

Law of Karma

Its 10 am on a Sunday morning and a baby is born at a posh locality of South Delhi. The parents are overwhelmed with happiness and can't stop smiling as the baby is born after 10 years of their marriage. They are rich and pledge that they will provide world's every comfort to their only child.

At exactly the same time, somewhere in rural Bihar another baby is born. She's the fifth sibling in the family. Parents are worried as they don't know how they will feed another mouth when the family is already so poor.

If we look at these two examples, we can conclude about the kind of lives these two children must have lived. A lot of people will comment that this is the result of the soul's karma. But the question arises "What is karma and how does it work." According to Hindu upnishads, Karma means the 'deed' or 'act' which can be broadly put into more accepted universal terms of 'cause' and 'effect'. Some parts of it are controlled, like birth, environment etc. but majority are made by us. Here the karmas of their last birth led these children into two totally different lives.

We are therefore born with a unique genetic makeup. Our memories and perceptions govern our outlook in any situation we face. Our actions reinforce our memories in a feedback loop-type mechanism and whenever a particular situation arises, we react accordingly. Through understanding of this law, we can adjust our actions to either change an ongoing situation, or gain new perspective on a past situation so we can avoid making the same mistake twice.

Sometimes people feel gloomy in general as memories of some unpleasant events surface. This leads to sadness and they start feeling low. The level of enthusiasm recedes and slowly leads to depression. If we can understand the 'law of karma' well, these emotional swings can be overcome completely. What we need to do is develop a sense of differentiating between positive and negative thoughts. It's a long process that takes both patience and practice. We need to identify our own self and think positive. This does not imply that we start suppressing unhappy memories, doing that will lead to more concentrated mind towards events that we want to forget. We can instead work on removing them completely by wilfully working on them. It would make negative things irrelevant with time and we will feel the force of optimism within us thus leading a happy life.

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