underpinned by wholesale selflessness.

Karma and the disciples of the Great Masters

The attainment of the state of karmalessness constitutes a cardinal objective of any fervent disciple of the noble Masters. Initiation kindles the mechanism of enlightenment, and this automatically yields an impulse for the fostering and preservation of that enlightenment. The sustainable adherence to that impulse via rigorous and consistent meditation accelerates the pace of enlightenment, while simultaneously amplifying its magnitude. This can then eventuate into the disciple's attainment of the

state of karmalessness. As the magnitude of the enlightenment process amplifies, the connection between the disciple and the Master intensifies, and the maintenance of such an intimate relationship with the Master can then culminate in the disciple's attainment of the state of karmalessness. Intimacy of the disciple with the Master does not imply physical proximity between the former and the latter, but rather, the degree and vividness with which the disciple is sincere and the rigour and solemnity with which s/he conducts meditation practices, coupled with the austerity with which s/he complies with the precepts of a righteous life. It's now prompting to examine the modality by which a disciple of the noble Masters can behold the sanctimonious state of karmalessness.

The disciple is to undertake every task, exercise every mental process, speech, emotion or deed in the name of the Master. Disbursing exertions in the name of the Master does not simply imply compliance with the code of righteousness constructed by the Master, as an invaluable safeguard to the disciple's spiritual cultivation. Indeed, it transcends adherence to the conventional moral criteria for discipleship. It implies that whenever one is to disburse a deed, exert a thought, speech or emotion, one must pause prior to the corresponding exertion, and vigorously contemplate the Master in his/her innermost being, to the degree that it appears as though the Master is physically present on the scene of the exertion. The disciple is then to scrutinise the impending deed, so as to ascertain its decorum; and to establish as to whether the deed meets of the Master's endorsement. If reasoning, logic and conscience uphold the moral merit and spiritual productivity of the impending exertion, and one is entirely satisfied that the deed deserves and qualifies for the Master's authorisation, then the disciple can proceed to disburse the deed. Nonetheless, just performing a deed on grounds of moral acceptability per se does not automatically avail to karmalessness. The deed must be disbursed as though one were executing the instructions of the Master, such that it would appear as though it is the Master in person who is actually disbursing that deed via the disciple as an instrument of service. Then and only then will the deed yield zero karma for the disciple. This is because the noble Masters themselves have transcended the arena of karma, and by virtue of that transcendence, the Masters have become karmaless. When the disciple then wholeheartedly and profoundly attunes to the Master and discharges every function as though s/he is rendering service to the Master, it can be construed that it is the Master who is actually disbursing the deed; the disciple posing only as an agent via which the service of the Master is manifesting. That explains why in the biblical scriptures, it is stated:

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy.

(1Peter 1:14-16)

So, the disciple is to dedicate every disbursement as service to the Master, such that a deed which is not endorsable by the Master cannot possibly be discharged. The disciple posing only as an agent of the principal, who is the Master, and when an agent executes the instructions of the principal, the responsibility rests upon the principal, such that the agent cannot also execute a deed that has not met of the principal's approval. For instance, when one works for a certain organisation and one discharges one's functions in full compliance with company policies and procedures, one cannot be held liable to any unfavourable impacts that are begotten by one's company-instructed duties. Nonetheless, if one disburses one's duties in acute contravention of company policies and procedures, there is a likelihood that one might shoulder liabilities arising from one's unendorsed conduct. Thus, the disciple is to utilise his mind, heart and emotion as though they are the borrowed belongings of the Master, to be handled with meticulousness and prudence exactly as its proprietor would require it to be used. The adoption of this noble approach of always at the service of the Master would yield enormous benefits for the disciple. For, then, it becomes a logical compulsion for the disciple to engage in deeds, insofar as they

meet of the Master's unequivocal endorsement. And every deed endorsed by the Master must be wholesome and of the status of moral correctitude. The disciple will then secure safeguard from lapsing into reckless blunders, which embody the likelihood for retarding his spiritual evolution.

It should hereupon be elucidated and tenaciously accentuated that the Master derives neither benefits nor gratification from the subordination of the disciple, nor does the Master crave to confiscate the individuality of the individual. The disciple retains his individuality and independence as usual, and any guidelines issued by the Master are designed to uphold the welfare of the disciple, so as to hasten and lubricate his spiritual evolution and ultimate emancipation. In the like manner that a doctor never sequesters the liberty of the patient, so also does the disciple maintain the full spectrum of his discretionary latitude, as a free and responsible agent. If the patient voluntarily succumbs to the suggestions and prescriptions of the doctor, then it is because the patient is conversant that such suggestions and prescriptions are cardinal for his speedy recovery. Therefore, the doctor has got utterly nothing to lose if the patient was not a patient at all.

At this juncture, it is deemed befitting to assert that the most calamitous and vexatious stumbling block on the spiritual path is the abrupt overshooting of the ego, mounting an unwarranted barricade in one's expression of unconditional love, with at least provisional detrimental consequences on one's spiritual development. Adopting the inclination of habitual invocation of the Master's venerable presence in every minute detail of one's daily transactions constitutes an efficacious mechanism for demolishing the sporadic and unwarranted episodes of egocentric paroxysm that occasionally impinge upon one's personal arena.

One intimation that necessitates elucidation here is the fact that the venerable Masters are karmaless. Yes, during the process of becoming a Master, these noble ones have entirely consummated their karmic liabilities to utter obliteration. The Masters have traversed the arena of karma, and have ascended to the dimensions where love and love only prevails. The Masters discharge their noble duties in direct liaison with God, and in a manner devoid of any mediatory agents. All the duties and responsibilities of the Masters meet of God's approval, and are in perfect unison with the divine plan for the universe. If the Master does transact some karmic liabilities, then it is the karma of the Master's disciples. For out of copious clemency and inestimable selflessness, the Master assumes a portion of the disciple's karma.

As regards the administration of karma, one issue that ignites excitement and acclamation is the fact that ***when one becomes a disciple of the venerable Masters, his karma ceases to be administered by the Lords of karma and their agents; as one's karmic record is transferred to the Master. From then henceforth, one's karma is administered by the compassionate hand of the Master, unlike the Lords of karma for whom, by the very nature of their job, leniency is alien to their scheme of operation.*** The Master possesses the discretion to administer the disciple's fate and future karma as s/he deems appropriate for the disciple's welfare, and as favourable to his spiritual evolution. Nonetheless, as a rule, the individual's fate karma, that is, the karma that generated his current instalment of reincarnation is not to be altered. Usually, in the Quan Yin method, during initiation, Supreme Master Ching Hai deletes the disciple's colossal volume of stored karma contained in the sub-conscious mind. The disciple is then expected to adopt a life of sanctity, by adhering to the precepts, coupled with daily meditation, to evade the generation of future karma.

Therefore, a spiritual practitioner is effectively and simultaneously disposing of both fate and future karma, and this underscores why a disciple of the venerable Masters should scrutinise his personal demeanour with unreserved rigour, so as to retract from the generation of future karma. The Master cannot permit the accumulation of future karma beyond a certain threshold. The container must be

tidied up. If the disciple deems it fatiguing to shoulder his karma, he can be assured with unflinching certitude that the Master is rescuing the situation as much as permitted by possibility, and that this marks the final battle of his incredibly prolonged spiritual career. He can then summon the last requirement of bravery and a little more endurance, to confront his final noble challenge, before he finally secures liberation to the realms of eternal splendour.

The karma of killing animals and eating meat

The Ladder of Evolution on the planet Earth



The higher a species status of evolution on the evolutionary scale, the severer the consequences associated with killing it; and also of cooking, serving, selling or eating its flesh.

According to the Garuda Purana (Vedic scriptures), the planet earth is inhabited by 8,400,000 species of living creatures, each of them endowed with that Divine spark of light, and battling ever hard to evolve onto higher and more refined forms of life.

Of this multiplicity of species that inhabit the planet earth, with the exception of the *devas*, humans possess the highest evolutionary status, followed by animals, then birds, fishes, worms, vegetables, metals and stones. By the standard order of evolution, animals automatically evolve as humans, while humans who had displayed blatant abuse of their human dignity may degrade into animal status; for instance, if he had adopted the mentality of a dog, the dictates of the law of karma would compel him to take birth as a dog in a subsequent reincarnation; to afford him the opportunity to fulfil his dog-like mentality.

Thus the Bhagavad Gita states:

If he dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth in the animal kingdom (Bhagavad Gita 14:15)

Thus, be it humans, animals or birds, the sum total and nature of a species' present life circumstances, is dictated by the aggregate of the consequences of its previous lives' deeds, emotions, words and thoughts; and the proportion of such consequences apportioned to it in this lifetime. This in essence, can thus be regarded as the species' karma.

The very pertinent matter to grasp is as follows: When a soul is embodied in a particular form, whether human, animal or otherwise, that embodied soul is allotted a particular proportion of karma, as dictated by its previous life or lives; and the duration of the soul in that particular body is also predetermined prior to its embodiment in that particular body. The proportion of karma and the soul's preordained duration in a particular body is compatible with the resolution of such karma, in that particular body, before forging ahead on the evolutionary ladder.

The termination of a creature's life when its apportioned karma has not yet been consummated and when its allotted duration of life has not elapsed is an encroachment and disruption of its evolutionary program, and an undue sabotage of its Divine-endowed evolutionary prerogatives. This generates very severe negative karma for the killer of the creature and the consumers of its flesh. According to the Manu-Samhita, a book of religious and civil code, the following parties would be plagued by severe deadening karma, in the massacre of animals and the feasting on their flesh:

He who permits the slaughter of an animal, he who cuts it up, he who kills it, he who buys or sells meat, he who cooks it, he who serves it up, and he who eats it, must all be considered as the slayers of the animal. There is no greater sinner than that man who, though not worshipping the gods or the manes, seeks to increase the bulk of his own flesh by the flesh of other beings.

(Manu-Samhita, 51-52)

In effect, those who kill animals and consume their flesh would be plagued by the following misfortune:

At the personal level, the individual is tormented by all manners of disease; he pollutes and degrades his emotional, mental and spiritual ethereal constituents; he obscures his Divinity and shrinks his wisdom and love; his conscience is dejected; he is shun by the Angels and the Gods; he may descend into the kingdom of the demons (Hell) after death; he may be born as an animal such as a goat, tiger or lion in his subsequent reincarnation.

At the collective level, the killing of animals and the consumption of their flesh results in all manners of environmental degradation and species extinction, escalation in world hunger, societal degradation, conflict and wars, global pandemics such as mad cow disease, resource depletion etc.

Indeed, one of the domains where the unrestraint massacre of animals generates undesirable mass karma for humanity is war.

The clairvoyant can perceive that the environment around slaughter houses is enveloped in a colossal and viscous mass of negative energy, bubbling with fumes of blood and boiling with infuriated and agonised animal souls, which are energetically petitioning about their unjust and barbaric massacres. By the dictates of the law of karma, such a gigantic cluster of negative energy rebounds on society, constituting a perfect recipe for wars; where humans pathetically slaughter each other in battle fields. Given below is an assortment of injunctions that warn against the lamentable consequences of barbarism towards animals and other sentient beings:

Not killing or otherwise harming other living creatures is of obvious benefit for them. Less obvious is the fact that refraining from harming others is equally advantageous for ourselves. Why? Because of the Law of Karma: As ye sow, so shall ye reap. When you kill, or cause others to kill for you, in order to satisfy your desire for meat, you incur a karmic debt, and this debt must eventually be repaid. So in a very real sense, the keeping of a vegetarian diet is a gift which we give to ourselves. We feel better, the quality of our lives improves as the heaviness of our karmic indebtedness diminishes, and we are offered entrance into new subtle and Heavenly realms of inner experience. It is well worth the small price you have to pay!

(Supreme Master Ching Hai; The Key of Immediate enlightenment, sample booklet; p.g.56)

If we kill someone for food, we will be killed for food later, in some other form the next time, the next generation. It's a pity. We are so intelligent, so civilised and yet most of us do not know the cause of why our neighbouring countries are suffering. It is because of our palates, our tastes, and our stomachs. In order to feed and nourish one body, we kill so many beings, and starve so many fellow human beings. We aren't even talking about the animals yet. Understand? Then this guilt, consciously or unconsciously, will weigh down upon our conscience. It makes us suffer from cancer, tuberculosis and other kinds of incurable diseases, including AIDS.

(Supreme Master Ching Hai; The Key of Immediate enlightenment, sample booklet; p.g.69-70)

Also, it is stated:

But whoever sacrifices a bull is like one who kills a man, and whoever offers a lamb, like one who breaks a dog's neck;... They have chosen their own ways, and their souls delight in their abominations; so I also will choose harsh treatment for them and will bring upon them what they dread.

(Isaiah 66:3-4)

Also, it is stated:

Those who are against the supreme personality of God or are very proud, or those who are in ignorance of the intricacies of Vedic religious principles think themselves very advanced, and kill animals without hesitation to eat them. However, they do not know that the same animals will eat them on their way to hell as soon as they die.

(Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.14)

Also, it is stated:

No one can create a living being, despite all advancement of material science and therefore no one has the right to kill a living being by one's independent whims. The material world is a place always full of anxieties, and by encouraging animal slaughter, the whole atmosphere becomes polluted more and more by war, pestilence, famine and many other unwanted calamities.

(His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acarya of the Hare Krishna movement).

Also, it is stated:

In this age, the propensity for mercy is almost nil. Consequently, there is always fighting and wars between men and nations. Men do not understand that because they unrestrictedly kill so many animals,

they must be slaughtered like animals in big wars. Slaughter houses are maintained without restriction, and therefore every fifth or tenth year, there is a big war in which countless people are slaughtered even more cruelly than the animals. These are reactions brought about by unrestricted animal killing in the slaughter houses and by hunters in the bush.

(Srila Prabhupada in purport to Srimad-Bhagavatam)

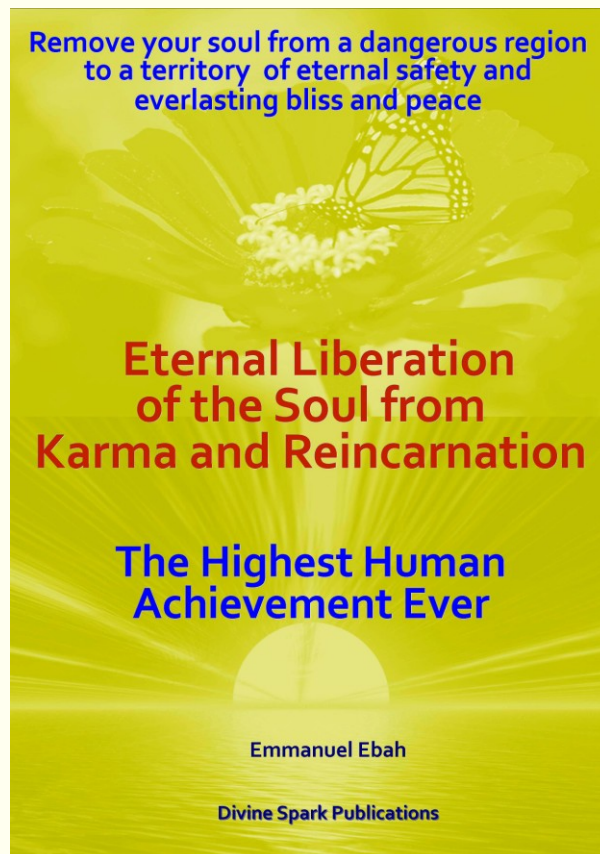
As a associated declaration of his rigorous ahimsa (non-violence) stance, Lord Buddha issued the following enunciation:

For the sake of love of purity, let the Bodhisattva refrain from eating flesh, which is born of semen, blood etc. To avoid causing terror to living beings, let the disciple, who is disciplining himself to attain compassion, refrain from eating meat...It is not true that meat is proper food and permissible when the animal was not killed by himself, when he did not order to kill it, when it was not especially meant for him...meat eating in any form, in any manner and in any place is unconditionally and once and for all prohibited. Meat eating I have not permitted to anyone, I do not permit and will not permit...

Lord Buddha (Lanka vatara Sutra)

Therefore, for the sake of your own health, for the sake of your soul, for the sake of the animals, for the sake of the environment, for the sake of peace, for the sake of compassion towards suffering sentient beings, for the sake of alleviating world hunger, for the sake of avoiding undesirable retributions, for the sake of Respect to God's creation, for the sake of the planet and the entire universe, please consider desisting from flesh consumption with immediate effect, and become an organic vegan today, before it is too late.

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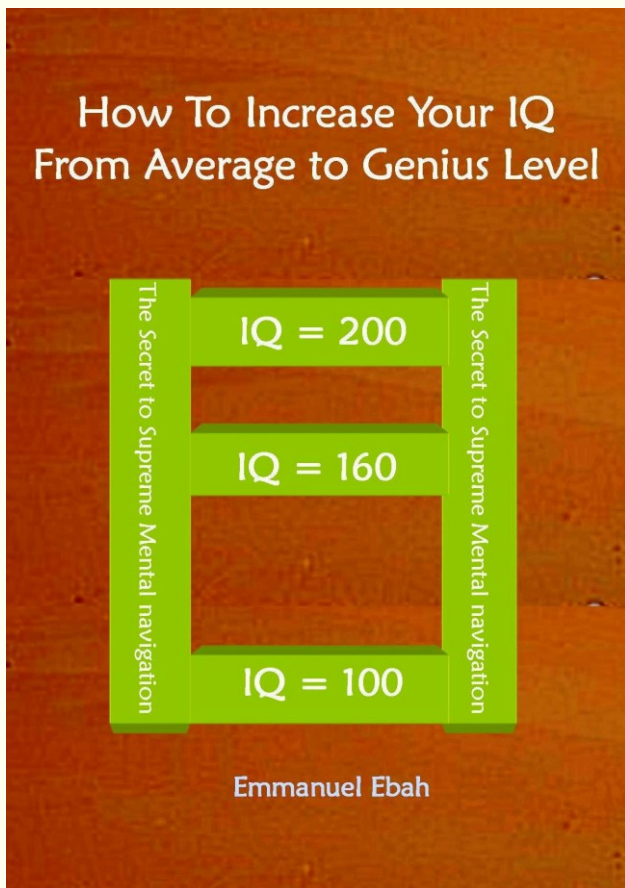
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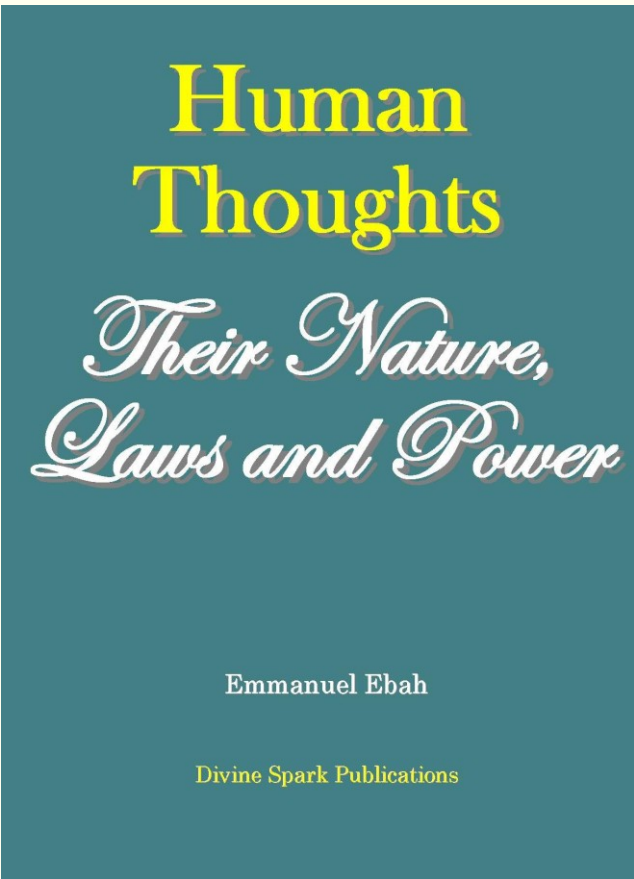
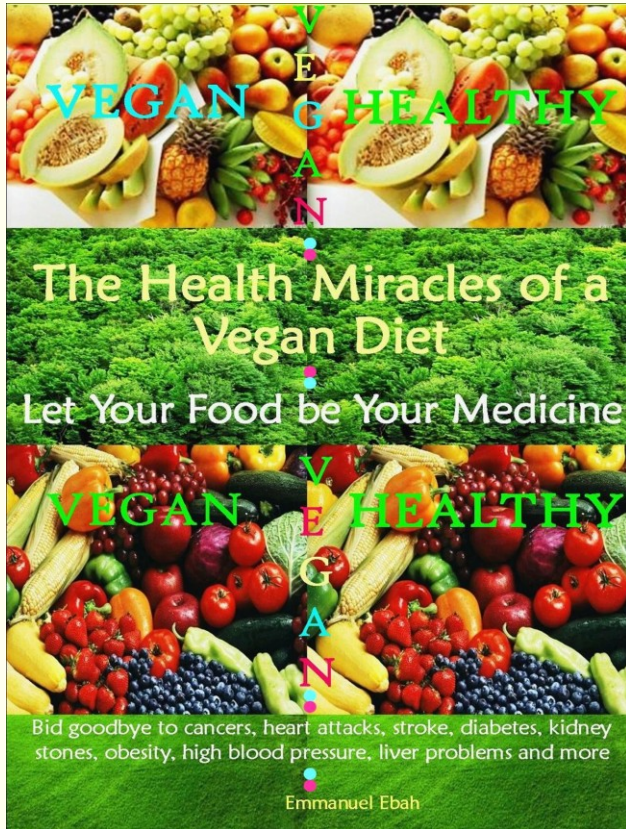
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