

Theory of causality and Karmaphala

All the phenomena of Nature are governed by one important law, the universal law of causation, which is also known as the Law of Karma. The law of causation is a universal law that keeps up the inner harmony and the logical order of the universe. Man's deeds are as much subject to this law. Karma signifies action or deed. Any physical and mental action is Karma. Thought also is karma. Reaction that follows an action is Karma. Karma is a broad term. All the actions of the body, mind, and senses are karma. Karma includes both cause and effect.

No event can occur without having a positive, definite cause at the back of it. There is no such things as a chance or accident. The cause is hidden or unknown, if you are not able to trace out the cause for the particular accident. This law of cause and effect is quite mysterious. All the physical and mental forces in Nature obey this grand law of cause and effect.

A close study of this law gives encouragement to the man who has lost hope. Destiny is created by man's thoughts, habits and character. There is every chance of his correction and improvement by changing his thoughts and his habits.

Every action that you do produces a twofold effect. It produces an impression in you mind and when you die you carry the Samskara in the Karmashaya or receptacle of works in your subconscious mind. Any action is bound to react upon you with equal force and effect.

If you hurt another man, you really hurt yourself. If you do some good to another man, you are really helping yourself. Because there is nothing but the Self. That is the reason why sages and Rishis, prophets and moralists harp on the one note. "Love thy neighbor as thyself. Never hurt the feelings of others." He who has rightly understood this law, can never do any harm to anybody.

Every thought has a cause behind it. Every action, every thought, however trivial and insignificant it may affect the whole world directly or indirectly. That noble soul who always does good to the world and entertain sublime thoughts, is a blessing to the world at large. He purifies the world.¹

¹ Sivananda, practice of karma yoga p.43-46

This grand law of causation includes the following laws.

1. Law of action and reaction

It there is an action, there must be a reaction. The reaction will be of equal force and of a similar nature. Virtue brings its own reward; vice brings its own punishment. This is the working of the law of reaction. If I radiate joy to others, if I relieve the sufferings of others, I will doubtlessly get the joy. This is the law of reaction. If I hurt another man, if I cause misery and pain to another, I will in turn get the misery and pain. God neither punishes the wicked nor rewards the virtuous. It is their own Karmas that bring reward and punishment. It is the law of action and reaction that brings the fruits. No one is to be blamed. The law operates everywhere with unceasing precision and scientific accuracy. The law of action and reaction operates both in the physical and mental planes.

He who thoroughly understands this grand law of action and reaction will never do any wrong action, because he knows that it will react upon him and bring misery and pain.

2. Law of compensation

The law of compensation operates everywhere in Nature's phenomena. The seed breaks and a big tree appears from the seed. The tree comes out in accordance with the law of compensation. Fuel burns and destroyed. But there is heat in accordance with the law of compensation. If there is a day in India, there is a night in America. Peace follows war and vice versa. The law of compensation operates in the mental plane also.

Every effect has a cause. Every consequence has an antecedent. There must be perfect balance between the cause and effect, between the antecedent and consequence. The law of compensation keeps up the balance, and establishes peace, harmony, justice in Nature. If you do an evil act, you will reap a bad fruit in compensation.

A man may reap the fruit of compensation for his action either in this life or in the next. If we deny preexistence and rebirth and take into consideration that life begins with this birth only and ends completely with

the death of the body and there is nothing more, then it will be no compensation for the virtuous man who had done noble actions and for the wicked man who has done crimes. If you connect your present life with the past and future lives, and then judge the present life from the standpoint of eternal life, then there will be perfect justice. Then there will be perfect compensation.

Your present life is nothing when compared with the whole soul-life. It is momentary. It is a mere fragment. Whenever you want to find out the cause or antecedent for anything, you will have to go deep into the affairs of the eternal soul-life. Then there will be perfect balance between the cause and the effect. The law of compensation embraces a wide range of the whole soul life. There is a reincarnation. There have been countless previous lives also. You will have to take into consideration the widest view of the life of the soul. Then you will find a perfect, satisfactory solution for all the intricate and complicated affairs of life. Then there will be no room for lamentation or misapprehension.

3. Law of retribution

Every wrong action or crime brings its own punishment, in accordance with the law of retribution. The law of causation, the law of action and reaction, the law of compensation and the law of retribution---all these operate together. Every wrong action causes punishment first in the inner nature or soul and externally in circumstances in the form of pain, misery, loss, failure, misfortune, disease etc.

Man is ignorant. He is swayed by impulses, wrath, passion, attachment, pride and repulsion. He does various kinds of wicked actions. He does not know what he is exactly doing. Later on he repents. Discipline of the Indriyas is necessary. He should remember the law of causation, the law of action and reaction, and the law of retribution at every step.

If all people understand this law correctly and discharge their duties carefully they would rise to sublime heights in the ladder of spirituality. They will be moral and virtuous and have a happy life. There will not be any room for complaint when they see inequalities in birth, fortune, intelligence and capacities.

4. Law of resistance

If you eat a mango, if you do any kind of work, it produces an impression in the subconscious mind or Chitta. This impression is called Samskara or tendency. Whatever you see, hear, feel smell or taste, causes Samskaras. These impressions are indestructible. They can only be fried in toto by Asamprajnata Samadhi. Man is a bundle of Samskaras that bring a man again and again to this physical plane. They are the cause for rebirths. The sum total of these impressions constitute the character of a man. If you do virtuous actions, the Chitta will contain good impressions and you will possess a good character.

Actions produce Samskaras. Samskaras combine together through repetition and form habits. Habits is developed into character. Karmas manufacture character and character manufactures will. If the character is pure and strong, the will also will be pure and strong and vice versa.

There is always a double life in Nature, the Asuric and Daivic. The fight between the Asuras and the Devas is always going on in the body and the mind. If you struggle very hard, the new good habits will establish themselves quickly. You will have rapid progress in the spiritual path.