

Karmic Retribution

I had a question this week. “How can I lessen karmic retribution?” Let’s look at what karma is first.

What is karma?

With every thought, word and action we make, we simultaneously set seeds into our life which will produce an effect when the time is right. In accordance with the law of the simultaneity of cause and effect, negativity will produce negative results and positive thoughts words and actions will create positive effects. If we have committed evil acts we will experience suffering in one form or another. Our good actions have effects that lead to happiness.

The actions that leads to karmic retribution are slander of the law.

What is Slander of the Law?

We hear the word slander a lot but let’s unpack it so we will know what that means. When we speak ill of a person who embraces the law, it’s the same as speaking ill of the Mystic Law itself. So if you are contemptuous, hating, jealous or holding a grudge against another member you are slandering the law. It also means to deny, oppose, disparage or vilify the correct Buddhist teaching. So slander includes not believing in the teaching, harboring doubts.

Karmic Retribution

Nichiren describes eight forms of karmic retribution. We can be despised, cursed with an ugly appearance, be poorly clad, be poorly fed, seek wealth in vain, be born to an impoverished and lowly family or one with erroneous views and finally to be persecuted by one’s sovereign. He experienced all eight.

Buddhism is Justice

Can we just chant and thereby receive our karma more lightly? No, because as the Goshu says, “Buddhism is justice.” Lets say a thief starts to practice with the stolen goods still in his pocket. Although he chants, in order to eradicate his crime, he must return the loot to the owner and make some sort of reparation for the trouble he caused. We must experience the effects of any bad causes we’ve made, but, because we are chanting, we will receive the effects more lightly. Lessening karmic retribution means to transform the heavy and receive it lightly.

If we are suffering in our present life it is due to past karma. You might claim that you didn’t create any bad karma or slander the Lotus Sutra but as we know, we don’t remember what we did in our past lives. As Nichiren says “ If you want to understand the causes that existed in the past, look at the results as they are manifested in the present and if you want to understand what results will be manifested in the future, look at the causes that exist in the present.” WND 1, p. 279

Lessening karmic retribution doesn’t just mean zeroing out a minus balance but actually effecting a momentous change in the direction of our very lives, shifting from a downward descent towards an infinite upward ascent. We can only truly change our karma through the law of the simultaneity of cause and effect . When we change our mind we can transform both our lives and our environment. Thus doing our human revolution is also changing our karma.

When we face obstacles, we must practice earnestly and direct ourselves towards increasing our faith and eliminating disbelief, doubt and slander. When we triumph over the slander of disbelief, doubt and the desire to quit, then we will receive the effect. The Mystic Law rises in our hearts and Buddhahood wells forth. When we reveal that inner Buddhahood, we can surmount all obstacles.

Sit in front of the Gohonzon and make a commitment to change and act on ideas that come to you. Then devote yourself to activities, sharing Buddhism with others and supporting their practice.

In order to redress slander of the law you must do the opposite, praise the law and teach it to others by introducing others to the practice.. When you do these two things, you can overcome karmic effects and change your destiny.

When you start introducing people to the practice and protect the law then you receive great blessings and benefit. Karma, that could have troubled you for many lifetimes, can be transformed.

Challenge Karma and Strengthen Your Faith

The process of confronting and challenging our karma, enables us to polish and strengthen our faith. If we are irresolute, we crumble but if we maintain a firm resolve, we become pure gold. Defeat for a Buddhist lies not in encountering difficulties but rather not challenging them.

Half Hearted Practice Can't Change Karma

When changing karma you want to double down and go all out with your practice. Half hearted practice cannot alter the realm of karma. Attaining Buddhahood means to transform your karma through challenging difficult obstacles.

Summary:

We discussed the fact that through our practice we can lessen karmic retribution and receive it lightly. Bad karma is caused by past evil acts and by slandering the law.

Slander means to speak badly of other practitioners or to vilify the Law itself.

We looked at the eight types of karmic retribution.

Finally we looked at what we can do to lessen karmic retribution.

1. Resolve to change your karma and make changes in your life.
2. Challenge your obstacles.
3. Chant earnestly and with resolve: half hearted chanting won't change karma.
4. Praise the law and teach it to others.
5. Do your human revolution.

Related URL's

How to Master Barriers to Human Revolution <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-Xh>

Steps to Win the Spiritual Struggle When Confronting an Obstacle <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-DB>

Difficult Family Karma/ How to Change It <https://wp.me/p3V1J9-ZD>