

TO AWAKENING, PART 18

The Origin of Reincarnation Stated in *Surangama Sutra*

Now we know that people experience reincarnation and are implicated and dominated by cause and effect. But what is the cause of reincarnation? Let's explore its origins with some scientific cases.

You Owe Me Life, I Return the Debt

Dr. Roger J. Woolger, a psychologist at Oxford University in the U.K., also an expert in the field of reincarnation, had a patient named Paula who recalled one of her past lives as a mother in a primitive tribe. This tribe lacked food, everybody was starving, so this mother took an ax to chop her own baby and served it as food.

In the life immediately following, this mother was born into another primitive tribe. This tribe encountered the same problem of starvation, and the mother also killed her baby. During the hypnosis, she saw that this time she was the baby, and the mother who killed her was the baby she had killed in her previous life. This causal retribution is truly like the shadow following its form, from which no one can escape.

Another case from Professor Stevenson is about a Native American in Alaska named Charles Porter who recalled a previous life in which he was pierced by a spear during a war between two tribes. He was born with a big birthmark in the shape of a diamond like the wound caused by a spear. This patient was able to recognize the enemy who killed him as his mother's uncle in this life. Can you imagine how he would feel when he saw his great uncle?

So, The Buddha categorized the relationships among people as none other than "collecting debt, repaying debt, seeking revenge, and returning the debt of gratitude."

A famous Buddhist sutra—*The Surangama Sutra*—states,
"You owe me life, I return the debt,
per this cause and condition,
hundreds of thousands of kalpas passed,

we are perpetually in this birth-death samsara.”

You Love My Heart, I Enamour Your Beauty

A case from Professor Stevenson is about a girl named Tintinming, who was born in Myanmar in 1960. Her father was named Lapi, and her mother was named Sang. Lapi's deceased wife was named Huei who was the current wife's older sister.

The older sister, Huei, had had an extremely good relationship with her husband when alive. After she died, she appeared in her sister's dream and said, "I am going to follow you." One year later, Sang became the second wife of Lapi and was pregnant soon after.

During the pregnancy, she again dreamed of her late sister. The late sister once again expressed her wish to follow her. The younger sister told the late sister in the dream, "You are no longer in the same world as us now, and I also married your husband; if you always follow me, I am afraid it is not appropriate." But this late sister said in the dream, "The relationship will no longer be the same as before. I am determined to follow you."

Later, Sang gave birth to a daughter named Tintinming. When she was two years old, she was able to recall and describe her previous life as Lapi's wife. Tintinming's affection for her past husband remained; whenever her parents sat together, Tintinming always showed her jealousy by wedging herself in between them.

Due to this entangled love, men and women are drawn together, causing them to be reincarnated again and again. Maybe in one life they are parent and child, but in the next life, they become husband and wife. How dreadful that is!!!

The *Surangama Sutra* interprets these intricate causal relationships in a very simple way:

"You love my heart, I enamor your beauty,
per this cause and condition,
through hundreds of thousands of kalpas,
we are entangled together."

Through History Books in Glory, Let Our Crimson Hearts Shine!

Dr. Bryan Jameison, a well-known expert of reincarnation studies in the U.S., began his research into past lives and healing in the late 1960s. A few cases from his book, *The Search for Past Lives: Exploring Reincarnation'S Mysteries and The Amazing Healing Power of Past Life Therapy*, also shed light on the origin of reincarnation.

In this book, there was a girl named Nancy who suffered from depression from a young age. Despite having a happy family, she always felt guilty and ashamed to live in the world. She attempted suicide three times but was rescued every time.

Dr. Jameison helped her to recall her past life as a sixteen-year-old girl in Europe during World War II. Her family lived happily together until, one day when they were eating dinner, Hitler's fascist army suddenly broke into their house and arrested them. Her father protested, "You cannot arrest people like this." The Nazis shot him on the spot. Along with her mother and brother, they were dragged down the stairs. Her brother attempted to pull away and run down the street but was also shot and fell dead to the ground.

When she saw this tragic scene—a happy family destroyed by this fascist army in seconds—she felt the sky spinning and passed out. She woke up in a truck with many other people who had also been arrested. They were packed into a crowded train just like animals with no respect or dignity at all.

When the train arrived at a station, they were pushed into a concentration camp like livestock. Their hair was cut and they were given prisoner uniforms. She and another girl were selected to serve those fascist officers as sex slaves. This girl played piano very well and was liked by a Nazi officer who presented a bouquet to her to show his affection. Later, when this Nazi officer pursued pleasure with her, she even had a delusion, thinking she might live with this young officer forever after the war ended.

One day, this Nazi officer brought her to a yard where a crowd of people were walking. She asked the young officer, "Where are they heading to?" That officer smiled and said that they were going to enter the gas chamber. At that moment, one person in the crowd turned around and she recognized her mother following this group to the gas chamber.

The day after this incident, this girl felt overwhelmed by guilt. Her heart was full of anguish. Her entire family had been killed by these monsters of the fascist army, yet she

was still here pursuing pleasure with an enemy officer and even had a fantasy of living with him later. She ended her own life by slashing her wrist. However, the sense of guilt in her heart did not die with her death but followed her soul and reincarnated to this life. As a consequence, she felt an extremely deep sense of guilt since her childhood and often had the thought of committing suicide in this life.

Chinese ancients said, Better to die in glory than live in disgrace. As humans, we should live in a dignified and upright manner. We should not live with demons; otherwise, this guilt of deficit to the soul will not be obliterated life after life. A famous poet in the Southern Song Dynasty, Wen Tianxiang, said in one of his poems,

*Since time began,
to die, who can decline?
Through history books in glory,
let our crimson hearts shine!*

In the next part, we will delve deeper into the origin of reincarnation, introducing how Native Americans, after almost being annihilated, came back to take revenge in white people's society, and how do we resolve grievances with others. Please stay tuned and help us spread the messages. See you soon on Part 19.