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## **Fate, Karma and Free Will**

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## Introduction

For many people, fate is something incomprehensible. Upsetting events happen to them that apparently they did not bring about, that go against what they wanted or would have wished for themselves. How is this possible? Why these events? Why them and not someone else?

Is the human being just a toy in the hands of fate, a puppet in the game of life, a mere grain in the millstones of the universe?

Believing this leads to denying the existence of free will, which makes us free and responsible beings. Such a conception also leads to resignation or despair, because there is no longer any incentive to react, fight and learn from events in order to progress.

However, contrary to what many people think, fate is not formed randomly and arbitrarily, but is determined in a rigorously logical and fair way according to each person's decisions. It is therefore an objective and understandable process.

The explanations that will be given in this book are based on the knowledge contained in the spiritual work entitled: *In the Light of Truth, the Grail Message* by Abd-ru-shin. It contains three basic notions for understanding fate, also called karma, namely:

- The human being has the free will of resolution, the existence of which is often denied because it has been sought in the brain while it is in the immaterial spirit of the human being.
- The law of sowing and reaping compulsorily brings back to each one all that he has sown, good and bad, in the form of thoughts, words and deeds. The situations and circumstances engendered by this sowing form our fate.
- The human spirit reincarnates several times on earth. It can reap in the course of a lifetime the things it sowed in a previous incarnation. But since he does not remember his previous sowing, the reaping seems arbitrary and unjust to him.

Knowing the process of the formation of fate is indispensable. It allows us to understand better the events we are living through and to better shape our future. This knowledge also allows us to put the notions of chance and group karma in their rightful place and precisely defines the influence that the stars can have. Thus, we understand much better the need for redemption, reparation and forgiveness. But above all, we are led to be fully aware of the importance of the decisions we make with our free will, since, whether we know it or not, according to our choices, we are preparing ourselves a fate that is painful and sad or, on the contrary, joyful and beautiful.

## **Chapter 1            Fate and Free Will**

Of all the events that take place in our lives, there are some that we see clearly as being the result of our decisions. Others, on the other hand, do not appear to us as such: they go against what we want and are even the opposite of what we would have wished for.

Of the former, we say that they are the logical continuation of things, because we distinguish the relationship between the decisions we have taken and what happens to us. For the second, a logical relationship is missing. And, because they seem to take place for no reason, by chance and, therefore, arbitrarily, we then talk about fate. The oriental term karma is also being used more and more.

Fate would thus be formed by all the events that we do not wish for ourselves, but which happen to us anyway, without us being able to explain why they have arisen.

### **The different forms of fate**

More often than not, fate takes the form of an event that strongly disrupts the course of someone's life. This person led a peaceful existence, fully filled with family, work and social life. He was striving to achieve his goals, he had plans. All of a sudden, however, something suddenly happens without him expecting it and profoundly changes his life. This event is not necessarily painful, it can also be something happy: an unexpected help, an opportunity that presents itself, meeting someone, new possibilities that open up. In either case, the person is suddenly confronted with a totally new situation. Life and the world are not what they used to be. He has to develop new approaches, draw from within himself forces that have been neglected until now and find new solutions to adapt to the new situation.

Fate is not always made of a single event, sometimes it can take the form of a series of them that follow each other and whose effects add up to one another.

The significant event that fate brings can affect us personally, but it can also affect someone close to us and thus indirectly become part of our fate. If his great happiness or his serious problem is his fate, what we feel when we see him in this situation is our fate, because we cannot escape it. Even though we are not affected ourselves, this indirect fate can have a strong influence on us, precisely because it is a loved one who experiences it.

But fate is not only made up of great events. It is also made up of a multitude of small things: incidents, surprises, unforeseen events, setbacks and joys that take place in the course of our daily life and which do not seem to result from our decisions. Without bringing immense happiness or deep distress, they are small events that shape our lives and that we are confronted with.

### **The confusing nature of fate**

The confusing nature of fate is its unpredictability. The drama or the happy event that awaits someone sometimes seems so much like the fruit of the most complete chance that it would have taken very little for it not to have happened. And yet, ... it has taken place, to the great joy or regret of the person concerned.

On other occasions, it was a chain of circumstances that allowed an event to occur, a chain so improbable that the odds of it happening were zero, and yet it did happen.

The disconcerting character of fate also manifests itself in the fact that good and benevolent people with their surroundings are struck by adverse circumstances in the course of their lives, while other people, who show little love for their neighbour, who even mistreat and oppress them, are apparently spared from any painful fate and can live their lives in peace.

And what are we to think of fate when it falls with vigour on a few individuals in a group but not on the others, and this without being able to explain why. In a serious traffic accident, for example, the driver may be seriously injured, and the person next to him gets away without a scratch. Sometimes, when an aircraft crashes on the ground, all but one or two passengers die, other times it is the other way around, all but a few survive. How can such facts be explained?

There are, however, cases where fate takes a form that is very difficult to admit, and these are the cases where a child full of life, drive and enthusiasm is swept away by an accident. The turnaround is so striking that one cannot help wondering why such a thing happens? What sense does it make? Where do these ordeals come from?

### **Attempts to explain fate**

For many people, fate is something inexplicable by nature and must be dealt with as best as possible. "That's the way it is, you have to make do," they say. Or, "We can only hope that everything will be all right" or "Let's hope, that in the end, we'll be lucky".

This way of seeing things is generally the materialistic way of thinking. For them it is by chance that human beings are born from matter and therefore it is chance that also governs their fate. Curiously, some believers see things in the same way. They certainly think that God created the world and the beings that live in it, but that human fate is left to arbitrariness and chance. These believers are then faced with the agonizing question of how it is that God, who is good, tolerates all the suffering and misfortune that fate brings to human beings.

In contrast to this way of seeing things that involves chance, there is another one that considers that far from being random, the fate of each person is predetermined. This predetermination comes from "natural necessity", or from the "law governing history", or from the Creator. The human being is thus forced to go through a life planned for him, without being able to oppose it. Moreover, not only do they go through situations and events that they have not chosen to live, but the way they react to them is also predetermined and therefore escapes them. Man believes that he freely takes his life into his own hands, makes choices, struggles for himself, opposes fate, tries to escape it or to direct it, but everything he does is already predetermined and is included and planned for him.

Whether fate is random or predetermined, it is frightening because it is unpredictable and inexorable and often ill-intentioned. At any moment, it can swoop down on us without us being able to do anything against it. This leads to fatalism. Nothing having a logical reason or everything being already written, all effort is in vain. Whether we do one thing or its opposite, in any case what is planned will take place regardless of our efforts.

The human being would thus be nothing more than a toy tossed around, a grain that will be inexorably crushed in the millstones of life. He is like an actor who chooses neither the play

he is going to play in nor the role he will play in it. He believes he has the free will of resolution, that is, the ability to make free, uninfluenced and therefore non-predetermined decisions, but this is an illusion. He has no free will and only plays out pre-designed scenarios.

### **Free will**

The existence or not of the faculty of free will is fundamental to be established, because it is on it that the possibility of finding an answer to the questions that arise about fate depends.

The legal system that prevails in our society, which is the guarantor of public order, is based entirely on the conviction that human beings have a free will. Someone who does not have the capacity to make free decisions cannot indeed be held responsible for his actions, and therefore cannot be punished for them either.

If he was not free, he could not act otherwise than he did. How then can he be blamed for his actions? Besides, what would be the point of punishing him. There would be nothing to correct in him, since his deeds don't come from him?

In spite of the contradictions that we end up with, some people think that human beings do not have a free will. They justify their position by saying that at birth the brain of the human being is empty and contains no knowledge. Thus everything that goes into it comes from the outside.

It is the information that comes into the brain through the education that the human being receives from his parents and through the information he acquires at school. In addition to this, there is all the information that comes from reading, listening to the radio, watching television programmes and talking to friends, neighbours, colleagues at work, members of clubs or political parties to which he belongs.

It is not only information that he receives, but also ways of approaching problems, analysing them and reasoning on the basis of specific concepts and criteria. These latter are strongly dependent on social class, religion, nationality, etc.

All this information and thinking strategies, the deniers of free will say, influence and condition reasoning and, by this, also decision-making. The decisions we make are therefore never free, they cannot be free. They are always conditioned, therefore, the human being has no free will.

This would be perfectly correct if the brain were really the centre of our personality and the seat of our decision-making power. But is this the case?

Materialists think so. For them, nothing exists outside matter, so the human being is only his physical body. However, there is a different way of looking at things: the spiritual approach. The spiritual approach thinks that there are many other things besides matter. Although non visible, weighable or chemically analysable, they never the less exist. Among these things is the immaterial spirit of the human being, taken in the sense of the soul, which is the true centre of our personality and of decision making.

The spirit originates from the spiritual plane, also called paradise, which is at the top of creation. When, for the purposes of his evolution, he leaves the spiritual plane and crosses the planes of the beyond to come to earth, he incarnates in a physical body. The physical body serves as a tool for him to act on the earthly plane. The body itself is equipped with various instruments: legs to move, hands to work and a brain to organise its activity on earth. The brain is therefore a tool at the disposal of the spirit. It is neither the centre of our personality nor the centre of our decisions. These are in the spirit, our real self. The brain is only a tool, certainly a very sophisticated one, but nevertheless a tool only.

All the information that accumulates in the brain conditions it with certainty, but it does not have this action on the spirit. The latter being immaterial, it escapes the material and earthly conditioning to which the brain is subjected.

Free will is therefore not a faculty of the brain, but of the spirit. It is a faculty which is an integral part of it and which cannot be affected by earthly conditioning. The human spirit can therefore make free decisions, and it must even make decisions in order to develop.

### **The development of the spirit**

The spirit, which begins its existence in the spiritual plane, was not created with its faculties already fully developed, as it is explained in the spiritual work entitled *In the Light of Truth, the Grail Message*, a book on which we base ourselves to give the following explanations of free will, fate, and karma. On the contrary, the spirit begins its existence as a "spirit-germ". Just as a grain of wheat has all kinds of potentialities that enable it to become a wheat plant crowned with a grain-laden ear, so the spirit-germ has faculties within it that are in a germinal state and that develop and flourish only gradually, through experiences on the various planes of the beyond and on earth.

The fact that the spirit must develop and perfect itself is something that is easy for the human being to grasp, for he is that spirit of which we speak. As everyone can see for himself, but also by observing his surroundings, the human being can still improve. He can refine certain faculties that he already uses regularly and develop further certain others that he has allowed to slumber. And to do this, free will is indispensable.

The faculty of perseverance, for example, develops only if the spirit decides to use it. On its own, it cannot set itself in motion. It becomes active only if it is solicited. This solicitation is the result of a decision taken by the spirit. When the spirit decides to react to events by being applied, courageous, respectful, ... it forces these faculties to manifest themselves. With the repetition of the solicitations, these faculties will be strengthened, consolidated, developed, and finally blossom fully.

### **What about animals?**

Free will is a faculty proper to the spiritual; animals do not possess it.

Animals also make decisions, but they are not free. Their way of reacting is predictable because it is predetermined by the species to which they belong. A dog, for example, will defend itself either by biting or running away, according to its species. Being devoid of free will, it cannot decide to act differently, for example by hitting its enemy with its head as a goat does or with its feet as a horse.

Animals of the same species therefore develop in a very similar way. The only personal peculiarities that can distinguish them from each other, come from their confrontation with situations that other members of the species have not experienced.

The lack of free will in animals also means that they develop only in reaction to events, whereas humans can also develop by acting on their own initiative. This results in a highly individualized development of human beings, hence the variety of human personalities. No two human beings are alike. Everyone can decide how he will act or react, and shapes a personality accordingly.

Animals are not responsible for their actions because they do not have a free will. Therefore they can never be judged and condemned by a court of law. The situation is the same for children. What is the reason? Don't these latter have a free will?

Since free will is an intrinsic faculty of the spirit, children possess it too. But being spirits in bodies which have not yet reached maturity, their free will is not yet capable of manifesting itself. This will not take place until adolescence, when the maturity of the body and a certain earthly maturity have been attained.

### **Free will and fate**

The human being has a free will. He can therefore seek to influence the course of events, resist, fight for himself. He is not a toy of events or a puppet in the hands of fate, but a being capable of deciding and directing his life.

But then how can we reconcile the existence of the free will, which seems to give complete freedom of choice, and that of fate, which seems to limit it, since the latter brings about unwanted events? This is what we are going to see in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 2            The law of cause and effect**

For many people, fate being governed by chance, events follow one another without reason. They take place in one way, but could just as well have taken place in a different way. However, observation of our environment shows the opposite.

### **There are natural laws and a natural order**

Natural phenomena do not occur just anyhow, nor in a time-varying way. On the contrary, they take place in an immutable and constant manner. This regularity clearly shows that these phenomena are subject to precise rules. These rules are what we call the laws of nature. According to their field, they will be called the laws of chemistry, physics, botany, etc..

It is the existence of this regularity in the unfolding of phenomena that is at the basis of science and which has allowed it to develop. It is also because of the existence of immutable laws that we can speak of a natural order. Nothing happens without reason, without logical and explainable causes. Everything has its place. Everything is arranged according to the possibilities offered by the natural laws. This is basically well known in everything that concerns science, but is set aside when it comes to the fate of the human being. Suddenly there is no longer order and laws, but chance and arbitrariness. Why is that?

The reason is that, generally, it is not known that the laws of nature do not only act in the gross matter of the earthly plane, but that they are also active in the ethereal planes of the beyond and in the spiritual planes, that is to say, among other things, on what emanates from us as spirits. On this level they are called spiritual laws, laws of creation or cosmic laws.

### **The law of cause and effect**

Among the great laws that govern everything in creation is the law of cause and effect. Its action makes every event or phenomenon a cause that inevitably has an effect. The effect follows the cause with certainty and takes a form that is related to it. The expression "there is no smoke without fire" perfectly illustrates this.

On a material level, the effects of this law are well known. Electric current is formed by the movement of an electron along the chain of atoms of the electric wire. The first electron hits (causes) the electron of the next atom, which drives it away (effect) and causes it to collide (cause) with the electron of the next atom, etc. In mechanics, it is the movement of one part of a motor that drives the movement of a second part, which in turn drives a third, and so on in a series of cause-and-effect relationships that make the motor turn. In botany, the fact that a seed is sown (cause) allows it to germinate and grow into a plant (effect). Without a seed, there is no plant.

Not enough thought is given to the blessing of the existence of this law. It is the bearer of movement, multiplication, expansion, therefore of life. If nothing would ever result from anything, there would be a frightening stagnation, everything would stand still. All effort would be in vain, because it would be condemned to be of no effect.

At the spiritual level, the law of cause and effect is called the law of sowing and reaping. It was taught by Jesus. It is summed up by saying: "What you sow, you shall reap". This

imaginative way of expressing the action of the law makes it easy for us to grasp it. Everyone has already seen that reaping always follow sowing and that the nature of the reaping is related to the nature of the seeds sown.

If it is clear that when we sow wheat we will reap wheat, what kind of sowing and reaping is involved when we cease to consider the earthly and material realm to enter the spiritual realm?

Spiritual sowings are our thoughts, words and deeds, for although they manifest on earth, they are always preceded by a spiritual will. With the help of his free will, the spirit decides what it desires, which is translated into thoughts; it also chooses what it wants to communicate (words) and what it wants to do (deeds).

These three manifestations of his will are sowings and produce effects. Our actions have an effect on our material surroundings or the people we meet, our words have an effect on the people who perceive them. Our thoughts also have an effect, even if they are not expressed outwardly in words or deeds. This is little known, but it is based on the fact that thoughts are not "nothing at all", "air", but have a precise form made of materials more subtle than the dense matter with which our surroundings are formed. In this respect we speak of "thought-forms".

Thought-forms, which will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter, have the exact shape of the subject of the thought. Although they are invisible to the earthly eye, they influence human beings, more precisely people who are in affinity with them, because these people open themselves to them and capture them.

At first glance, the effects of the law of sowing and reaping appear to be purely material. When I hit someone, he receives a blow and suffers. But this is only the material effect of the action. On the spiritual level, another effect takes place. Indeed, what the law of sowing and reaping says is that the "one" who sows is also the "one" who reaps.

Thus, in addition to the immediate effect in matter, a second effect is added. This concerns the human spirit: it reaps what it has sown, that is to say, what it has destined for others. In concrete terms, this means that the law makes the one who has struck reap later a situation in which he will be struck in turn. He is thus given the opportunity to live on himself what he has done to his victim.

The result is that everything that a human being does to others, he actually does to himself as well, because later he will reap exactly what he has sown. There is a boomerang effect. What is intended for others is received in return by the one who sends it. This return of the action back to the starting point is the reason why we also talk about the law of retroaction. All our actions come back to us; they affect both our neighbour and ourselves. Hence Christ's advice: "Love your neighbour as yourself", which is translated in everyday language by the formula: "Do not do to others what you do not want done to you".

This law is basically well known. Many expressions in the language bear witness to it. When someone finally reaps what he had intended for others, we exclaim: "No wonder! He had it coming! "It had to happen!" It couldn't have happened any other way! "The expression "backlash" also illustrates the point. The stick with which we hit the other one, resurfaces against us, the flame that we send on the other one comes back towards us and burns us,...

Some people will say that these are just sayings. They are, however, the result of repeated personal experiences that testify to the existence of the law.

### **In accordance with justice**

The way in which the law of sowing and reaping works is imbued with the greatest justice, and this for two reasons.

The first is that there is an identity between what is sown and what is reaped. Indeed, if someone sowed but did not reap anything in return, we would consider it unjust. We feel that for justice to be done, the guilty party must reap something. But if he receives nothing in return, he has escaped justice. Nor would we feel that justice would be served if the guilty person reaped something pleasing when he had sown evil. The return would be unrelated to his sowing, it would be in contradiction with the evil he has done. When, on the other hand, he receives exactly what he sowed, we then feel that there is equality, balance, and therefore justice. And this return corresponding to the sowing is exactly what the law generates by bringing back to each one the fruits of his sowings.

The second reason why the activity of the law is just is that the harvest always returns to the sower himself and to no one else. Never does the return intended for one person go by mistake to someone other than the rightful recipient. Miscarriages of justice never occur with the laws of creation, as is sometimes the case with human justice where an innocent person is condemned in place of the true culprit. Everyone receives only what is due to him. As a result, each one can only atone for his own faults and never for those of others.

Different expressions of language show once again that human beings have already seen the eminently just nature of the activity of this law. When the time of the harvest has come and the reapings are painful, we feel sorry for the person concerned, but feel that in spite of everything "it is a just return" or "it is only justice". The expression "But what have I done to deserve this?" is also instructive in this regard. It shows that one is aware that one receives only because one has done something in the first place ("what have I done") and that according to what one has sown, one deserves to receive something accordingly ("... to deserve this"). There is therefore no arbitrariness, but total justice.

One's deep awareness of the fairness of this law is also revealed, in a biased way, in the haggling one tries to make with fate or the Creator when the time of due dates arrives. Indeed, it is not uncommon for someone who is threatened by misfortune to say, "If I escape this illness" - or any other painful situation - "then I promise and pledge not to do this or that again". Here follows a fault that particularly works on the conscience of the person concerned.

Although such bargains are not possible, these people, by offering to behave better from now on, show that they are aware that the evil they have sown justifies the painful fate they will reap. They hope, however, that they will not have to suffer this fate if, in return, they promise not to act badly in the future.

### **When will the harvest take place?**

The time between sowing and harvesting is variable.

It can be extremely short, a few minutes, as the following true story shows. Two people are immersed in a discussion. A third person arrives and, full of what he has to say, regardless, interrupts the two people to tell them what is so important to him. A few minutes later, his own speech is interrupted by a fourth person who arrives on the scene with no concern. Unhappy with the interruption, the third person gets angry, but suddenly holds back. He realizes that what he has just experienced is exactly what he had just imposed and that he has only reaped what he had sown.

The reaping of the sowings can sometimes take several weeks, as this other story shows. A motorist wanted to get rid of his car and buy another one he liked more, so he sold his used car. To get a good price, he did not specify that the radiator was a bit defective. He only mentioned in passing that perhaps, once, a small check should be made. With the money from the sale, he bought a new car. A few weeks later, the car broke down: the radiator was defective!

In other cases, the reaping comes back years after the sowing. So the consequences of acts committed in early adulthood can manifest themselves decades later, in old age. In other cases, however, the reaping obviously does not return until the end of the sower's life. Could the sower have escaped the harvest?

If so, not only would this be unjust, but it would call into question the existence of the law of sowing and reaping. Indeed, a law of creation is something whose action is all-powerful, immutable and without exception. No one and nothing can escape its action. It acts at all times with total infallibility, otherwise it would not be a law. Forgetting, errors, exceptions, arbitrariness, inconsistency, are the opposite of the notion of law. But then, what about those people who seem to escape the consequences of some of their actions, by dying before the harvest reaches them? Is this not an exception?

This exception is, in fact, not one. It seems to be, because the situation is not being approached with a broad enough view. Indeed, if the law is a reality, and therefore it is without exception, the sower will reap with certainty. Now, if the reaping does not come before the end of the present life, there is only one other possibility: it is that it will return after this life, that is, in the beyond or in another earthly life. This is because reapings are related to the human spirit and not to the earthly body. Now, at death, the spirit separates from the body and goes to the beyond, then reincarnates on various occasions on earth. The person who dies before reaping the fruit of some of his sowings therefore escapes no reaping and the law has made no exception. The reaping returns to him with certainty in the beyond or in a later life on earth. As the law works with fairness and without making any exception, we are quite naturally led to take into consideration the reality of reincarnation.

The situation we have just examined is one in which sowing seems not to be followed by reaping. There is an opposite situation in which it is the reapings that appear not to have been preceded by sowing.

Some children are born severely handicapped or seriously ill. Since nothing can be reaped that has not been sown first, the question arises as to when these children who are sick from birth were able to sow something in order to reap the situation they are experiencing?

For those who think that the child's life began with conception, no satisfactory answer can be found, because the child was not able to sow anything during the time of pregnancy. If one

takes a broader view, which corresponds to a spiritual approach, the sowing must have taken place before the pregnancy. This again leaves only one possibility if one does not want to deny the existence of the law of sowing and reaping: before this life the child has already lived another life, during which it has sown something that now requires it to live the experience of illness in order to learn and develop.

Basically, it is only the disregard for reincarnation that makes fate incomprehensible, because it prevents one from seeing that it can be the result of sowings that took place in a previous life. When the harvest returns, the sower of course no longer remembers what he has sown. He then thinks that what happens to him is inexplicable, therefore arbitrary and unjust. He will say that he has nothing to do with it and will start speaking of blind fate or strokes of fate.

However, there is nothing arbitrary, unjust or inexplicable about the events he is experiencing. The law brings him back the fruits of his earlier sowings.

Fate, blind and inexplicable to many, is therefore in reality only the reaping of the sowing done in previous lives by the person concerned himself.

Since the common acceptance of the word fate includes the notion of inexplicable events, the term karma is now also used. The notion of karma implies that fate is conditioned by or results from our past actions. In this sense, the expression "preparing ourselves a bad karma" means preparing a painful fate by the bad acts we commit. The "karmic returns" are the reaping of our sowings and "it is karmic" indicates that the event experienced by a person has its origin in what he has sown in the past.

### **The place of free will in the natural order**

Now that we have seen that natural phenomena and the events of our lives do not happen by chance but are governed by very specific laws, we need to talk again about free will.

Although the human spirit can make decisions freely, this does not mean that it has complete freedom. In fact, the human being is faced with an external reality, nature and its way of functioning, which he has not chosen; a reality that imposes itself upon him and which he is obliged to take into consideration.

The human being can choose to walk or run, but not to fly with his arms, because this goes beyond the laws of his own constitution. He can also choose to sow wheat rather than any other seed, but once this wheat is sown, he will not be able to do anything in order to reap oats instead.

Human beings can therefore act only within a framework whose characteristics and functioning have been determined by the Creator. His freedom is exercised only within this framework and not on it. Free will is therefore not a freedom of creation, but a freedom of decision within a pre-established framework. It does not put above the laws, but gives total freedom within them. Thus, whether the human spirit desires it or not, the laws are always the strongest, and its sowing will always be followed by reaping.

## Chapter 3            The Reasons for Karmic Returns

Karmic returns, which bring us back the fruit of our past sowings, are sometimes very unpleasant, even terribly painful. They cause us problems and conflicts that we would much rather not have to experience. Why do they have to come back to us? What is their meaning?

The purpose of karma is educational. Thanks to the free will that he possesses, the human being is able to make the decisions that he wants. He can therefore choose to make constructive or destructive decisions. But to go up to heaven, the spirit must choose what is good. The faculties that have been deposited in the spirit-germ by the Creator are all exclusively beneficial. Indeed, one cannot imagine that the Creator, who is good and perfect, deposits harmful ones. However, it is only after bringing these beneficial faculties to their full development that the spirit has completed its evolutionary cycle and can return to paradise. These faculties, however, develop only if they are used, which happens whenever the spirit, with the help of its free will, decides for the good. By opting for the good, it develops and strengthens its faculties, which finally enables it to ascend to the spiritual plane. Conversely, if the spirit decides for evil, it does not call upon those faculties and they do not develop.

When the spirit does evil, it is not necessarily consciously and out of wickedness, but also out of ignorance. In that case, how can it be aware of it? How can a human being know whether what he has decided is good or not?

There is, of course, the immediate observation of the effects that his actions have had on his fellow men, but that is not enough. On the one hand, because he must want to find out what those effects are, which is not always the case. On the other hand, because these observations are made from the outside. In spite of all his good will, he can only see what is happening from a distance, on the surface. The inner feeling that resides in the depths can thus very easily escape him.

The best way to become aware of the effect our actions have on our fellow man is to experience for ourselves what we have done to others. By experiencing it, we can feel from within, in all its intensity and acuteness, the things imposed on others by our decisions. And this indispensable experience is precisely what the law of retroaction brings back with certainty, making us reap what we have sown.

### **The three forms of karmic return**

Karmic feedback can take three different forms. They manifest themselves in an event, in the environment in which the subject lives, or directly on the persons themselves.

The first of these forms is that of an event. In the life of the person concerned, an incident occurs that upsets the quiet rhythm of daily life and affects him strongly. It may be an accident, a disruption in the professional environment, a sudden change in health, a conflict with relatives and much more.

An employee, for example, abuses the trust placed in him by his superior. This results in serious financial problems for the superior and deep moral wounds. In his next incarnation, if the return has not yet taken place in the meantime, the person who has cheated will have to live through a situation where he in turn is cheated by someone in whom he had placed all his

trust and who has abused it. He then lives from within all the material problems that this causes, but also the moral sufferings that betrayal brings.

Karmic returns can also manifest themselves in the environment in which the subject will have to live. He is therefore not affected by a specific and well circumscribed event but finds himself in an environment whose characteristics are those of the environment he created for others in a past life. Depending on the case, he is thus embodied in a poor, violent, hypocritical, distrustful, ... environment. Bathed in this environment, he is able to feel and live in a striking way, what he had reserved for others.

It is thus, for example, that a person who has oppressed those around him by his authoritarian and uncompromising character, will reincarnate in an environment where despotism and oppression reign. These will surround him, will be part of his various spheres of activity, will partly colour his daily life, as is the case for someone who lives in a totalitarian regime, in a family with very authoritarian parents, in a professional environment with domineering leaders, and so on. Placed in such environments and unable to escape them, part of the life of the person concerned consists in living day after day what he had sown in the past without being sufficiently aware of the suffering this had caused.

Karmic returns can also manifest themselves on the subject itself. It is touched on his own person, in his own body. An illness or a physical or mental handicap makes him feel a particular feeling that corresponds to the one he has generated in others in the past. It may be a feeling of anguish, helplessness, rejection, dependence, uselessness, ... In other cases, it is a chronic physical pain that undermines the strength and morale of the person, reproducing a state that he had inflicted on others.

By living on himself what he has done to others, the human being is confronted in a direct and intense way with what has resulted from the use of his free will. Through the experience he has lived, he feels what his "victims" have experienced. He bears the burden of the problems he has caused them, he endures the moral or physical suffering he has inflicted on them. In this way, he can realize that such situations are inherently bad, undesirable and must be avoided at all costs. His suffering may make him wish that no one else will have to experience it and make him resolve never to impose such a thing on others himself. The inner rejection of the evil he experiences leads him to aspire to the opposite. Thus, little by little, the fault that he had been carrying within him until then, is gradually transformed into the opposite quality.

Was he impatient, disrespectful and brutal, he will aspire and develop in himself patience, respect, gentleness. Was he intransigent, he will acquire more tolerance, was he selfish, he will develop altruism, etc.

Karmic returns therefore help the human being, they even push him to correct himself and to change direction. But if changes take place, it can only be the result of a will of the spirit, in other words, a decision taken with its free will. Indeed, a human being remains entirely free to make his own choices. He can opt for change, but he can also reject it. Instead of improving, he may, for example, wish to become stronger and more cunning so that, as soon as the opportunity arises, he will be able to oppress his oppressor himself, brutalize his persecutor, deceive his deceiver, exploit his exploiter, steal from his thief. In such cases, however, the possibility of inner change offered by karmic returns will not have been seized.

A karmic return is therefore not equivalent to redemption, i.e., to having simultaneously freed oneself from one's mistakes. Some people, when affliction touches them, say with a submissive air: "This is my karma, let's wait for it to pass!" But karma can pass without progress for the spirit if it has not seized the opportunity. The spirit has a free will until the end and everything depends on it. If, not having learned the lesson of the karmic return, the person behaves again as he did in the past, he recreates exactly the same karma. His expectation will have been in vain, he will not have freed himself from anything. By making a decision again that goes against the spiritual laws of good and righteousness, he recreates a harmful karma that he will have to reap later. This decision will probably not be the only one. He will repeat many similar ones, since, not having learned the lesson of karmic return, he will continue in his false way of acting. While a fresh start could have been made, the opposite is happening. The person remains in the old one. His situation even worsens. Therefore, one should not wait for things to pass. We must learn from the event and make a resolution to no longer act in the wrong way. It is with this decision that change takes place. Karmic return provides only an opportunity for change, it is not change itself.

Therefore, karmic returns have an educational purpose. The spirit can come out of it improved, with a deeper understanding of life. The spirit can integrate the high values by which it should guide itself and develop its faculties accordingly. The purpose of this learning, it should be remembered, is to bring to their full development the spiritual faculties deposited in the spirit-germ so that it can return to the spiritual plane as an accomplished spirit.

### **Do small mistakes count too?**

The law of sowing and reaping brings back to us absolutely everything we have sown, be it big or small mistakes. If it is easy to understand that our big mistakes are brought back to us because they do great damage, should the same be true of the small ones that have only a minimal effect on those around us? Is this not to over-emphasize details and complicate things too much? Are small disrespects, impatiences or unkind words so important that they must be returned to us?

Such returns are justified. The reason is that they are necessary for justice to be done, but also because, however small, they are a help to us. It is indeed rare for someone to do a lot of harm in the first place. It is small mistakes and imperfections that lead to bad habits. Over time, these become stronger, crystallize into flaws and then into inclinations. The development of bad things in us therefore starts in a small way and ends up in a big one. However, by bringing back our small imperfections, the law of sowing and reaping already gives us the opportunity to learn from small mistakes and prevents them from becoming big faults. This, of course, only to the extent that we learn from events.

It is therefore a mistake to think "This is only a small fault, it doesn't matter, there is no need to be careful". It is the little streams that make the big rivers.

### **Do we have to suffer to learn?**

What has been said so far about karmic returns could give the impression that one has to suffer to learn, that pain, problems and affliction are a necessary passage to develop spiritually. Is this really the case? To answer this question, we first need to see what suffering is.

The laws of creation indicate the paths on which the spirit must advance in order to be happy. They show him what is right. In fact, they are established precisely so that the existence of all creatures is harmonious. Respecting them therefore brings joy, not respecting them brings suffering. The human spirit can go against these laws because it has the freedom to decide. But if it opposes them, suffering results. This suffering will be all the greater as the decisions taken by the human spirit deviate from the path shown by the laws.

As a kind of counterbalance to its faculty of free decision, the human spirit possesses the capacity to feel whether something is right or wrong, good or bad. This faculty manifests itself through what is called the voice of conscience. In addition, the spirit possesses the ability to perceive warnings given to it by helpers in the beyond. Thus equipped, as it is explained in the Grail Message, the human spirit is able, if it so desires, always to make decisions which are in accordance with the laws, that is to say, which correspond to the good and the just.

But if he does only what is good, will he be able to learn? Does he not have to be in contact with evil in order to see that it is evil? No, it is quite possible to learn and develop spiritual faculties by doing only good.

Someone who only does good also sows something. The reaping will also come back to him in the form of experiences from which he can learn. For example, a person intuitively feels the need to help and support others, and he puts this into action. By doing so, he is sowing something. The harvest leads him to be himself supported and helped by others on a regular basis. The experience is a pleasant one. Through it, he experiences the benefits of helping others and thus becomes aware of the validity of his attitude.

It is not necessary for this person to experience the absence of help to realize the value of mutual aid. He can fully grasp its value by living the beneficial side of it. The sense of mutual aid is thus strengthened more and more within the person. In the end, he acts naturally and easily in this way, because this faculty has developed and become firmly rooted in him. It has become part of him. To act against it would seem despicable, beneath his dignity. He will not do it. But if one day, however, he should decide to act selfishly, which is possible because he has free will, he would have to force himself and expend a lot of energy to do so.

The faculties deposited in the spirit by the Creator are beneficial faculties, and naturally they can be developed through agreeable life experiences. Certainly, a painful experience is a way to become aware, but it is not indispensable. It is a possibility, not an obligation.

To believe in the existence of the law of sowing and reaping is also to believe in the existence of the Creator of this law. Indeed, how can we imagine that God, who is Love, would compel human beings to despair under adversity, to wring themselves up in pain and to collapse under suffering in order to develop. It would be nonsensical, a contradiction that is impossible.

*"For God does not will that His people should suffer!", we read in the Grail Message, "He wills only joy, love and happiness! The way **within** the Light cannot be otherwise! The way **towards** the Light has stones only if man first places them there!"*  
(In the Light of Truth, Grail Message, Volume II, Lecture 66).

## **Curse or luck?**

When painful hardships befall a person, he and his loved ones would very much like to see these returns not take place and life continue quietly as before. But since these are karmic returns, what happens to him is not the worst that can happen to him, but the best. In this way, he can learn and thus get rid of his karma.

If the reaping of the bad sowings did not return, the human being would continue to make the same mistakes as in the past. These would accumulate more and more, as long as he does not become aware of his false choices. He would constantly sow bad seeds around him, seeds that will bring suffering to those around him. This could go on for a long time and take on enormous dimensions if, precisely, the karmic returns did not put a brake on this movement, by giving the opportunity to become aware of the mistakes made and to decide to stop making them.

It is true that, caught up in a painful situation, the human being finds it difficult to think that what he is experiencing is good for him. However, knowledge of the existence of the law of sowing and reaping can help him to change his mind. On the one hand, because by discovering that the events he is experiencing have a meaning rather than non, he feels that they are less harsh. On the other hand, because the efforts he will make not only help him to overcome the ordeal, but at the same time rid him of his karma.

By looking back in his past life, everyone can find events that he considered at the time as the worst that could have happened to him, but which turned out to be most beneficial in retrospect. These events that he wished he had never had to experience, he is glad he didn't miss them, because they taught him so much.

It is the sick who realize the value of health, the unemployed the value of work, the oppressed the value of respect, the deceived the value of honesty, etc. There are many examples, but let us remember that these trials were not necessary or indispensable. They become educational and beneficial only because very precise sowings took place beforehand.

## **He who sows the wind, shall reap the storm...**

Someone who thought that fate was a matter of chance and who hoped that with a little luck nothing serious would happen to him, will he not be afraid when he learns that there is a law of sowing and reaping that brings back all his past sowings?

Many people are indeed afraid of it. A feeling of helplessness and discouragement also falls upon them, when they consider all that they have already done wrong in their present life and which has yet to come back to them, to which must be added all that they have sown in past lives and which they have not yet reaped. And this is all the more so because it is taught, in relation to the law of sowing and reaping, that what we sow we will reap a hundredfold, which the Bible expresses by saying: "Since they sowed the wind, they will reap the storm". (Hosea 8:7)

Why this increase in harvest compared to what was sown or why do small causes produce big effects? Isn't there something unfair in receiving more than one has given? It may appear so, but it is not. This increase is promoting. It sustains life, supports expansion and evolution.

Let's take a very down-to-earth example to illustrate this. If I sow a grain of wheat and the resulting plant has an ear containing only one grain, i.e. as many grains as were sown, there is stagnation. Indeed, if I eat the grain, I can no longer sow it; if I sow it, I cannot eat it. Worse still would be that by sowing the grain, one would reap an ear containing no grain, for this would quickly lead to death. The situation is quite different, however, if the grain I sow gives an ear bearing 50 grains. 25 of them can be sown and the other 25 eaten. Both the wheat and the one who sows it continue to exist. Life goes on.

So, when someone does a little good, through the law, a lot of good comes out of it. In this action lies a multiplying power that is a help given by the Creator. In this way there is increase, expansion, i.e. life. Admittedly, the law acts in the same way with harmful returns. A sowing of a little evil results in a harvest of much evil. This is a help, however, because the resulting suffering has a strong deterrent effect on the sower. All the more because the increased effect affects him and not his victim. The desire to pursue a false path is quickly stopped. At least the incentive is there. A signal has been transmitted which makes it clear that the road is false. This would not happen or would not happen as easily if the signal had been weaker.

### **Symbolic redemptions**

There is another reason why we should not be discouraged by the amplification of the reaping. It is indeed possible to reduce the strength of the returns by changing internally. This is related to what the Grail Message calls symbolic redemption.

The returns of our sowings will come back to us with certainty. The law cannot but bring them back to us, otherwise it would not be a law. These returns have the form of a storm if we have sown the wind, and a hurricane if we have sown a storm. But, although it returns to us with its full power, the return only affects us according to our inner state. How it reaches us depends more on our state of receptivity than on the return itself. How is this possible?

Someone who has done wrong and has not changed inwardly will experience the return in all its power. The evil in him is in full affinity with the evil he is to reap, and he will receive it in all its intensity. The situation is comparable to that of a radio receiver and transmitter that are on the same wavelength. The emission is perfectly received because there is an affinity at the wavelength level. Transposed to the human being, the wavelength of the person who must reap being on the exact wavelength of karma, he receives it fully.

On the contrary, when someone has recognized the evil he has done and has moved away from this way of acting before the karmic returns come back to him, these returns are felt differently. They come back with all the strength they have, but their effects will be altered. Having improved internally, the subject is no longer on the wavelength of the returns. It will be difficult for them to come into complete contact with him.

To continue with the example of the radio receiver and transmitter: no longer on the same wavelength, the transmission goes badly. It lacks intensity and is indistinct, and is thus less well received. In the case of karmic return, it is received in an attenuated manner. The more the person has changed internally, the less strong the return will be. This is perfectly normal and results from the action of the law of attraction of the affinities, another great law of creation. If this law causes things which are similar to attract each other, it also causes opposites to repel each other.

Karma is not repelled in the true sense of the word, but the reception and perception of its effects is greatly attenuated.

Concretely, the phenomenon of attenuation of karmic returns takes place in this way. The various envelopes or ethereal bodies that surround the human spirit incarnated on earth form a sort of halo around it, just as the atmospheric layers do around the globe. These envelopes are all the lighter, thinner and brighter as the spirit is good and radiates goodness, and all the darker and heavier as the spirit does the opposite.

Now, when, before the harmful karmic returns come back to it, a spirit has ceased to radiate dark but radiates light and luminous, the returns will have difficulty in reaching it. Their density and heaviness are not in affinity with the clear, fine, light halo that now surrounds it. They pass through it, like a stone in the air, without really reaching it.

Thus, someone whose sowing has brought about a karmic return that would force him to become seriously ill, will only be affected briefly by a benign illness, or will suffer only a small temporary discomfort, depending on the extent of his inner change. Someone who should have lost his job, for example, will only have to change departments, or make minor changes in the way he earns his living. A serious accident can turn into a small incident or a simple setback; a major financial problem with the mere loss of his wallet or a few coins.

The effects of karma transform themselves according to the inner state of the person. The return is not suppressed, but its severe and painful character is attenuated upon reception. It is thus transformed into something easy that can even be pleasurable. This thing is so easy and simple that the karmic return is experienced only symbolically, because the person has already changed inwardly.

Symbolic redemption is perfectly in keeping with justice. The purpose of karmic returns is indeed to give the opportunity to learn. However, if the lesson has been voluntarily learned before the return, a return in full force is no longer necessary. The return is indispensable because it is the expression of justice, but the intensity of the reaping can be adapted to the inner transformations, which is also justice.

Despair should not, therefore, win over the human being who reflects on all the karma that has yet to return to him. He will not be crushed by it, if he decides to insert himself voluntarily into the harmony of creation, changing inwardly towards the good. His firm will for the good transforms him and, by doing so, he reduces the intensity of the reapings that await him.

## Chapter 4                      **Reparation and Forgiveness**

When a karmic return has taken place and, thanks to it, the person affected has understood and changed internally for the better, it is generally concluded that everything is for the best, since karma is erased. The person has atoned for his fault and has grown out of it. He is better with himself and with his surroundings, thanks to the greater clairvoyance he has acquired and the beneficial faculties he has developed. But, if all goes well for him, what about his "victim"?

This latter has been wronged. He has suffered material and moral harm. In what does the fact that his "executioner" has reaped the fruits of his own sowing change anything for him? The sufferings of the guilty party do not restore anything to the victim. It does not compensate him for anything and does not bring him any reparation. Now, justice must be done not only to the executioner, but also to the victim.

The harm done to the victim must be repaired by the perpetrator himself. Instead of reparation, the expression "making amends" is also used. It means that the perpetrator must buy back, give something, pay, make an effort. He has a debt to the victim and he has to redeemed it in order to cancel it.

### **Need for reunion**

The need for reparation or redemption means that the paths of the executioner and the victim must once again cross.

How can such a reunion take place? The two protagonists are unable to organise such a reunion themselves, since it may take place one or more lives after the one in which the wrong was done. However, they must not worry about it because the laws of creation take care of it. Two persons linked in this way are brought together by the law of cause and effect to find themselves at an opportune moment and in adequate situations to provide the possibility of reparation.

Some of the people we meet or associate with in our present life are therefore people we have dealt with in a previous life. We have known them well, but our paths have parted. A conflict that needs to be resolved, a wrong that needs to be repaired, brings us back into contact with them. Since they are equipped with a new body, a new name and a new professional activity and social position, we do not recognize them. Only now and then do we get the strong impression that we already know a person we are meeting for the first time in this life. We feel attracted to them or, on the contrary, repelled, depending on the state of our previous relationships.

If we approach the issue of reunion and redemption a little too quickly, we may think, for example, that the victim I stole from in another life will steal from me in this one and thus that we will be even. This would imply, however, that the victim would have to do harm in order for the karmic reunion and redemption to take place. Evil would thus compulsorily compel evil, which is impossible because it contradicts the promoting nature of the laws of creation.

So the thief will not be robbed by his victim, but by someone else. This other character by whom the theft of the thief will be carried out during the karmic return may have nothing to do with the two protagonists of the situation we are considering. He has become a thief by

developing his inclination himself and finds himself in the vicinity of the first thief thanks to the action of the law of attraction of affinities. Thus, by using the bad inclination freely formed by a thief, the law puts the former perpetrator in the situation of being robbed, which makes him experiment on himself what being dispossessed of his property can have as an effect.

### **Reparation**

Reparation takes place when the perpetrator, by doing his victim the good that he did not do at the time, repairs what he had damaged. This can be done by restoring his confidence through his kindness and thoughtfulness when he had once shaken him with his wickedness; by offering him something of one kind or another when he had deprived him of something; that he will defend a person's reputation when he had destroyed it in another life by his slander; that he will support morally or financially someone whom he once arbitrarily deprived of his livelihood. The possibilities are as innumerable as the situations of daily life are varied.

In fact, every time one helps or supports one's neighbour in one way or another, whether by a good word, a smile or an action, reparation may be taking place, though one does not know it. Of course, the motivation should not be interested. It should not only be aimed at getting rid of one's karmic debts, but at doing good through a spontaneous impulse, simply because it is good to do good; in other words, by love of neighbour.

### **Forgiveness**

Successful reparation brings forgiveness from the victim. Forgiveness thus closes the cycle that began with the wrong committed. Forgiveness is the conclusion of the reparation and the concrete sign that the karmic debt is paid off.

To forgive is indeed to hold an offence as null and void, to no longer have a grievance, no longer hold a grudge, no longer be angry. When reparation has been followed by forgiveness, the evil is erased, it is as if nothing had happened.

To forgive is to give something to the one who has wronged. The word forgive includes the word give, a word that is also found in the word forgiveness in other languages: pardonner in French, vergeben in German. The guilty party has a debt to pay, the victim forgave it. In other words, he acquits him of it.

When a liar harms his neighbour, but aware of his mistake, comes to apologize, wants to make amends and asks for forgiveness, the victim can consciously forgive him. Indeed, the culprit is in front of the victim, the latter sees that he is sincere and now wants to avoid resorting to such a bad process to get what he wants.

The situation is different when the reparation takes place in a later incarnation. The perpetrator and the victim are face to face again, but neither is aware of the past. The perpetrator does not know that the good deed he has just done is in fact reparation, and the victim does not know that the person facing him was repaying his debt. How then, under such conditions, can forgiveness be granted?

It seems impossible, but forgiveness can still be given. It will manifest itself in the form of a feeling of gratitude or appreciation to the person who has just done the good deed in question.

The good feeling towards the former offender is the opposite of the bad feeling caused by the wrong done in the past. Thus, the victim's bad feelings about the person who had wronged him have been transformed into good feelings. Concord replaces hostility, contentment replaces discontent, harmony disharmony.

The forgiveness is unconscious, but it is addressed to the right person and for an act that is related to the past wrong. What at first appeared to be a handicap, namely not being aware from one incarnation to the next of the true identity of one's counterpart and the wrongs he has done to us, turns out to be a great advantage. The victim can much more easily accept reparation, because he has an open heart and is without bias.

### **Anticipated forgiveness**

Forgiveness does not necessarily have to take place after reparation, it can also take place before it. In this case it is an anticipated forgiveness.

The victim of a theft, for example, may find extenuating circumstances for the thief and excuse him for his actions. He understands that in a very difficult economic context, some people may resort to theft to try to get out of a desperate situation. Although he disapproves of theft as such, he understands and decides not to hold it against him. The thief is forgiven before he can make a repair and even before he has reaped what he has sown.

However, early forgiveness does not mean that the guilty party is exempt from everything. The law does not stop acting because of forgiveness. The culprit reaps with certainty what he has sown, because that is the way the law wants it, but also because the need to learn by reaping is not removed. However, to the extent that the victim of a crime can truly forgive, there is no longer a wound in him. The harm done is therefore very small and the return will be lessened accordingly. Thanks to forgiveness, the guilty party thus benefits from a milder return.

However, is it not an injustice that someone who has done something wrong, does not receive it fully in return, but only in an attenuated way because of an early forgiveness? Will he be able to learn from events if they manifest themselves too softly?

Here there are two things to consider: return in relation to justice and return in relation to its educational value.

The lessening of the reaping is not unjust. By his sincere forgiveness, the victim has the possibility of weakening the intensity of the return out of love of neighbour. But this return is only attenuated, it is not suppressed. It comes back to the guilty party and the possibility for him to learn the lesson is given to him.

This attenuation does not, moreover, diminish the educational character of the harvest. Indeed, recognizing an error during a karmic return depends more on the good will of the person concerned than on the strength of the return. A person of good will may become aware of his mistakes during a light reaping, whereas a person of ill will will not be able to do so despite the most violent returns.

### **The link between the injuring party and the injured party**

The need for reparation and forgiveness means that the paths of the executioner and his victim must cross again one day. To this end, karmic bonds, or threads of fate, link them together. There is therefore a bond between them, a bond that will disappear as soon as the first has repaired and the second has forgiven. From that moment, the two protagonists are released from each other. Each one will be free to continue on his way without them having to meet again.

What happens, however, when in this karmic relationship, one of the two protagonists does not do his part, either the offender does not repair his wrongs, or the victim does not forgive his tormentor? If the wrongdoer does nothing to make amends, will the injured party be held back in his spiritual evolution and prevented from ascending to the spiritual plane? And if the injured party persists in not wanting to forgive, will the injuring party be held back in his ascent to the spiritual plane in spite of his good will?

No, any person of good will can free himself, even if there is no active participation of the person he is bonded to. Neither the wrongdoer nor the wronged person should remain blocked because of the ill will of the other.

The victim can free himself from the person who has wronged him by unilaterally forgiving him, in other words, before the latter has understood his mistakes and has repaired them. Indeed, by an unconscious act of benevolence towards the victim, the injured party can offer the necessary reparation. The gratitude which the victim shows him in return is then equivalent to forgiveness for him. It should be remembered that a large part of these outcomes take place in a later life, in which there are no conscious memories and in which the two actors find themselves in a neutral position.

In the opposite situation, it is the victim who refuses to forgive. The guilty party may have already repented and done everything possible to make amends. Will he have to wait for his victim to forgive him before he can continue his ascent? No, here on earth, he can obtain a symbolic forgiveness in response to some act or another on his part. The human being is generally not entirely bad: he has good sides in him, and it is through one of these sides that forgiveness can be brought about. Through one of his acts, he obtains the victim's assent or recognition. A feeling of gratitude or love is there, and the person to whom it is addressed is also the one concerned. The conditions are thus met for the pardon to release the former offender.

It is not the same for the victim. The victim remains stuck in his evolution. His intransigence reveals an absence of love and goodwill. These prevent him from ascending to the highest planes, where love of neighbour is obvious. Having not forgiven those who have offended him, the person is not forgiven for his offences by the laws.

There is thus a great blessing in forgiveness. By forgiving the one who has wronged us, we free him from his debt and, at the same time, we free ourselves since we break the bonds that might have held us to him.

## Human laws and laws of creation

The laws of creation and the human laws have the same goal: to ensure order and harmony. However, being of different origins, they are two distinct things, which do not function in the same way. The latter do not have as wide-ranging and beneficial effects as the former. So what are the differences between them?

The laws of creation are never wrong in the distribution of karmic returns. A mistake on their part is impossible since the reapings are linked to the one who is to receive them by a bond that disappears only when the harvest has succeeded. Human justice, on the other hand, can be mistaken. Judicial errors do occur. Someone will then be condemned to reap something he did not sow personally.

Moreover, human justice does not make the guilty reap what has been sown, but something that is irrelevant. Generally speaking, it can be said that offences, however varied and different they may be, are all punished by only two measures: a fine and imprisonment. Putting someone in prison certainly enables society to protect itself from the violence and embezzlement of a criminal. Imprisonment is also unpleasant for the criminal, as is a fine, but what is the relationship between these two measures and having committed violent acts, forgery of documents, abuse of authority, murder or any other crime?

Neither a stay in prison nor a fine brings back the experience of what has been sown. Therefore, they do not make it possible to understand the evil committed by living it on themselves. The educational value of karmic return is lacking. There is indeed no experience lived in direct relation to the crime. From this something fundamental results: the execution of an earthly punishment does not simultaneously erase the karma linked to the fault. It is not because someone has finished his stay in prison or has paid his fine that the laws of creation also acquit him of his karma. For the cosmic laws, the person in question still has to go through the whole process of reaping, awareness, amendment and reparation before he can free himself from his karma.

A judicial system that would be closer to the one stemming from the laws of creation would have to change in several respects.

First of all, rather than imprisoning all criminals together, indiscriminately, it would be better to divide them into subgroups in affinity: violent people, counterfeiters, thieves, etc. This would create a situation that is in the direction of a karmic return. Inevitably manifesting their fault, each member of a group thus imposes it on people who have the same, which is a logical and just reaping for them. Thus, aggressive and violent prisoners are aggressive and violent with each other. In the long run, they may disgust each other with their behaviour, which may lead them to aspire to something else. In any case, they do not contaminate those who are detained with them with their fault, since they already have it.

Another point to consider is the length of the sentence. This is determined in advance, before it is known what the prisoner's degree of amendment will be by the end of his stay in prison. It would be more desirable for the length of the sentence to be adjusted along the way in accordance with the prisoner's internal progress. Sentences would therefore be of indefinite length. This, of course, requires quite different human skills on the part of those who take care of prisoners. It would, however, avoid releasing too soon prisoners who have not repented at all and, conversely, it would avoid keeping people who have transformed themselves

internally years before the end of their sentence in prison. Moreover, a sentence of indeterminate length has a stimulating effect on the recipient: it is up to him, by changing inwardly, to reduce the length of the sentence.

There should also be an amendment to the statute of limitations, the ability for a criminal to escape punishment if caught a certain number of years after committing the offence. The statute of limitations does not exist with the law of sowing and reaping. Karmic returns may come decades after the crime has been committed or even centuries later, as is the case when the reaping arrives in a later incarnation.

These various measures would be all the more effective if the prisoners were made aware of the existence of the laws of creation and the supraterrrestrial purpose of existence, namely, to develop the spiritual faculties within us so that we can return to paradise as an accomplished spirit. Aware of the great general framework in which existence takes place, it is then easier for them to realize where they are, where they must go and how to get there. This knowledge is not only useful for them, it is an indispensable basic knowledge for every human being.

## Chapter 5            Group Karma

Group karma, sometimes also called collective karma, affects a more or less numerous and homogeneous group of people, for example a nation, a tribe, a race, a social class or the members of a religion.

For example, it may be said that such and such a country has a heavy karma for having once unleashed an unjust and cruel war, and that is why now it is itself facing such an aggression; such and such a tribe has plundered and ransomed its neighbours for decades, now it is this tribe that is being plundered by a stronger tribe; such and such a Western nation has colonised a weaker country to enjoy its wealth, now it is the people of that country who emigrate to it to benefit from its opulence; a country has weakened another country by promoting drug use, now it is its own people who are weakened by drugs illegally entering the country; a religious group has persecuted those who had a different belief than they do, now it is the religious group that is persecuted because of its belief; the ruling class of a country has exploited the people, now it is the people who nationalize and exploit their possessions.

These relationships between what a tribe has done and what it has to reap later is taken for granted in the Bible. It provides many examples of this. Among these, we can read in the book of the prophet Habakkuk :

"You accumulate wealth by stealing from others and taking their property as a pledge, you will suddenly be caught by the throat, your creditors will appear and make you tremble, they will in turn plunder you ... You pocket dishonest gains in favour of your relatives and you think you are high enough to escape the blows of misfortune, your plans will only serve to humiliate your relatives ... You have slaughtered animals, well, animals will terrify you. "(Habakkuk 2: 6-17; Bible)

### **The group karma in question**

There's something surprising about the notion of group karma. Does it really exist? Indeed, for a karma to form, it requires a decision freely made by a spirit, in other words, a spirit must have made a resolution with the help of its free will. But a nation (or any other group) is not a spirit and does not have a free will of its own.

Furthermore, the purpose of karmic reaping is to make the spirit aware of the value of its decisions and to help it progress. However, a nation does not have a spirit that can take advantage of karmic reaping to improve itself.

A nation, indeed, is not a spirit, it is an assemblage of spirits. It is only when a multitude of spirits are gathered together that one is in the presence of a nation, a religious grouping or a social class. From all this it follows that group karma can not exist. And yet, many facts indicate that it is a reality.

Things become clearer if we consider that, at the level of a group, it is the will of the strongest part of that group that determines its fate. By "the strongest party" we mean the largest number.

Thus, when the majority of human beings forming a nation think, aspire, want and do something, be it politically, socially or culturally, things will happen according to the will of that strongest part because it is more numerous. The same applies to all the other kinds of groupings.

### **Grouped karmic returns**

The reaping of the sowing, however, does not return to the nation, understood as an "I" representative of all citizens, since such an "I" does not exist, but to each spirit composing the nation and belonging to the predominant part. Returns could well strike each spirit separately, at different times and in different places. In some cases, that is the way it happens. However, returns can also come back together, in the same place and at the same time. Being of similar kinds, these karmic returns together form a great event at the social or political level, giving the appearance of group karma.

Such group returns are conditioned by the law of attraction of affinities. Being motivated by the same ideals, having fought for the same goals, and having struggled in a similar way, a part of the spirits of the same nation are in affinity with each other. The law of attraction of the affinities causes them to attract each other and in the next incarnation they find themselves together. The first to incarnate attract the next, giving them in turn the opportunity to incarnate.

Where will these incarnations take place? In certain cases, when love of the homeland and a strong involvement in its culture are present, they will take place in the country in question, since the spirits will be attracted there out of affinity with the spirits already there. Thus, they come together and collectively receive their karmic returns which, being similar, have the appearance of group karma, whereas each spirit has received its own individually. In other cases, the love of the nation does not play a fundamental role and the spirits reincarnate together elsewhere.

### **To each according to his due**

A group karma, in the sense that all the bad deeds committed by the different members of the group would return globally to each of the members, that is to say in a way that is undifferentiated and undeserved by some, does not exist. If this could happen, it would indeed mean that each member would have to take responsibility not only for his own actions but also for those of the other members of the group. Such a thing, however, would be in contradiction with the law of sowing and reaping, whose action makes each one reap only what he has personally sown.

During group karmic returns, for example, at the level of a nation, everyone is affected according to his own sowing, hence all the differences in the strength and kind of returns.

During a war, for example, some people are affected very strongly by the violence of the conflict. Other members of the same nation are only slightly affected. They suffer various inconveniences, face a variety of embarrassments and obstacles, but nothing very serious or confusing. Still other members seem to escape all danger and worry. This is a minority. It is made up of people who are incarnated in the countries in question for reasons other than those of the majority. They have not sown like the others, so they reap quite naturally differently than the majority does.

Apart from these differences in intensity, there are also differences in the actual events experienced. Some will be primarily affected by the fighting, others by the destruction, and still others by the loss of loved ones. But others will be affected above all by deprivation or humiliation, nervous stress, hunger, cold.

Although all the spirits living the grouped return are in the same global event, each one lives one aspect or another according to what he has sown.

So there is not an identical experience for all, but a variety of experiences. These differentiated returns clearly show that group karma, as it is usually understood, does not correspond to reality. This fact is particularly well illustrated by natural disasters, if we consider what happens during them.

### **Natural disasters**

During an earthquake, flood or hurricane, suffering and destruction simultaneously affect many people living in a region or country. On the surface, victims of natural disasters experience the return of an identical karma, but this is not the case.

So it is not, for example, a tsunami that was sown by the victims and is now being reaped by them, but a particular situation within this great event that is a tsunami; and the situations that such an event engenders are very numerous. To mention just a few: pain, fear, cold, hunger, physical injuries, but also loss of loved ones, home, possessions, work, self-confidence, hopes, etc.

These situations are all the more numerous because a unique experience, the destruction of one's home for example, can be lived in very different ways by those who are in this case. Each of the person concerned lives the situation according to his own personality. What one person will feel as a disaster will be perceived by another as a temporary inconvenience, while yet another will welcome the situation as an opportunity to make a fresh start in a new direction.

The tsunami has nothing directly to do with the karma of those affected, but it was used, as are other natural disasters, to bring back karmas that had not yet been reaped. These karmas are different from one individual to another, but they all reap the fruits of their sowing in the same event. This event could have taken other forms. Indeed, what counts during a karmic return is less the external form of the event than the internal experience. The feeling of distress that one feels when one has lost everything and the questioning that this brings about can just as easily occur during a natural disaster as during a war, a fire, an economic crisis, etc.

Many people can therefore be affected during the same event, but each person always remains responsible for his own sowing, and therefore for his personal fate.

### **Is a group redemption possible?**

If grouped returns are possible, are there grouped redemptions? Can the redemption of karmas of many persons take place together, in a grouped manner? This question is related to the crucifixion as explained by the Church.

According to the Church, Jesus came to earth to take upon himself all the sins of men, i.e. their karma, and through his suffering and death on the cross he redeemed all their sins for them. Delivered from their karma, every human being who believes in him would thus be saved. This is what in theological language is referred to as redemption through crucifixion.

This way of interpreting the crucifixion is, however, in contradiction to the law of sowing and reaping. It even opposes it in two different ways. On the one hand, because human beings sow faults but do not have to reap them, and on the other hand, because someone, Jesus, redeems faults that he did not commit.

The explanation given by the Church to justify her point of view is that by eating the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge, Adam and Eve would have committed a sin that was automatically transmitted to all their descendants, that is to say to the whole of humanity. The resulting evil was so great that humanity would have become incapable of getting rid of it. Only Jesus, because of his origin and strength, would have been able to redeem these sins through his suffering and death on the cross.

Far from bringing us back to the logic of the law, this explanation takes us further away from it, for it introduces an additional element that contradicts the law of sowing and reaping. According to this explanation, the fault of one person, that of Adam or Eve, can reflect on all human beings even though they did not participate in it. In other words, they are charged with karma that they did not sow!

To claim that someone can sow without reaping (humanity), redeem without being guilty (Jesus) or inherit a fault he did not commit (Adam's descendants) is to deny the existence of the law of cause and effect taught by Jesus himself: what you sow you will reap. It is also denying that this law is perfect, since exceptions are possible. But if it is not perfect, the one who created it, God, is not perfect either, which is not possible.

Here we are faced with the following alternative:

- Either the law of sowing and reaping makes exceptions and is therefore not a law, and redemption through crucifixion is possible;
- Or the law is perfect and without exception, which is the case for a law created by God, and it is the interpretation of the crucifixion that is erroneous.

Of the two propositions of this alternative, it is of course the second that is true. So Jesus did not come to earth to take upon himself and redeem the sins of men. Such a thing is impossible. Now, if this is the case, then what was the reason for his coming? The Son of God came down to earth to bring the Word, that is, the knowledge necessary for human spirits to redeem their personal karma themselves according to the law of cause and effect, and thus to ascend to heaven.

Nothing that man has sown has been taken away by the crucifixion. On the contrary, crucifying Jesus only aggravated the karma of those who participated in it. "What you sow, you shall reap," says the law clearly, but not: what you sow, someone else will reap and redeem. The group redemption of the karma of many people is impossible, each one must make up for the faults he has committed.

## Chapter 6                    The Formation of Karma

How does karma actually form? What are the processes that come into play so that our sowings return to us in the form of reapings?

The period of time between the moment we sow and the moment we reap is sometimes very long. The reaping often comes back one or more lives after the one in which the sowing took place. During this time, the seeds must have survived in order for them to be able to come back. The question which arises is: in what form are the actions, words and thoughts recorded to be kept until they are brought back as reapings. And not only in what form, but also where, in what place, are they during this waiting time?

A further question still arises: how do the reapings reach precisely the person who is to receive them, the instigator, and not someone else? There are billions of human spirits, and each of them sows countless seeds. How is it that the resulting reaping always returns to the right person, in other words, that there is never a wrong distribution of returns?

The harvest and the spirit must be connected in some way, but what is the nature of this connection? What form does it take?

### **Thought-forms**

Every act and every word is preceded by a thought. Acts and words are generally given more importance because they are visible or audible terrestrially, but the main element is the thought. Thoughts always precedes deeds and words, must precede them, otherwise they do not materialize. Indeed, without prior thought, there can be no deeds or words.

The human being is a spirit incarnated in a body. Now, what the body expresses by deeds and words is only the result of the will of the spirit. The body is but an instrument for the concretisation of this will on the earthly plane. What is most important, that is to say, the strongest and most real, is therefore not the action or the sounds, but the initial idea: the thought which is at the origin of what followed.

To illustrate this, let us take an example. Before a jug can be shaped, there is the "jug thought" in the potter's head, i.e. an image of the object in question. Without the jug thought, there is no jug. The thought must necessarily precede, which shows the primordial place it occupies. Its importance is also revealed by the fact that if the jug thought were to disappear, it would no longer be possible to shape one. The thought or image on which to base it would be lacking. The jug can be destroyed, however, because as long as the jug thought remains in the potter's head, a new jug can be made at any time.

Although thoughts take the first place, they are generally considered as incidental, secondary; things that have no consistency or form, in fact, "nothing at all". Yet, resulting from the will of the spirit, being the product of its activity, they should possess a force greater than that in which they finally materialise in matter, that is to say, they should be of a stronger reality than deeds and words. Indeed, how could the ultimate consequences of a thought, such as the sounds resulting from the activity of the phonation organs of the physical body, be more powerful and truer than the thought from which they emanate?

Although thoughts cannot be without consistency and form, as is generally believed. Thoughts, as dictionary definitions say, are representations or images of objects and the actions they point to. But if they represent something or are the image of those things, there is something to see and they have a form. This is why, in the spiritual approach, one speaks of "thought-form".

When someone thinks, desires, aspires, decides, ... he emits a thought that takes exactly the form of the content of the thought. A thought-form is all the more firm and strong as the thought is something important for the one who emits it, as he is emotionally taken by it and as he nourishes it with his aspirations. A superficial thought, on the other hand, has only a flabby and weak form.

Since every act and every word is always preceded by a thought, there are, in addition to thought-forms representing thoughts themselves, forms corresponding to what one does and says. These three kinds of forms are works of the spirit.

Where are the thought-forms? Since they are not visible on the earthly plane, they must be somewhere else. Thought-forms are made of finer materials than the dense matter with which our physical environment is built. These materials are those of the plane of ethereal matter, also called the beyond. Thought-forms are therefore found in the beyond.

The word beyond is used to refer to the region that is beyond the perceptive capacity of our five senses, of which vision is a part. Since they do not belong to the densest matter that can be grasped or perceived by the eyes of the physical body, thought-forms are invisible to the common man. But some people have the ability to see them, these are the clairvoyants.

The clairvoyants are people who, in addition to being able to grasp, like everyone else, the reality that surrounds them with their physical eyes, are also able to see with the eyes of one of their ethereal bodies. They can thus observe what is happening in the beyond, including seeing the thought-forms there. When you think about it, the fact that the faculty of clairvoyance exists and that a clairvoyant can describe what a person has done in the past, what situations he is experiencing now and what the future holds, is that there is something in front of him - forms - that he can observe. If not, there would be nothing to see, and the faculty of clairvoyance could not exist.

There's a logic to thoughts having a form. They are the starting point, the models of actions and words that will follow. A model must be visible to be useful, so it must have a form. This fact must have been well known to the ancients. The word idea, very close to thought, comes from the Greek and means "visible form".

Some phenomena, such as telepathy and simultaneous discoveries, can only be explained if we take in account the existence of thought-forms.

If thoughts were chemical substances secreted by the brain, as science thinks they are, how can we explain that they can travel through space to be received by another brain at a great distance, as it happens with telepathy. This phenomenon is nevertheless understandable if we consider that thoughts have a form in the beyond. The thought-form emitted by one person can, therefore, move to a second person. This is what happens when someone "sends good thoughts" to someone. The second person can then capture or perceive this thought-form

inwardly. In other cases the thought-forms do not move but are captured by a person who is open to or aspires to what such thoughts represent.

Cases of simultaneous discovery are those where two scientists discover within days the solution to a problem they are both working on, unaware that someone else was doing the same research. If it is hard enough to imagine that interactions between chemicals representing thoughts could lead to the same idea in two different brains, it is even harder to imagine that the idea would emerge at the same time. However, the existence of thought-forms puts things into a different perspective.

The two scientists doing their research create each a thought-form which corresponds to the subject of the research. Since it is the same research, the two thought-forms are in affinity. The law of attraction of the affinities causes these two thought-forms to come together as one. Together they form a bigger thought-form whose content is the object of the research. From now on, the two scientists feed this thought-form together. Being both connected to it, each can unconsciously capture what the other has brought to it. Their understanding of the subject thus advances simultaneously and their work is completed in the same period. It will then be said very truly that if they made their discovery at the same time, it is because the idea must have been "in the air".

So there are many thought-forms in the beyond that represent everything that emanates from us, in other words, everything we have sown. They form the karma that will come back to us one day. These thought-forms remain in the beyond until the time comes when they are to be reaped. As they condense, they shape earthly realities according to their content, thus shaping our fate.

### **The threads of fate**

Multiple thought-forms are found in the beyond and yet, without the least error, they always return precisely to those who issued them. Such a thing is possible, because the thought-forms are linked to the spirit by connecting threads or cords of ethereal matter. These threads are therefore invisible to us.

All that emanates from the spirit, thus not only takes a form in the beyond, but this form is connected to the spirit by a thread. The form remains in a permanent relationship with the spirit that emitted it. It cannot separate and move away from it irretrievably, which would be the case if there were no link. In the latter case, there would then be nothing to indicate where this form must return to. The presence of the threads, on the contrary, reveals very clearly who is the sender and thus who will be the receiver of the form. Thanks to these threads, rightly referred to in popular parlance as "the threads of fate", what we are to reap comes back to us without any possible error. The threads are the guarantors of a fair distribution of karmic returns.

The existence of such threads may at first be surprising, but the fact that threads connect things in affinity is not something unusual. In everyday life, we are confronted with a variety of such threads. Electric wires connect the different parts of a machine, telephone wires connect people to each other. Radio transmitters and receivers, but also television and mobile phone, transmitters and receivers are also connected by wires. Although these latter wires are special, since they are made up of particular waves, they are still wires.

Wires also exist in human beings. Just as the umbilical cord connects the foetus to the mother, so the immaterial spirit of the human being is connected to the physical body in which it is incarnated by a silver cord. This designation comes from the Bible. The silver cord is visible to clairvoyants. When it breaks, it leads to death. Perhaps it is the silver cord that is referred to when it is said that a person's life is hanging by a thread.

Relationships between human beings give rise to friendships ties, marital ties, family ties, kinship ties and social ties. Ties can also form between a person and a thing. A person may be attached to his or her home, wealth, social status, country, land, etc.

The term tie was not chosen at random. It corresponds to an earthly reality: the emotional bond between a human being and the person or object of his attention. This bond has its counterpart in the beyond, the threads connecting the spirit to the thought-forms it has emitted.

A multitude of threads therefore emanate from the human spirit, threads that join, cross, combine and thus form the weft of its fate or karma.

However, these threads do not combine by themselves. According to many ancient beliefs there are three supraterrrestrial entities that are responsible for this. Universally known as *nornes*, they are represented as three spinners holding the threads of human fate in their hands. Each of these entities represents one of the great moments in the unfolding of time: *Werdandi* the present, *Urd* the past and *Skuld* the future. The threads of current (present) thoughts and actions are formed by *Werdandi*. They are then transmitted by her to *Urd* who connects them to the threads of past actions. *Skuld* then weaves these different threads to form the weft of future events, in other words, fate.

Is such a way of looking at things credible? Does it correspond to reality? It seems so, judging by a passage in the Bible in which Jesus says: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18: 18). Are we not talking here about the threads or ties that form in heaven as a result of the ties we make by our thoughts and actions on earth? And are not the threads in heaven that we can untie here on earth by redeeming our mistakes the weft of our karma in the beyond?

### **The carpet of life**

Fate, or karma, can thus be compared to a gigantic carpet. It is only an image, but it allows us to represent things to ourselves. Through all its thoughts, decisions and actions, the human spirit creates threads of different thickness, textures and colours, which come together behind it to form a carpet. The appearance of this carpet corresponds to the value or lack of value of the sowings. As the human being lives and makes new decisions, the carpet lengthens, passes over him (the threads in heaven), and then comes back in front of him. It then constitutes the ground on which the spirit must walk from now on.

This carpet, in the weft of which all past actions are woven, contains all the reapings resulting from the old sowings. Unaware that he is at the origin of this carpet, the human being who walks on it sometimes gets annoyed by the imperfections of its weft and the ugliness of its colours, even though he is its designer.

Although much of this carpet was woven in previous incarnations, it is his carpet. Earthly death does not interrupt the weaving, since the spirit survives earthly death and continues to sow in the beyond. The threads that connect it to its works therefore remain whether it is in the beyond or on earth.

If it is not satisfied with the carpet on which it has to walk, the spirit can react. At any moment, it can decide with his free will to sow differently from what it has done up to now. A change in the weave of the carpet weft will take place. Instead of being woven only with dark threads, the weft begins to integrate light threads. The more the person has a firm will for good, the more lighter threads enter into the weave of the carpet and the more the person gets rid of the darker threads as he unravels them in the karmic returns. The colour of the carpet gradually ceases to be dark and becomes luminous. In time it will become entirely light.

Thus, as soon as he changes inwardly for the good and sticks to it, the human being puts a limit to the harmful karma that he still has to reap. This will exhaust itself and will be replaced by beneficial karma. Life and fate then take on a completely different colour, for the weft of the carpet now contains threads which will only bring back happy and joyful events.

The human being is truly the master of his fate and this fate will be happy or not depending on what he sows. Conscious of this fact, everyone will certainly aspire to weave only good threads. But how to proceed? How can we be sure to weave only beneficial threads in the weft of our fate?

The answer to this question is fundamental to know because it can serve as a guideline throughout our evolutionary journey on earth and in the beyond. Not only to benefit from a happy fate but also to enable us to return to paradise.

In order to weave only beneficial threads, we must not limit ourselves to thinking only of ourselves and our personal happiness. On the contrary, we must also and above all think of the happiness of other spirits and creatures who, like us, evolve in creation and whose progress and happiness we must not hinder. They have as much right to dwell in creation as we do and as much right to be happy there as we do.

In reality, our fate depends very much on theirs because, paradoxically, the more we ensure that their fate is happy, the happier we will be. So the key to a happy fate lies in the love we give to our neighbour.

## Chapter 7                      Astrology and Karma

Are we subject to the influence of the stars? Can we be born under a good or a bad star? If astrology is a reality, how can we reconcile the influence of the stars with the conception of a fate that would result from decisions made by our free will?

To answer these various questions, we must first briefly look at what astrology is.

### **Astrology**

As modern science has shown, everything is energy. Every thing has a force that radiates outward and influences its surroundings according to its characteristics. Is it therefore surprising that human beings have long since come to discover the influence of the stars on them? If the sun and the moon can already contribute so much to our lives - the sun by heating us, lighting us and making plants grow; the moon by influencing things as variable as our moods and the tides - why shouldn't the other celestial bodies: planets, stars, constellations, ... do the same?

Among the multitude of celestial bodies spread out over the starry sky above him, man discovered that two great groups of them had a great influence on him.

The first group consists of twelve constellations (or groups of stars) arranged in a circle around the earth. They form a circular band of sky which is the background against which, seen from the earth, the planets move. The constellations are not an inert background, but they radiate towards the earth, each according to its own kind. These are the twelve astrological signs forming the circle of the zodiac: Aries, Taurus, Gemini, ... , signs that benefit the earth and everything on it with their formative, animating and sustaining forces.

The second group of celestial bodies includes ten planets: the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Mars, Venus,... . Each planet advances at its own speed and thus traverses the 12 signs of the zodiac in a different time span: 24 hours for the Sun, but 28 days for the Moon, and 248 years for Pluto, the furthest planet. Like the signs of the zodiac, each planet has its own characteristics and sends corresponding forces towards the earth.

To these two elements, the signs and the planets, is added a third: the houses. This is a division of the sky into twelve parts or houses (no longer signs of the zodiac) from the eastern horizon, which is used by astrologers. Each of these "houses" extends over 1 to 3 signs and represents a sphere of human life. For example his work, his travels, his family, his friends, his possessions, his ideals, ...

To study the influence of the stars on a given person, astrologers draw the natal chart at the time of the person's birth. This sky chart, also called astrological chart, is a flat representation of the position of the planets, signs and houses at the precise moment of the subject's birth. It is drawn not only according to the time of birth, but also according to where the birth took place. It is therefore something very personal and individual.

The spirit incarnates on earth is surrounded by a belt of twelve constellations, traversed by ten planets. It is therefore in the middle of a gigantic network of force fields. The theme gives, in a visible form, the image of it at the moment of birth.

The interpretation of a theme takes into account the position of the planets in the signs and in the houses, the position of the planets in relation to each other, but also that of certain precise points on the sky map; the position of the ascendant (eastern horizon at birth) and the middle of the sky (the zenith). Each planet, sign and house having a special meaning, it follows that, according to the configuration of the chart, the astrologer will be able to deduce the character of the subject, the characteristics of his family, professional and social life, his interests, his health, ...

By studying the future movements of the planets in relation to the basic theme, it can also define moments or periods that may bring important events and depict the general characteristics of these events (predictions).

### **Free will and astral influences**

For anyone who has seriously studied astrology, the influence of the stars is indisputable. Day after day, the practice of this art confirms it. If this is indeed so, then a fundamental question arises: if the stars influence us, what about our free will and the possibility for us to shape our fate based on our decisions?

Here we are faced with two seemingly contradictory elements.

On the one hand, we have seen throughout this book that the human spirit is endowed with a free will and that from the decisions it makes through it, it forms its fate according to the law that what we sow we inevitably reap later.

On the other hand, we have just seen that thanks to astrology, it is possible to see the character and fate of a person according to his birth chart, which tends to show that it is the stars that determine what we are and what our fate will be.

Being in contradiction with each other, these two elements seem at first glance to be mutually exclusive. But does the fact that one is right necessarily imply that the other is wrong? Should we really reject one in favour of the other, when both appear to be right? Is there not a way to reconcile these two truths?

The contradiction between these two facts is only apparent. It stems from the absence of an overall view and knowledge of the true role of the stars. However, this knowledge is revealed in the Grail Message, which explains the nature of astral influences as follows:

*"The radiations of the stars are merely channels into which is drawn all the karma hanging about a person at that time, in so far as the karma is homogenous to the existing radiations. If the radiations of the stars are unfavourable then only the unfavourable karma clinging to a person will be drawn into these channels, exactly as it corresponds to the nature of the radiations, and nothing else! It is the same with favourable radiations. Jointly guided in this way, karma can have a much more perceptible effect on mankind. However, where there is no bad karma outstanding, even unfavourable radiations of the stars cannot have bad effects. The one can not be separated from the other."*

(In the Light of Truth, the Grail Message, Volume II, Lecture 22).

All that we have sown returns to us transported by the currents of forces that emanate from the planets and act as a kind of channel. Each planet brings us the karma corresponding to its kind. So there is an organized distribution of karmic returns. They do not come back to us at any time or in any order, but when their kind corresponds to the kind of the currents of the stars.

The stars are therefore not the starting point of karma but the relays through which karma returns to its author. There is therefore no incompatibility between the fact that man forms his fate through his free will and the activity of the stars. The human being effectively forms his fate and the stars bring it back to him.

### **Why was I born under this sky?**

In addition to their role as relays or channels for karmic returns, the stars act permanently on events by sending their particular force towards the earth. The earth, let us remember, is in the middle of the radiant force fields emanating from the signs and planets.

Together, these forces contain all the energies and stimuli that the human spirit needs. They are constantly being sent towards the earth, but depending on the position of the planets in the sky, the intensity of their radiation varies.

When a planet transiting the sky is momentarily in a dominant position, it has more strength. Thus, it stimulates, triggers and reinforces more everything that depends on the energy it offers. The other planets, which, because of their position have a more discreet action at the moment, do not transmit as much force. The result is a slowing, braking or blocking action on the phenomena and events that need it to manifest themselves. The stimulating or braking action of the stars does not suppress the free will of the human being, but puts the latter in constantly new situations to which he must react.

Thus, according to the distribution of the stars in the sky at a given moment, the moment in question will have a very particular "colouring". This energetic colouring is constantly changing as the stars are constantly changing position. The birth sky of each new individual is therefore different and has very special characteristics.

Why is an individual born under one sky rather than another? Some people say that it happens by chance and that the stars under which someone is born will form his character and fate. The spirit, however, does not begin its existence with birth. The spirit existed before coming to earth. It had already lived and decided many things before that moment. In this way, he had already formed a personality and had already laid the foundations for his future fate.

The individual who comes into the world at a particular time therefore does not have such and such a character and such a fate because he was born under that sky, but he was born under that sky because he has such and such a character and such and such a fate. The human spirit is thus incarnated under a sky that corresponds to it, hence the illusion that it is the human spirit that corresponds to the sky.

The spirit cannot come to earth at any time, anywhere, in one family rather than another. There are laws that govern the possibilities of reincarnation. The main one is the law of attraction of affinities, which causes fellow human beings to attract each other, to join together and consequently to gather together, while opposites repel each other.

It is therefore necessary for an affinity between the spirit of the unborn child and the environment in which it is born to exist, so that it can be properly anchored in it and continue its evolution. A plant too cannot thrive in any soil and environment; it needs a land in affinity with its needs. Likewise, it is also necessary that there is a relationship or correspondence between the events that take place on earth and those that the spirit must experience karmically. In this way it can make the experiences that help it to progress. The social, political, cultural, economic, ... situation of the moment must indeed offer it the context in which to live its karma.

The general colouring of events on earth corresponds to that of heaven. On the one hand because these events are formed partly by the karmic returns corresponding to this sky (role of channels of the stars), on the other hand because the contribution of force from the sky in question acts in a corresponding way on the activity of human beings (role of radiation-centres of the stars).

Thus, we form our karma from the decisions we make with our free will. This karma is returned to us by the law of sowing and reaping and it is the law of attraction of affinities that attracts us to the place and time when this karma can be reaped.

### **Movement of the stars and evolution**

Because of their continuously changing position, the stars are constantly feeding or pouring their radiation onto man and the earth in a constantly new way. These permanent modifications avoid uniformity and are highly beneficial to the human spirit. They push it to move, to surpass itself, and thus to evolve.

At first glance, one might think that when the human being has found a balance in his life, it would be preferable that nothing should disturb him. However, a too uniform rhythm of life easily leads to stagnation. The spirit can fall asleep in the daily routine and thus cease to develop the faculties that are in it.

But thanks to the movement of the stars, stagnation is never possible. Constantly new situations and challenges force the spirit to move. It must be active, vigilant, weigh, decide, realize, struggle, persevere. This strengthens it internally and contributes to the development of its spiritual faculties. How much and how the spirit develops depends on itself. He is free at this level, because his free will allows him to choose.

When, taking advantage of a force input from a given planet or the stimulation associated with it, the human spirit achieves one thing or another in relation to the energies received, it is generally thought that it is the planet that has determined its action, in other words, that has forced it to achieve it. However, it has not been forced to do anything. It was offered an opportunity and it took it.

There are many ways it can use this force. The forces of the planet Venus, for example, drive the human spirit to seek beauty and harmony in general. Therefore, this search can manifest itself in art, in the way it speaks, in the way it furnishes his home, dresses, etc. And in the field of art, it can be painting, music, sculpture, etc. If it is about music, it can manifest itself in the choice of an instrument or another, in a style of music or in simply listening to it, instead of playing it, etc.

The venusian energy given by the planet is only a global kind of energy with precise characteristics, but which can be used in many ways. Which one will be chosen depends on the person's free will. Moreover, this energy can be used in a beneficial or harmful way, for good or for evil, for constructive and ennobling purposes, or egoistic and lowly.

Fundamentally, these forces are intended to enable the realisation of what is good and right. These forces were indeed created by the Creator who wants only good. They aim at development and perfection. The fact that the human spirit can decide to use them to promote or destroy shows that it can dispose of them as it pleases. It is therefore proof that it has the free will to decide despite the influence of the stars.

### **What room is there for superstition?**

Faced with the perfection of the law of sowing and reaping, which brings to each his due, what place can superstition have? It has none, for it is born only from a lack of knowledge of this law. It is true that superstitious people find that one thing leads to another. But they do not know that this is due to the rigorous and exact activity of the law of sowing and reaping, which means that each one receives only what he has sown. They speak instead of a mysterious process and thus leave room for arbitrariness and lack of logic.

Superstitious people think that one can reap something completely different from what one has sown. To take a few well-known examples: breaking a mirror would cause seven years of misfortune, walking under a ladder would announce an accident, opening an umbrella inside the house would call for rain. Good things can also happen as a result of certain actions: finding a four-leaf clover would bring luck, just like seeing a chimney sweep.

There is no relation between seeing a chimney sweep and a happy event that will happen to us in the near future. For example, receiving a letter from a loved one you have not heard from since long ago, being promoted in your job, or meeting the man or woman of your life. Nor than between a broken mirror and an accident of one kind or another. But the belief is there. Superstitious people are convinced that certain acts always and automatically determine a certain consequence, even if these have no relation to the acts committed. They scrupulously avoid the former in order to escape the latter. Their life is then full of taboos and unfounded prohibitions. The arbitrariness of all this maintains fear in them.

Superstitious people do not only believe in the existence of these arbitrary and inconsistent cause-and-effect chains. They also believe that the harvest of events can be thwarted just as arbitrarily by the use of talismans or lucky charms. For example, a four-leaf clover that you keep on you, a horseshoe that you place open up against the wall of your house, a medallion of St. Christopher that you hang in your car, etc. The purpose of these lucky charms is to prevent misfortune from happening, even if it is well deserved.

Ignorance of the true action of the law of sowing and reaping prevents superstitious people from seeing that the events that happen to them are not arbitrary and that lessons can be learned from them. For them, there is no logic in events, so there is nothing to learn. This lack of knowledge prevents them from learning from what happens to them. It also makes them waste their time to avoid committing this or that act arbitrarily declared evil, time that they could use to joyfully progress in creation. In this way, they also do not acquire the quiet assurance that comes from the certainty that misfortune cannot fall upon them if they have not called it.

## Chapter 8 The First Victim and the Last Executioner

Although all human beings have already reincarnated many times, and during these incarnations they have sown many things, not all the events that happen to them are necessarily karmic returns. Some of them certainly are, but not all of them.

### The first victim

To highlight this, let us take the case of the first man on earth who had to suffer harm at the hands of one of his fellow men. This man, what did he sow in order to reap this wrong and become the first victim? Nothing, for if he had sown something for this, he would not have been the first victim.

The first to suffer harm therefore sowed nothing to deserve it. We can see that an innocent person can be wronged unjustly. The possibility therefore exists. However, this was an extreme case, at the beginning of the history of mankind. Is it the same afterwards? In other words, is it possible, for example, for us today to experience events that are not karmic returns?

According to his karma, the human being is embodied in a particular environment with people with specific characteristics. The decisions they make are therefore partly predictable since they issue from them and are conditioned by their gender. In this way, their decisions and actions are, in general, in accordance with the karmic experiences that the person, who is incarnated by affinity in their midst, must live.

However, at every moment, thanks to their free will, human beings can make new decisions. They can therefore make choices absolutely outside of those they usually make. When this is the case, something unusual takes place. It then affects a person who lives in their surroundings, without it being part of the predictable course of that person's karmic returns.

Let's take an example. For karmic reasons, someone has incarnated close to caring people, because he has to experience this quality on himself. Inevitably, he will experience this quality because the decisions that these people make are tinged with benevolence. One of these people, however, one day allows himself to be carried away by a fit of anger and decides to attack him. This act is out of the ordinary. It is the result of a decision made at the time. It goes against what he would do "normally" and what the other person could logically reap by virtue of his karma. The person attacked then suffers something unjustly and which is not karmic.

A feeling of revolt comes over us when we see an innocent person suffering without having done anything to deserve it. It is not uncommon for God to be blamed for the fact that He seems to tolerate these injustices and does not prevent them. But the powerful sense of revolt that is awakening in us should rather be directed towards the source of injustice: human beings. It is indeed they who commit them.

Possessing a free will, human beings can at any time decide to do evil if they wish. There is no safeguard that can prevent them from doing so, except their own conscience. This consciousness resides in the spirit. It expresses itself through the voice of conscience. The

conscience clearly indicates what is right and what is wrong. If the human being listened to it and acted accordingly, he would never harm his fellow man.

But one must listen to one's conscience. And not only listen to it, but also develop and refine it by caring and obeying it. In this way, it would acquire more strength and would be better able to act as a safeguard that prevents us from harming our neighbour.

Although human beings can right the wrongs they commit, it is better never to perpetuate them. On the one hand to avoid suffering for his neighbour, suffering that he does not appreciate, and on the other hand, because repairing a wrong is not always so quick and easy to do.

It should be pointed out here that, at the beginning of the evolution of humanity, there must have been more cases of innocent victims than later on. At that far-off time, human spirits had not yet sown much. Much of what they were experiencing was not karmic. Later, after many reincarnations, their sowing became very numerous and the harm they received corresponded more and more to karmic returns.

At the beginning of evolution, the harm that human beings could do to themselves was also less than what they could do later. Only with time, habit and obstinacy did small imperfections of character become serious faults capable of doing much harm.

Apart from the cases we have just spoken of where the wrongs are not karmic and thus are unjustly suffered, there are other cases in which the harm is also not karmic, but in which the victim nevertheless has his share of responsibility.

### **Why me?**

Of all the people around someone who decides to do wrong, the latter "chooses" only one. Hence the victims' bitter exclamations "Why me?". Indeed, why him rather than someone else? This choice doesn't take place by chance. It unconsciously focuses on the most receptive person.

This becomes understandable if we take into consideration the law of motion, which is another great law of creation. This law causes everything that is alive to move, to be in motion, and therefore that what wants to remain alive must maintain motion in itself. From this law it follows, conversely, that the slowing down of movement or life leads to sickness and then death. The latter is indeed characterized by the absence of motion.

The need to move manifests itself in the human being both physically and psychically. The slowing down of blood circulation, respiratory exchanges or the functioning of any organ weakens the body, making it susceptible to disease. At the level of the spirit, a lack of activity, will or alertness makes the person receptive to external influences. Not asserting himself towards his entourage, his entourage will assert itself towards him. Not directing his life, life will direct him. He is like a boat without a rudder: not trying to maintain a course, it is the wind and sea currents that direct it.

### **A too great state of receptivity**

Thus, some people, by their inner attitude and what consequently emanates from them, do not oppose a force equal to those coming from the outside, a force that would mark strongly their presence and shows that they are endowed with a capacity for resistance. They are like a void that can be filled and, by that very fact, "asks" to be filled. By their receptivity, they attract what's around them. Of all the people on whom someone with evil intentions might act, they are the ones who will unconsciously be chosen first, and not alert and vigilant people.

Events take place in this way all the more easily because there is a tendency in nature and in human beings to choose the easiest path, the path of least effort. Water always flows down the steepest path. During a thunderstorm, lightning strikes the ground by following the path of least resistance. Despite its power and speed, a lion does not attack the most beautiful and muscular gazelles in a herd, but the weakest. Sick or old gazelles offer less resistance, they are more "receptive" to attack.

The same can be observed in human behaviour. Humans also willingly choose the path of least effort. He will preferably choose the wide and easy road rather than the narrow and steep one, as explained in the Bible. If there are two ways of doing something, he will most often adopt the one that demands the least of him. This tendency also manifests itself in human relationships. At school, for example, every class has its whipping boy. It is the pupil who is the object of all the pranks, who is the object of most of the quolibets. He doesn't know how to put up the necessary resistance. If he leaves the class, another scapegoat will be found, the second least resistant in the class.

It is also well known that a human being who cannot take out his anger on his true tormentors, because of his lack of personal strength or the subordinate position he occupies, takes it out on someone weaker, because he is not as strong as he is.

### **Fault by excess or lack**

It is generally believed that human beings can only sin in excess. He is too combative, too firm and too enthusiastic, for example, and that he acquires the faults of violence, intolerance and unconsciousness. But he can also sin through lack. He will then be too passive, irresolute and receptive. He has not sufficiently developed his spiritual faculties in relation to his fellow men, something that goes against the law of movement.

Man must not only do no evil, but he must also, and above all, do good, for it is in this way that he develops the faculties that lie within him, faculties that are all beneficial. The inactive spirit, which does neither evil nor good, but which stands somewhere in the middle, does not evolve. It is said to be a lukewarm spirit. Lacking strength, it puts itself in danger, because it offers the greatest receptivity. He easily becomes a victim.

In such a case, the victim is not preserved from harm because, it is his fault that he offers too much flank to the aggression. He is partly to blame. In this way, what happens to the victim cannot be considered totally unfair. It could have been avoided. It was up to him to develop his faculties rather than neglecting them, to be vigilant rather than not being vigilant. By sowing a situation of vulnerability, he reaps a situation in which anyone can take advantage of his weakness.

A well-known historical case of this lack of vigilance is that of the Incas. They were a good people, joyful, candid, ... therefore endowed with many qualities. But they were not vigilant. They lived carefree, while they were surrounded by people less peaceful than them. Although the Incas built in two centuries an empire of nearly 8 million inhabitants, with a very elaborate social organization, this empire collapsed in a few days under the assault of Pizarro and his 182 soldiers. The Incas had an army, but it was the state of mind of the army and its leaders that was not up to the task. They were not prepared enough to defend themselves, which ultimately led to their unfortunate fate.

It is certainly wrong to take advantage of the vulnerability of others and to harm them, even when that person, or people, almost calls out to them by their behaviour. In all circumstances and in the face of anyone, the human spirit must bear witness to love of neighbour, that is to say, it must behave in a correct and respectful manner.

Every harvest, even in these circumstances, however, has an educational value. The sufferings which the lukewarm person must experience because of his shortcomings draw him out of his passivity. It awakens him and stimulates him to become active, to struggle, to persevere. These different reactions lead to the development of inner faculties that had been dormant until then. The lukewarm person thus becomes someone who inspires respect.

### **The last executioner**

The question of the last executioner is the counterpart of that of the first victim. It's a fairly theoretical question, but it's one that a lot of people ask themselves. This question is the following: when all human beings, except one, are of good will and do no more harm, how will the last bad person reap the painful karma that he deserves? No one will be available to deceive him, brutalize him, or do any other mischief that should be his due. Where is the "executioner" through whom the painful returns could come? Does someone have to devote himself to doing evil so that the last refractory person can experience upon himself the suffering he has done to others? Some people think so and, indeed, that for this reason, karma can never end. There will always be a need for new executioners who hurt those who karmically deserve it, these executioners creating a new karma for themselves, which will require other executioners who hurt them to live it on them, and so on, without end.

Such a thing is of course not necessary. On the one hand, by his own clumsiness, the person can create a situation himself that corresponds to a karmic return. An unfortunate gesture on his part and his house catches fire, his car goes off the road, a precious object breaks, he gets hurt, poisoned, etc. On the other hand, painful karma can be brought back by something other than events produced by human beings. As we have already mentioned about natural disasters, a variety of difficult situations can be experienced during storms, floods, etc... For example, physical suffering due to injuries or moral pain due to the loss of property, position, etc., can be experienced. Nature can also bring about organic deficiencies that cause karmic returns in the form of a difficult experience of one kind or another at the body level. The last executioner can thus live his karma without another human being being forced to do harm, since he and nature can be the initiators.

Nothing prevents karma from ending one day, but when will this end come?

## Chapter 9                    The End of Karma

The human being sows and reaps; he sows again and reaps again. Until when can these cycles of sowing and reaping take place? Do they continue like this for eternity or is there a limit to them?

The time offered to the spirit-germ seed to evolve is not infinite. It is limited to the duration of the existence of the place where it is serving its apprenticeship. This place are the planes of gross matter and those of ethereal matter, in other words matter in general. Indeed, matter does not last forever.

### **Matter is not eternal**

Matter goes through a cycle of formation, growth then decomposition, which redivides it into its constituent elements, so that these can go through a new cycle. This cycle is easy to observe in our closest surroundings. Minerals group together to form rocks which, under the effect of erosion, decompose into isolated minerals. Different substances come together to form plants or animal bodies. These grow and then decompose.

What happens here, in small, also takes place on a large scale at the level of the earth, but also of matter in general, i.e. for all the planes of dense and ethereal matter. There will thus come a day when the whole material creation will decompose. When this is the case, the human spirit will be deprived of a dwelling place in which to evolve. It will therefore be obliged to leave matter before that time. But, to go where? The only possibility open to him is to go to his plane of origin, the spiritual plane. Being above matter, this plane is not subject to decomposition. Now, the entrance to paradise is open only to spirits who have developed their spiritual faculties and know how to use them consciously for good. As long as this stage has not been reached, the spirit is compelled to remain in matter. However, if the latter is decomposing, the spirit is carried away with it in the process of decomposition.

Since all karma can only be formed and thus unravelled in matter, the decomposition of matter puts an end to all karmas with certainty.

### **The sorting process**

With the decomposition of matter, a sort is thus naturally made between the spirits which will be able to go up to paradise and those which will not. The former are those whose spiritual evolution is sufficiently advanced and who are therefore not bound to matter. When the latter enters into decomposition, they separate themselves easily from it and ascend to the spiritual plane with which they are in affinity.

The second are those whose evolution has remained too far behind and, consequently, that too many karmic threads hold attached to matter, because of the wrong directions they have taken. Not being able to extract themselves from it in time and move away from it when it decomposes, they remain attached to it and disintegrate at the same time as it does. In the course of this process, not only their envelopes of dense and ethereal matter decompose, but also all the spiritual faculties they had developed up to that time since being a spirit-germ. This is spiritual death.

The sorting that takes place during the decomposition of matter is similar to the sorting that takes place at the end of the year in schools. The curriculum offered by schools cannot be followed indefinitely. One day, the time allotted to acquire the knowledge provided comes to an end. The final examination is then used to determine the student's abilities. It tests him on his true worth at the time of the examination and not on the grades for the year. These show only what the student knew in the course of study but may have forgotten in the meantime. But, it is the knowledge he has at the end of his study that is decisive, because it is this knowledge that defines his possibilities (or lack of them) for the new stage that lies before him.

For the human spirit in creation, there also comes a day when the question arises as to what value it has acquired once it has reached the end of the time allotted for its evolution? Has it made use of the opportunity it has been given to develop the faculties deposited in his spirit in a germ state? Does it use its faculties for good? Has it become a personality who knows how to behave respectfully and harmoniously in creation or not? The day on which these questions are asked is comparable for him to an examination day which determines whether he will be able to continue his evolution or not.

The existence of an examination that sorts out human spirits is something that is known to all the great religions. It is what is referred to as "The Last Judgment".

### **What is the Last Judgment?**

The Last Judgment is described as an event that will happen at the end of time, when God will pass judgment on the fate of all human spirits.

To use biblical expressions, it is the time of separation between the sheep and the goats (the good and the wicked), between the good grain and the chaff (what is usable and what is not), or between the good grain and the tare (the good and the bad) - the tare is a plant that is particularly harmful to the growth of grain.

Judgement takes place at the end of time or at the end of the world. Indeed, the decomposition of matter leads to the disintegration of all forms: stars, mountains, plains, seas, plants, animals, ... and thus the end of a world and an era.

The Last Judgement is also referred to as "the day of the Lord" or "the day of retribution", i.e. the day when God imposes his Justice. Man will receive what is due to him for all that he has accomplished and not yet undone in the course of his existence, here on earth and in the beyond.

Announcements concerning the coming of a Judgment at the end of time have been made for a long time and all over the globe. As far as the West is concerned, it is first the prophets of the Old Testament who speak about it, then Christ, and finally the book of Revelation (also called the Apocalypse), which is entirely devoted to this subject. So what do the prophecies say about the Judgment?

The earliest written testimony we have is that of the prophet Amos, around 750 B.C., who exclaimed, "What do you expect in the day of the Lord? It will be darkness and not light" (Amos 5:15). We can see by his words that the coming of this day was already known before he spoke of it. Indeed, Amos is obliged to correct the opinion of his listeners: the day of the

Lord will not be a joyful day, as they expect it to be, which it could have been if man had sown only good karma, but a dark day. The judgment does not take place arbitrarily, but restore to the human being exclusively what he has sown. This is confirmed time and again: "I will chastise him (man) according to his ways, I will repay him according to his works" (Hosea 4:10); "I will bring your way upon your head, says the Lord, ... I will do to you as you have done" (Ezekiel 16:43, 59); "For the day of the Lord is near at hand for all nations. As you have done, so shall it be done to you; your works shall fall upon your head". (Obadiah 1:15)

Unfortunately, what human beings have sown are bad fruits. These will make him reap destruction and suffering. "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace" writes Malachi (about 450 B.C.) "all the lofty and all the wicked will be as stubble, and the day to come will set them on fire" (Mal. 4.1). The prophet Daniel, 250 years later, about 200 B.C., also says, "It will be a time of trouble, such as has not been since the nations existed up to that time" (Daniel 12:1).

The purpose of the Judgment, however, is not to destroy everything that exists, but to effect a separation between those who do not act according to the laws of creation and those who do, the latter being then saved from the decomposition that will begin in matter. "But to you who fear my name shall the sun of righteousness rise" (Malachi 4:2). And "At that time those of your people who are written in the book (of life) will be saved" (Daniel 12:1).

Far from invalidating the existence and coming of the Last Judgment, the Son of God, Jesus, only confirms it:

"On the day of Judgment, men will give an account of every vain word." (Matthew 12:36).

"It will be the same at the end of the world. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and cast them into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:49-50).

"The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent..." (Mark 1:15).

The book of Revelation, placed at the end of the Bible, symbolically and pictorially describes everything that will take place during the Judgment. It will take place because "the time has come to judge ... and to destroy those who destroy the earth". (Revelation 11:18).

There is something frightening about the Last Judgment, but those who strive to do good have nothing to fear, "For the Judgment shall be according to righteousness. And as many as are upright in heart will approve of it" (Psalm 94:15).

### **The Process of Judgment**

In order to be in accordance with justice, the Last Judgment cannot be pronounced before the end of the human being's apprenticeship, in other words, before he has reaped all his karma. Indeed, learning by living on itself what it has sown, i.e. through the reaping of its karma, is an integral part of the learning process of the human spirit. But what that spirit is before these returns is not the same as what it will be after them. The spirit can still change a great deal when confronted with the reapings, whether for good or for ill. That is why these returns must

be taken into account for the final Judgment and the human spirit must be able to experience these returns before being judged.

The Last Judgment is therefore about the ultimate result of the spirit's activity after the return of all its karma, hence the biblical words: some who were thought to be lost will be saved at the last moment while others who were thought to be saved will be lost at the last moment.

Since the Last Judgment must take place just before the decomposition process begins, all of each individual's karma must be returned to him before that moment is reached. Now, with each passing hour, the human spirit makes new decisions with the help of its free will. In this way, it sows a new karma, thus postponing the moment of the return of the last reaping. Indeed, if these reapings returned at the same rhythm as usual, part of the human being's karma could not reach him before the judgment, but would necessarily reach him afterwards, which cannot be since there is a deadline not to be exceeded.

In order for all karma, old and new, to come back before the Judgment deadline, something must radically change in the way the course of events takes place. This change cannot be arbitrary, that's why it only concerns the speed with which the reapings are returned to their author. It consists of an acceleration of this speed, which greatly shortens the time needed for the return of new and old karma. Instead of the reapings returning only gradually, spread out over time, they are returned in a concentrated and rapid form. This results in the accelerated closing of all karmic cycles. Thus, the human being lives a lot in a very short time. He is confronted with a rapid succession of situations and events, happy and unhappy, in accordance with what he has sown. And it is on the result of this confrontation that the spirit is judged.

Faced with this intensification of returns, the spirit cannot remain inactive. It must react and make decisions. If it has developed enough good in itself so far and is willing, the karmic returns will be mainly good, which will confirm and strengthen it in its ways. It will learn from its experience and will come out of them improved. It will free itself from the karmic threads that held it back and will be able to develop quickly in it what he is lacking. For this reason, it will pass the Last Judgment.

If, on the contrary, the spirit's inner state is not good and it does not have a good will, it will suffer one dramatic event after another, in accordance with what it has sown. It is wounded, bruised, crushed by them. Has it faced one of them that already the next one arrives, then the next one and so on. To these painful returns that threaten to overwhelm it, is added the new bad karma that it sows when it reacts erroneously to these returns. It thus binds itself even more to matter. Its faults and weaknesses will increase and it will be destroyed under the weight of its errors, which corresponds to being rejected at the time of the Last Judgment. The sorting that takes place during the judgment is thus done automatically according to the real inner state of the human being.

This is his real inner state, for the Judgment is not based on an approximate knowledge of the facts and inner motives of the human being, as is the case with human justice. On the contrary, because of the existence of the almighty law of sowing and reaping, the fruits that are returned to their author in the course of the Judgment are very exactly what he has sown. Moreover, his real inner state is clearly revealed in the way he reacts to his karmic returns. By rejecting what is bad or not, he reveals whether he is good or not, and thereby judges himself.

Judgment is therefore not something that takes place once all the remaining karma has been returned, but during this return. It even consists of this return.

The forms that the concentrated returns of an individual karma take can only be strong and incisive. Now, when to these returns are added all those of other human beings who, like him, because of the Last Judgment, simultaneously receive their own karma in return, great upheavals and disasters result, such as those announced by the prophets. They take the form of great and terrifying social, political, economic, but also natural disasters, since, as we have seen, these allow for grouped karmic returns.

### **A natural event**

One difficulty that there may be in admitting the reality of the Last Judgment is that, at first glance, it appears to be something unnatural, because it is too far removed from the logic of the usual course of events.

In reality, however, the Last Judgment is a perfectly natural event. The processes of acceleration and sorting that characterize it take place commonly in various forms in nature. These forms are small representations of what happens on a large scale during the Judgment.

Let's take the example of a fever. In the course of a fever, all metabolisms are accelerated. Blood circulation, oxygenation, cellular exchanges, combustion, organic defences and toxin elimination are intensified. The body cells and microbes responsible for the fever are suddenly put in a completely new situation. They have to function at a much more demanding pace, cope with a higher temperature, etc. A lot happens to them in a short time. The conditions of survival become much more difficult. They are a challenge to overcome. Only that which is strong in itself, is in its place and lives in harmony with the rest of the body will win out. While these conditions are met by the body cells, this is not the case for microbes. They may be strong in themselves, but they are neither in their place nor contribute to harmony at all. They will therefore be destroyed in the course of the fever.

So during a fever, a real sorting takes place that eliminates what is bad: the microbes, and keeps what is good: the cells.

Another natural phenomenon that illustrates in small ways what happens in large ways at the Last Judgment is the process of natural selection. It is defined as the separation or sorting that takes place between individuals (plant or animal) who have sufficiently developed their potentialities to survive the characteristics of their environment and those who have not.

Natural selection takes place constantly, at a slow pace, for example in the struggle of plants against lack of water or of animals to escape from predators. Sometimes, however, it can accelerate and intensify. This is the case when the environment suddenly undergoes a major change. Whether it is a change in temperature, precipitation patterns, oxygen content in the air, etc., these changes put pressure on what is in the environment, hence the term "selection pressure" used to describe this phenomenon. Here again, only that which has sufficiently developed its faculties to adapt to the new environmental conditions, in other words, which uses its potentialities in harmony with what nature now requires of it, can survive.

According to palaeontology, the conditions on earth have already changed a dozen times, each time bringing the earth into a new geological era. Each passage represented a period when

selection pressure increased sharply and led to the elimination of many plants and animals. For example, during the transition from the Cretaceous to the Tertiary, 65 million years ago, various plants and 50% of marine animal species disappeared.

That a particular plant or animal disappears or is severely decimated as a result of natural selection is felt as normal and logical by human beings. The same applies to the fact that a plant or animal has to struggle to survive, otherwise it will be eliminated, of course, as long as this happens in the natural order of things and not because of irresponsible human behaviour. Natural selection is therefore something that human beings perfectly admit. However, this natural selection does not only take place on plants and animals, but also on the human being himself. It manifests itself on his body as natural selection as it is spoken of in science, and on his spirit as Last Judgment. Indeed, through judgment, the spirit is under a very strong selection pressure because of the acceleration of karmic returns and it can be eliminated if it is not up to scratch.

### **Intermediate judgements have already taken place**

The adjective last, in the expression Last Judgment, shows that it is the ultimate and last judgment of a series of judgments. It is the latest. Therefore, there have been others before it.

So what are these other judgments that preceded it that could be called intermediate judgments? There have been several in the history of mankind. Their existence therefore confirms the possibility that an ultimate Judgment is within the realm of the possible.

The best known of these intermediate judgements, which made a provisional sorting among human beings, is undoubtedly the flood from which Noah and his family escaped.

The Bible relates the event as follows: "The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. ... The waters grew heavier and heavier, and all the high mountains that are under the whole heaven were covered. ... Everything that moved upon the earth perished ...". (Genesis 7:12,19,21)

What were the reasons for this judgment? It was triggered because "the Lord saw that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that all the thoughts of their hearts were daily directed only to evil." (Genesis 6:5).

The purpose of the flood was not to destroy mankind for good, but, by their death on earth, to put an end to a common evolution in the wrong direction. In this way, the spirits could later reincarnate and make a new beginning. For, having recognised their mistakes in the beyond, they returned to earth thanks to the presence of the descendants of the human beings who had survived the flood, symbolised in the story by Noah and his family.

Another of these intermediate judgments is known to us thanks to Plato. It concerns the island of Atlantis, which was engulfed in one day by a gigantic cataclysm. "... there were extraordinary earthquakes and floods, and in the space of a single day and a single harmful night, ... the island of Atlantis, having sunk into the sea, disappeared ...". (Timaeus 25:26)

According to Plato, Atlantis was a huge island that was full of wealth and experienced an incredible boom and prosperity. As long as the Atlantians obeyed the laws and remained attached to the divine principles, all went well. But when they became "unable to endure

prosperity ... and were infected with unjust lust and pride," things changed for them. "Then the god of gods, Zeus, who reigns according to the laws and can discern these sorts of things, realizing the unfortunate state of a race that had been virtuous, resolved to punish them to make them more moderate and wise. (Critias 120 a)

Here too, an evolution towards decadence is interrupted in order to help the spirits take another direction.

Another example is Sodom and Gomorrah, two cities on the Dead Sea that were known for the perversion of their inhabitants. They were also destroyed, but this time not by water or earthquakes. On the contrary, "The Lord rained brimstone and fire from heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah, ... He destroyed these cities, the whole plain and all the inhabitants of the cities, and the plants of the earth". Abraham, looking down from afar, ..." saw a smoke rising from the earth, like the smoke of a furnace". (Genesis 19:24,27)

To better grasp the meaning of intermediate judgements it is necessary to remember that the human spirit does not live in isolation. When it does evil, it does not only affect it, but also the spirits around it and the nature that surrounds it. The results of his erroneous behaviour can cause great damage. Human beings and animals may suffer unjustly, and nature may be partly destroyed. Through its harmful activities, it can also prevent other spirits from evolving.

An intermediate judgment which eliminates the troublemakers allows the spirits in question to return to better feelings in the beyond if they so desire, to nature to repair and regenerate itself, and to other spirits to continue their evolution more normally.

### **Karma and Judgment**

If you think about it, every karmic feedback we get in the course of daily life corresponds to a kind of small judgment. Each time these returns reset one of our "accounts" to zero. An evil done in the past is brought back; by its redemption, it is erased. The account in question can be closed. We could also say: the debt is paid, it is erased, or the penalty has been incurred, the person is cleared of the wrong.

The final judgment differs from ordinary karmic returns by the fact that during it all accounts are reset to zero. Someone who passes the Last Judgement successfully thus sees all of his karma eliminated. However, this does not mean that he has become perfect and has finished evolving. He has gotten rid of his karma, but not necessarily of his faults. Having behaved erroneously for a long time, the development of his spiritual faculties remained far behind what it should have been. He must now continue his evolution and perfect it.

But is such a thing still possible? Can matter still offer him the learning ground he needs? According to the prophets, it can. A period of improvement will follow the Judgment and take place before decomposition begins. This period is referred to as the "Kingdom of a thousand years". During this time, human spirits who have proven their good will be allowed to learn what they still lack, in order to catch up. Again according to the prophets, they will be instructed and guided by an envoy of God: Imanuel, the Son of Man.

In the Grail Message we can read that "*Thus the Millennium will become a school for mankind, in which they must learn how they have to stand in this Subsequent Creation, how to think and to act in order to fulfil their appointed task correctly, and thereby to achieve happiness themselves!*" (Volume I, Lecture 28).

However, this will not mean that learning through experience will cease. Far from diminishing, the speed and intensity with which events unfold at the time of judgment, will be maintained during the reign of a thousand years.

During this reign, everything that the human spirit sows will return to it very quickly. There will no longer be a long period of time between sowing and reaping, but the latter will succeed the former extremely closely. In some cases, the returns will even be immediate. They will be so rapid that every human spirit will be immediately confronted with what it needs to reap. He will thus be able to immediately become aware of whether or not his decisions are well-founded. In this way, he will be able to modify straight away what must be changed in him, according to what he has just learned from his experience.

The speed of return is an invaluable aid given to the human spirit. It prevents it from going down the wrong path for a too long time. It also enables it to quickly consolidate the good in it. But before the spirit can participate in this "intensive remedial course" and become fully receptive to what is taught, it must first be transformed itself inwardly at the time of the Last Judgment.

### **When is the Last Judgment due?**

The event of the Last Judgement may appear to many people as logical in relation to the existence of the cycle of formation-decomposition through which matter passes and in relation to the existence of karma, but nevertheless remain for them a mere theoretical possibility, in other words something unreal and distant and, therefore, unlikely.

However, if one is concerned about when the judgment will take place, it suddenly becomes something much more concrete. In fact, various signs which, according to the prophecies, announce the final judgment are already visible. Moreover, it is also possible to observe today the premises of the process of intensification of karmic returns proper to the judgment.

Let's first look at some of the signs given in the prophecies. In the book of the prophet Isaiah, the approach of the Last Judgment is described as being linked to a growing inability of human beings to get along with one another and to solve the great problems they face. Much effort is being made, but with little result. "Form plans, they will be destroyed; give orders and they will be ineffective, for Imanuel is coming". (Isaiah 8:10)

Whether it is to try to resolve armed or commercial conflicts between nations, to fight pollution or epidemics, or to try to save nature, never have so many international meetings, summits, conferences, working groups and special commissions been set up as they are today. But there have also never been so many meetings that lead nowhere, so many failed reforms, so many unsuccessful consensus-building processes, so many political decisions without results, so many non respected resolutions, so many broken agreements and truces, so many failed efforts.

Another sign heralded by prophecies is the appearance of a multitude of false prophets, that is to say, people who claim to be able to show the way forward to humanity in distress. Here, once again, we are forced to note that in recent decades there has been an explosion in the number of teachings, groups and associations of a religious, spiritual, esoteric and occultist nature. The arrival of this multitude of false prophets is not arbitrary, but constitutes a karmic return. The history of humanity shows that man has often preferred to listen to false prophets rather than to God's envoys. The intensified returns of karma at the Last Judgment bring the false prophets back to him in great numbers and thus incite every human being to distinguish the true from the false, for this is also the time of the arrival of the true guide.

As far as the acceleration process is concerned, this has been observed in many areas, starting around the beginning of the 20th century. It has been referred to as the "acceleration of history" to highlight the fact that while in the past a certain amount of time was needed for events to take place - and thus for history to be made - now this time was shorter and shorter.

Acceleration affects nature as well as the human body, diseases, lifestyles and social relationships. Here are a few examples.

If before 1900, there was a major earthquake every 10 years, from then on there was one every 5 years, and now there is one every year or more. In the second half of the 20th century, there was an average of 530 to 600 severe natural events (storms, floods...) per year in the world. Around the year 2000 there are more than 700.

If it took many tens of thousands of years for the world population to reach 1 billion, in 1850, 50 years later it had doubled and 100 years later it had increased sixfold. According to the WHO, the rate of emergence of new diseases has accelerated. As for puberty, it appears earlier and earlier.

Between Julius Caesar and the 1900s, that is to say 20 centuries, there were fewer changes in lifestyle than in the 20th century alone. Just think of the radical changes in our lives and social organization brought about by the invention of automobiles, airplanes, fixed and then mobile telephones, television, computers and the Internet.

The lives of individuals are also filled with more varied and numerous events than ever before. Contrary to what happened in the past, it is not uncommon nowadays to change profession, home, spouse, religion, financial situation, ... several times in a lifetime.

Many signs therefore seem to announce the Last Judgement. This is being felt by a growing number of people. The accumulation of tragic and destructive events makes them ask "but where is the world going to?". Expressions such as "Apocalyptic scenes" and "tragedies of biblical proportions" are also used to describe the desolation resulting from natural cataclysms, armed conflicts, the destruction of nature by pollution and the over-exploitation of natural resources. On the subject of the acceleration of events shaking our planet, the British Encyclopaedia states that: "The approach of the paroxysm, intuitively felt by the prophets, is now felt and feared as an event close at hand. To believe in its imminence is no longer an act of faith: it is a fact of observation and experience". (Article: Time, p. 413)

One might be surprised that prophets could foretell the coming of events that would take place several millennia later and, what is more, the tragic nature of those events. However, such a thing is possible precisely because of the existence of karma. The fruits of our sowing take

shape in the beyond. They are our thought-forms, the forms of our deeds and words. They constitute the events to come and according to their kind they reveal their nature.

### **The end of karma**

All karma ends one day. That it does so through the Last Judgment is only the ultimate solution. However, the human being does not have to wait for this deadline to ascend to paradise. He can anticipate it. That would be the normal way, the way that all human spirits could take.

By deciding to act only in the direction of good, just and beautiful, the spirit ceases to produce a karma that binds it to the earth. On the contrary, the threads of its good sowings bind it more and more upwards. There comes a time when he no longer has to reincarnate, but continues his evolution only on the planes of the ethereal matter of the beyond.

By perfecting himself, he can stay on higher and higher planes. There, he will be in close contact with human spirits who, like him, already have a great spiritual maturity. By their example, it is strengthened in the path it has taken. Its spiritual faculties flourish and become ever more refined.

Finally, having become an accomplished spirit, free of all karma, it enters the spiritual realm. This is the longed-for return to paradise, his homeland.

For further information about the work

“In the Light of Truth, the Grail Message” by Adbd-ru-shin

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