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Karma, Dharma and Rebirth

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*All things arise and cease
due to causes and conditions*

What do you think? What does it mean? What can be done?

Karma, Dharma and Rebirth

by Bing Escudero

The universe moves in a ceaseless cycle of periods. Everything comes and goes; and what goes, comes again. The unmanifest becoming the manifest in an eternal cycle of being and becoming. In this process, there is birth and rebirth, from the macrocosmic to the microcosmic. Consciousness unfolds, and form evolves. From lowest matter to highest spirit, a higher consciousness advances to higher forms. Thus there is growth, there is development.

In our humanity, it is the perfective process: from unconscious perfection, to conscious imperfection, onto conscious perfection. In accord with the twin laws of karma and rebirth, humans are born and reborn; from life, to the after-life and, to another life again on earth.

How many times? As many as there shall be and as are necessary until that great teaching is fulfilled: *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* And the same Teacher repeats and confirms: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the divine kingdom.*

We are born again in spirit as well as in a physical body, returning to earth, learning our karmic lessons, until our humanity realizes its divinity of the kingdom where we originally belong.

What is more, we are born, again and again, as theists, agnostics, atheists and non-such believers. Christians are born again, and again, in other reincarnations, as Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims and in other faiths as well, and conversely, until the great spiritual lessons made available in the world are learned and put into practice. If at least one faith truly succeeds in us, we shall then have come to live, accept and respect all faiths, where the rest of humanity draw forth the same related spiritual ideals for their own special needs.

In our human imperfection, karma is incurred. The perfection of our essential spiritual nature or *dharma* is our divine inheritance, and when invested in our activities on earth, karma is resolved. (See box, *Laws of Good Karma.*)

The physical body is an animal by its nature. It is sacrificed in the service of the human spirit aspiring toward

divine realization. Unfortunately, animal sacrifice is misunderstood in some religious rituals that take spiritual metaphors literally.

Also, rebirth as reincarnation is not transmigration, the false belief humans are reborn as an animal, a plant or a rock. As an apple seed returns to the soil to grow again into an apple tree, so does the human seed or soul return to earth to grow up again as a human being. The word *reincarnation* means, *again to come into (human) flesh*. It is the cyclic law of growth and maturity, death and rebirth. It is accompanied by its twin law of karma or justice.

Karma accounts for the apparent injustice that appears to befall our lot on earth. Haven't we brought up these questions before? Why are some people born into fame and fortune, while others are born deprived or destitute? Why are some born with beauty and brains, while others are born with a fate and a face only a mother can love? Why the inequity, the inequality, the discrepancy, the partiality and the unfairness among humans?

**The Laws of Good Karma
as a Formula**

Goodwill	= Peace
Compassion	= Wisdom
Harmony	= Truth
Self-control	= Equanimity
Caring	= Comfort
Charity	= Wealth
Temperance	= Beauty

Until the law of karma is rightly understood, there is no viable explanation. Or else, the rest of creation would be attributed to a biased and capricious deity who plays probabilistic games with the universe, indulging with changes and chances or, playing random favorites, instead of sustaining a world of

law and order and, above all, with great wisdom and with absolute justice.

The twin laws of karma and rebirth bring hope and renewal. We fashion our own future according to our present awareness; until we learn the good is done only for its own sake, not even for the personal reward of a promised heaven, nor for the salvation from the punishment of a fearful hell. Except for none other than of being true to our innermost essence as a spiritual being or dharma which is our eternal nature.

When rightly understood, karmic law renders to every person according to their works or deeds. Indeed, do we

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harvest what we have planted. Any forgiveness is in the opportunity to do better with our best. In the learning process, wrongs are righted. Selfishness transforms into selflessness. Hate turns to love. Ignorance evolves into wisdom. Humanity merges into Divinity.

A world Teacher once said: *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.* How? A belligerent nation kills and conquers the people of a meek nation. The conquering nation becomes great and prosperous. At the height of their greatness and prosperity, the people they killed or hurt reincarnate as their own citizens, inheriting what was taken away from them as the spoils of war.

The evidence and testimonies of rebirth or reincarnation are found in some brave ground-breaking references¹ that have been attracting the interest and attention of many. But the strongest convincing evidence is finally in one's own remembrance of past lives.

Nevertheless, it is a blessing we do not remember our former lives on earth. If we did, and at our present state of development, we would merely perpetuate our hoary misgivings and ancient animosities, revenges or vendettas, like having to start the day with a horrible dream upon waking up, rather than with the opportunity to start over with a clean slate, feeling refreshed and renewed.

Since when did anyone grow any less by dying. After passing through the pearly gates of death, we re-enter the golden gate of rebirth, many times over, until our human dross is changed into spiritual gold. In the crucible of birth and death, joy and sorrow, failure and success, our spirituality emerges triumphant.

¹Stevenson, Ian. *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2nd rev. ed., 1974. By the same author, see also: *Reincarnation and Biology*, 2 vols. and *Xenoglossy*. Cerminara, Gina. *Many Mansions*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1978.

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