

## **One's Life in this World are Determined by this Two Types of Karma!**

Venerable Master Chin Kung: One's rebirth in the human realm and one's life in this world are determined by two types of karma.

Q: This fellow practitioner asked a question. Someone runs a frozen food business and he does not slaughter animals directly. A few years ago, his business was of small scale with only six employees. It has now expanded to a scale with 80 employees. All staff members work very hard. Does it mean they also work hard to kill animals? The business is the result of the joint effort of all staff. If he stopped the business now, most of the staff members would be laid off. So, he cannot stop it straight away. Currently, he has someone running it for him. He himself now runs a flower shop. He leads a frugal life and does many good deeds. Others respectfully regard him as a lay Buddhist practitioner. May I ask if he is allowed to follow the Triple Gems (i.e. Buddha symbolising enlightenment, dharma symbolising correctness and sangha symbolising purity and harmony)?

A: Yes, he is. He can follow the Triple Gems. (The Chinese word) '皈 gui' means repent and correct oneself. We must know that everyone's good fortune in this life is the consequence of what they did in their previous lives. You will understand it if you read Liaofan's Four Lessons carefully. Indeed, the ancients said, 'Any one sip of water and any one bite of food (in this life) are determined by what one did in previous lives'. There is no exception in the past, at present, in China or elsewhere in the world. Who determined it for you? You did. It has nothing to do with other people.

The Buddha taught us that two types of karma determine a human being's life in this world. The first type is 'directing karma'. It directs us to be reincarnated in one of the ten dharma realms (in the universe). We produced the causes of directing karma in previous lives. The directing karma (of us gaining rebirth in the human realm) is the Five Precepts and the Ten Good Deeds. We practised the Five Precepts and the Ten Good Deeds quite well (in our previous lives). So, the karma of us practising the Five Precepts and the Ten Good Deeds directed us to be reborn in the human realm and gain rebirth in a human body. As for being reborn into which family and who would be our parents, it depends on various causes. Without these causes, we would not be reborn into those specific families. The Buddha explained clearly that the causes are very complicated. But they fall into four main categories, namely, repaying kindness, taking revenge, recovering debts and repaying debts. If the child born into your family is to repay your kindness, they were born to be loving and respectful to you. If the child is to take revenge on you, it is troublesome, they will bring down your whole family. Why? Because they are there to take vengeance.

If the child is to recover debts from you, you will then happily bring them up. When they become adult, they die. All the money you have spent on them is the amount that you owed them (in previous lives). As they have recovered all the debt, they leave. If the child is to repay the money they owed you, they will look after you when you are old. They do not respect you, do not love you, but they cater for all your needs for daily living. Why? Because they are there to pay off the debt. They owed you, so they pay it back. Without these four causes, a child will not be born into your family. So, we must understand it. Once we understand it, we can turn the karma causes into dharma causes. We can then be said to be awakened. Be the child is here to repay kindness or take revenge, we guide them to be mindful of Amitabha Buddha's name, to learn to be a Buddha and to follow the Buddha's teachings. This practice

will turn the karma causes resulted in previous lives into dharma causes. How wonderful it is. Write off all the debts. This is true wisdom.

The second type is 'filling karma'. Filling karma determines what we have for enjoyment in this life. The amount of wealth you gain in this life, your social status and your academic degree are the consequences of the good and bad deeds that you did in previous lives. Some people are super rich, it is because they gave a huge amount of wealth to others in their previous lives. Giving wealth is the cause, gaining wealth is the consequence. Giving one's knowledge is the cause, being intelligent and wise is the consequence. Giving fearlessness is the cause, good health and long life are the consequences. If you practise all these three types of giving, you will reap perfect consequences. You will be wealthy, intelligent, wise, healthy and have a long life. This is perfect good fortune. However, we have seen many people who are wealthy but they are not intelligent and has no wisdom. Some of them have not even received primary school education. But they enjoy good conditions. They have many undergraduates and postgraduates working for them. They are the boss and their employees are willing to work for them. (It is because) the employees owed them in previous lives. What are the employees doing? They are repaying their boss' kindness given in previous lives. They owed their boss in previous lives, so they are here to repay the boss' kindness. So, we must practise good deeds and accumulate merit. Consequently, we will have good filling karma.

If we did not do many good deeds (in previous lives), we will certainly lead a hard life (in this life). But now we have learned the Buddha's teachings, we can start to practise good deeds properly. It is never too late. If we practise it hard and properly, in three years' time, good consequences will arrive. We have seen many real-life examples. After three, five or ten years of practising good deeds, good consequences will definitely arrive. Your destiny will definitely change. Destiny does exist, but it can be changed. If we practise good thoughts and good actions, the consequences we receive will be better and better. If we practise bad thoughts and bad actions, even though we have good fortune, it will disappear, and the span of time for us to enjoy it will also be shortened. Once our good fortune is spent completely, bad consequences will arrive. It is why nowadays many wealthy people, such as some business people, go into bankruptcy after only a few years of running the business. Why is it? It is because they have not practised good deeds in this life although they did so in previous lives. So, good fortune can be easily spent. We must understand these principles.