

Facts about Karma

Michael the Great

I am Michael. Today I wish to speak on the subject of Karma, which is retribution for deeds in past lives in Buddhism, or the expected consequences of good or evil deeds committed in this life. I want to correct mistaken notions regarding this concept and redefine the idea so it may better serve as a guide for those who study the True Law.

Karma, which is called *Go* in Japanese, can be broadly classified into four basic types. The first type is rooted in the instinctive nature inherent in man. The second type is intractable characteristics and attitudes which arise from the national temperament and race consciousness. For example, the Japanese generally tend to be emotional and irrational, and their thinking is not deep and systematic. Rather than think deeply about something, they rush to conclusions, and decide whether they are for or against something largely by their likes and dislikes.

In other words, Japanese are not a thoughtful and deliberate type of people, but instead are shallow thinkers and are quick to follow suit and join the crowd, and they also have a tendency to be illogical and susceptible to tactics of agitation. As a group, they are anti-individualistic and rather than deeply ponder and deliberate whether a viewpoint is correct or mistaken, they tend to be swept by popular opinion and not even resist. This is exactly the opposite of what we call "reasonable types" who correct mistaken notions, and question a person's views until they are convinced, and also they are not grudging to accept the truth. The impossible Karma of the Japanese up until now has been to allow their emotions to decide matters and to resign to the majority disregarding the opinion of individuals and to be pushed in any direction the mass media takes them. Americans also have

their own Karma, and the British have their own Karma as well.

The third type of Karma is that inherited from one's parents, which includes congenital weak points and flaws in one's character, as well as habits which are acquired in the process of learning to adapt to one's surroundings, and other weaknesses of character which form inevitably in one's social life.

The fourth type of Karma has many things in common with the third type such as weaknesses and flaws in a person's character. This Karma can be gauged by how a person deals with the question of virtue and evil. In Buddhist doctrine and that of other religions, even though they appeal to the sense of responsibility in people, when the consciousness or intellectual level of people are low, these teachings are unable to effect a change in their attitudes. Therefore people are taught that things are the way they are because of retribution from past lives. So they are told to perform good deeds to erase bad Karma one by one so as not to carry the retribution over into their next life. This idea is taken much too far and some people are even told that their family is disposed toward sickness, separation, or accident because the spirit of their ancestor is not being worshipped. This gives many newly established religions grounds on which to take advantage and even victimize innocent people.

Such religions stir up fear in the hearts of people about the world of the unknown. These religions are the same in nature as primitive ancestor worship. It is unthinkable for people like yourselves who have a high standard of intelligence and at least live in a civilized society with what can be called a scientific and rational way of life, to regress to the belief system of people two or three thousand years ago. It is anachronistic to believe that since there are past lives and future existences, certain ceremonies need to be performed fastidiously, or that otherwise the wrath of the spirit of the deceased could inflict all manner of curses. I want

you to completely discard such ideas that so called Karma has to be worked out in the third dimension, or else it will be carried into the next life to cause problems there. Such beliefs are known as being superstitious, and this is an adjective for those who have strayed into the wrong path of religious faith.

Things will improve tremendously when people begin to think more rationally and reasonably to consider, discuss, and act on things by taking personal responsibility, and when people begin to adopt the principles of independence in their own lives to keep from harming or causing others problems. When all people strive to live like this, no more will ideas for weak-willed people, such as Karma, curses, or fate, come up where the power lies in the hands of someone else and events are caused by others.

You are all equal before God and you are not slave to anyone. You are not meant to be in submission to anyone. Even though natural disasters are unavoidable, human disaster comes not because of others, but are instead caused by each individual. Stop leading a pessimistic life by absorbing mistaken ideas into your subconscious like Karma and Original Sin which give you the impression that the individual is powerless to help himself. When things are not going very well, you have become ill, or you have had an accident, these all indicate that you have not been skillful enough in managing your life, or that you were lacking in attentiveness and wisdom. In other words, you should regard this as a shortcoming in either your conscientiousness, diligence, knowledge or handling of affairs. This is the correct attitude which is given to you as the True Law applicable between the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Instead of using pessimistic words and ideas like "fate," you must each make efforts to create your own situation for yourself. Throw away old fashioned ideas like Karma from ancestors or retribution from past lives, and do not be influenced by false

religions which use such ideas as bait to gain more followers. Also, you must edify other uncritical and irrational people who think that they must do as they are told. Foolish religious concepts must be cut off and discarded as soon as possible. A civilized life and the religious beliefs of our ancestors are mutually exclusive. As long as a person is confused by such ideas, one will forever be unable to grow intellectually, or to attain spiritual development. About the only knowledge and understanding that can be gained at that level is to think of the training of one's soul as something only a monk or priest undergoes.

The Prajna Paramita required by Heaven is enlightened human relationships, and a practical attitude in life which is full of initiative and innovativeness. This is a way of life where one does not serve his emotions, but deals with things in a rational manner using other wise persons as one's model. It also means to remain virtuous, and to know that is right and wrong, and having the ability to distinguish good from evil. It refers to a wisdom in living which is rooted in the "good self" which springs from the heart of compassion and love.

Both men and women must become like this. Otherwise one cannot become a soul worthy of trust from Heaven, with the privilege of becoming a member of the Celestial Realm. With the continuing betrayal of "good spirits," we need people with more perfect characters. I would like to make it clear once again that Heaven has no use for lazy persons who feel that such training of the soul is too much trouble.

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