

Eunuchs – The Curse of Past Life Karma?

'Karma' is an Indian religious concept where humans have free will to choose good or evil and suffer the consequences. It explains causality through a system where beneficial effects are derived from past beneficial actions and harmful effects from past harmful actions, creating a system of actions and reactions throughout a soul's reincarnated lives. The causality is said to be applicable not only to the material world but also to our thoughts, words, actions and actions that other do under our instructions. A soul reincarnates into an appropriate body, which is dependent on karma. A person has to reap the fruits of one's personal karma and may need to undergo multiple births to be released from karma's effects. This provides an explanation for why some people never get to see the fruits of their action in their lifetimes, why some children die when they have committed no sin and the problem of human suffering. Shortly before the epic Mahabharata war, both Duryodhana and Arjuna went to Lord Krishna to seek his favour. Lord Krishna, being omniscient, could already discern the future repercussions of his actions and suggested that he would lend his army to fight for one side while he would personally stand on the side of the other, though only in the capacity of a charioteer and would not take part in the actual hostilities. True to his word, Lord Krishna did not take part in the war. Still, under his astute and wily championship, it seemed as if the Pandavas had victory in their grasp. However, the Kauravas were led by no less a personality than Bhishma, who acted as their *Senapathi* (commander-in-chief of army). The war could not be won by the Pandavas until Bhishma was killed. However, this seemed like an impossible task, since there was no one who could defeat the mighty warrior. When things started to look bleak for the Pandava side, Lord Krishna, in his infinite wisdom, provided a solution, which involved the services of Shikhandi, a transgendered man.

Shikhandi was originally born as a girl child named 'Shikhandini' to Drupada, the king of Panchala. Shikhandi fought in the Kurukshetra war (Mahabharata) on the side of the Pandavas,

Legend is that when Bhishma's younger brother, Vichitravirya was due to get married, Bhishma took it upon himself to go to the swayamvara of the daughters of the King of Kashi, Amba, Ambika and Ambalika and kidnap them. Once back in Hastinapura, however, Bhishma was approached by Amba, who told him that she had already promised herself to Shalya, the King of Saubha. Bhishma sent her off with a huge escort to go and marry Shalya but Shalya was totally humiliated at losing to Bhishma during the swayamvara and refused to accept Amba. He advised her to marry Bhishma, since it was he who had kidnapped her at the swayamvara. Amba approached Bhishma, who refused as he had already taken a vow of celibacy and he was not about to stray from the path of truth. She talked to Satyawati, Bhishma's step-mother, who was very sympathetic to Amba's plight and tried to get Bhishma to marry her in vain.

Amba asked Parasurama (the sixth avatar of Vishnu – he is said to be a Brahmakshatriya or warrior Brahman, the first warrior saint) for advice on how to rectify her situation. Parasurama declared that Bhishma was the person to blame and fought Bhishma but neither came out ahead. Amba was utterly disheartened and decided that she would perform austerities for the purpose of destroying Bhishma. After about twelve years of very intense penance, Lord Shiva appeared to Amba and granted her a boon that in her next life, she would cause Bhishma's downfall.

Amba promptly immolated herself by jumping onto a funeral pyre. Lord Shiva appeared to king Drupada and told him that his wife would conceive a baby, who would start life as a female but later become a male. Upon the baby's birth, Drupada named her Sikhandi and raised her as if she were a boy and even sent her to learn the martial arts from Dronacharya. Later, he contracted a marriage between Sikhandi and the daughter of Hiranyavarma, the short-tempered King of the Dasarnikas. Hiranyavarma was furious at the deception and attacked Panchala. Sikhandi ran away into the woods, where she met a Yaksha named Sthunakarna. She explained her plight to the Yaksha, who offered to trade genders with Sikhandi. Thus, Sikhandi, now a man, went back to Panchala and eventually became the commander of one of the Pandavas' seven *akshauhinis* (divisions). He was Bhima's nominee for commander-in-chief of the army.

The Pandavas, at Krishna's behest, stationed Sikhandi between Bhishma and Arjuna during the war. Bhishma had made a vow that he would never raise arms against any woman, one who was born a woman, one with a woman's shape or even one with a woman's name and so he wouldn't fight Sikhandi. Arjuna and Sikhandi together shot Bhishma down and thus, Sikhandi fulfilled his destiny, to destroy Bhishma.

The author's motive for mentioning this historical event is merely to raise the issue of past life repercussions, which culminated in the birth and subsequent life of a beautiful lady (Amba) as a TG/TS person. Do past life actions or *karma* as Hindus say, cause a soul to take birth as a eunuch? The author has undergone Past Life Regression therapy (PLR - where an individual is hypnotised with his/her consent and guided to recall specific instances from his previous births) and also practices the same on others. He made up his mind to try this therapy on a few eunuchs to ascertain the facts, in the spiritual sense, about their births as eunuchs. Non-Hindus may not believe in reincarnation but the author found a strong link between their births as eunuchs and their previous lives, based on the principles of PLR. The three anecdotes that follow are the result of PLR done on eunuchs.

Past Life Regression (PLR) is a technique which takes an individual back through time to their previous lives by accessing normally hidden memories in the subconscious mind. It employs the use of hypnosis along with visualization procedures similar to those used in some forms of meditation. Past life regression is typically undertaken either in pursuit of a spiritual experience or in a psychotherapeutic setting. Most advocates loosely adhere to beliefs about reincarnation.

The technique used during past life regression involves the subject answering a series of questions while hypnotized to reveal identity and events of past lives.

Saundarya's Statement

Saundarya true to her name, has been bestowed with ultimate beauty – a beautiful face with striking, sharp features that can make most others jealous. However, Saundarya is

not a normal woman. Her beautiful face hides the absence of a gender and she is terrified of fire.

A trained dancer who gives dance tuitions to girls belonging to rich families of Hyderabad, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh, Saundarya hobnobs with the rich and the famous. A Keralite friend of the author has hired her to teach classical dance to his teenage daughter. This cultured gentleman introduced the author to Saundarya. She stays with her parents and a lot of men have a crush on her as they are not aware of her actual gender. She is a beautiful princess for them, as per parents haven't told anybody else about her actual gender or lack thereof. It was knowingly and tactically done so that their social status remained unscathed.

In a way, life is beautiful for her. However, this idyllic existence is but a mirage, since she cannot lead a truly fulfilling life as a woman.

Her gender deprivation and morbid fear of fire made Saundarya very depressed and she decided to seek some answers to her condition. Not finding any among accepted norms of society or medicine, she decided to explore unconventional, yet effective solutions to her problems. In her quest, she contacted the author, who told her, "I am a past life therapist and would like to find the reason behind your fate on the basis of your past life karma." Upon her consent, the author, who is a skilled practitioner of the therapy, did a PLR on Saundarya and found a tragic story behind her reincarnation as a eunuch.

Under the influence of PLR, Saundarya started to relate her tale as Pandit Chandramohan. She assumed his identity narrated the events of his life, as if she was Chandramohan himself. As per locations pointed out by Saundarya during PLR, it seems that Chandramohan was born, brought up and based in same barren part of Central India. He was the son of a priest and had inherited the priesthood of the village temple from his father. It was a '*Nag Devta*' temple.

“If there was anything in excess in those barren villages,” Chandramohan said, “then they were snakes. These snakes outnumbered humans residing in those villages. Every now and then, someone died due to snakebite. The natives requested my father to do something to end this menace. My father, Pandit Suryamohan, built a Nag temple in the village with the help of the villagers and told them to worship Nag Devta, the King of snakes and pray to him to protect them. Then onwards, though snakes were still plentiful, no one died of snakebite. This irritated the evil spirits of the universe but since my father was a noble soul, they were unable to harm him. After my father’s death, his legacy was carried on by me. Initially, I also performed my duties in earnest. As it is rightly said, it is very easy to corrupt, pollute and contaminate a young mind. At a young age, the evil spirits found a ripe time to undo the good deeds done by my father.”

They sent an evil spirit to me in the guise of a young and beautiful lady. She was the most beautiful girl, I had ever seen. I was immediately tempted by her. Anyone else in my position would have also fallen prey to her charms and wiles. The temptation was so strong that I wanted to make that girl mine by marrying her through any means, fair or foul. I started making advances to her and she too responded as per the instructions of the evil spirits who had sent her to me in the first place.

We started meeting everyday and night. In my lust for this woman, I stopped worshiping and sank to very low depths of morality. The evil forces were succeeding in their plans.

One night, *Nag Devta* appeared to me in a dream and warned me of the consequences of evil actions and not performing my duties properly. However, I was so consumed by my desire for this girl that I did not pay any heed to this warning. In time, the villagers came to know about of my illicit relationship and whispered amongst themselves. It is said that love is blind but in my case it was also deaf. I did not care for these murmurs of disapproval of the village folks either.

Finally, the worst happened as expected. One morning, villagers found the temple destroyed and lying in ruins, while the idol of *Nag Devta* had disappeared. Unaware of

all this, I was engaged in my lustful activities with my paramour in a nearby hut. The villagers were devastated and were terrified of the future. Now, once again they would have to bear the brunt of the snake menace. Pointing towards my hut, someone shouted, "Look! This evil son of a godly man! He has spoiled the name of his noble father. Let us kill him."

The villagers cursed me to the high heavens, saying that in my next birth, I would be deprived of the ability to have sex, which was the very cause of my and the villagers' downfall. Before my lover and I could do anything to protect ourselves, the villagers burned down our hut and both of us died amongst the flames.

"I am still repenting for the mistakes done by me but don't know how to correct them," said Saundarya. It was clear that Saundarya was suffering from the curse of her previous life. The author repeated the PLR sessions and Saundarya gradually realized the cause of her gender deprivation.

The author made her realize that she had atoned for her sins in her present life by being born as a eunuch and that she would be rid of her problems in her next birth. As she realized the cause of her condition and came to terms with her situation due to the PLR, Saundarya has adjusted to her condition and feels much better.

Pinky's Statement

Pinky aged 30 years, is a resident of Andheri, a Mumbai suburb. She solicits male clients in order to seek pleasure as well as earn money. However, Pinky regrets not being able to have a family like a normal woman and often wonders about why she has been singled out for punishment by God. While the author was researching material for this book, Pinky came in contact with him and narrated her tale. When the author explained about PLR and its benefits, she agreed to undergo the therapy and gave out some shocking details of her previous life incidents, which culminated in her birth in a transgender community.

Pinky's narrations are briefly as follows:

"I am Indrayani, beautiful and true to my name, just like an '*apsara*' in Lord Indra's court. I have just attained 16 years of age and started to feel my sexuality. I keep dreaming of a princely figure, who makes passionate love to me.

I see myself in a dense forest. It is early in the morning and dewdrops are still fresh on the flowers. I am wandering lustily in the forest. Oh! Here comes a young lad, about 20 years of age and very much like the guy I always dream of! He is very robust and has divine features. He approaches me and holds my hands. I am so mesmerised by his charm that I accompany him without any hesitation.

We sit below a tree in the dense forest. I am charmed by his attitude. He is seducing me. He kisses and hugs me. I am happy and like his advances. He continues with his sexual advances. I feel my dreams coming true.

Alas, there is some interruption! A strange noise is coming from the bushes around us. We can hear someone approaching and wait for a moment until the passersby depart. He approaches me again and we make passionate love. I have done it for the first time and enjoyed the act. I have no remorse. We part ways and I depart for home. On my way, I come upon a pond. There are many birds, pigeons and peacocks around me. They are splashing about in the water and spraying water droplets on each other. I also feel like a free bird today. I play with them, take a bath in the pond and dry my hair."

At this point, the story seemed quite flimsy. As the author was aware of her sexual orientation, he thought that her oppressed feelings were coming out during the trance and that she was living out her fantasies. He even thought of aborting the PLR session. Just as he was getting ready to bring her out of her trance, she started describing her life in a palace.

"It is a palace, huge and surrounded by acres of green lawns. Some ceremonial function is going on in the palace. Many people are having dinner and courtesans are

dancing in the courtyard of the palace. I am not interested in the dance and move away. On my way, people bow to me. I realise that I am the local princess. I am waiting for somebody. Lo and behold, here he comes! He is the same boy Rana, the prince of my dreams, who I had met in the forest and made love to. Oh! He is a slave and is coming towards me. Nobody likes him. I feel happy to see him but I do not have the courage to go with him or greet him, since it is not possible for a princess to talk to a slave.

My father is not in good health and has planned my wedding with prince Indra Dev, the prince of the neighbouring kingdom. I do not like him. It is the slave Rana who is always in my mind and with whom I want to get married.

As time passes, my fondness towards Rana grows. In the absence of others, I have started meeting my prince inside the palace as well. However, my love for Rana does not stay hidden for long. People residing in the palace have started whispering about this out-of-caste love affair. Very soon, these whispers come out of the palace and start poisoning the ears of the whole kingdom. This love affair between a princess and a slave may not gain acceptance but it fascinates one and all. It becomes the talk of the town. People have started maligning me. "Slave Rana is making merry and prince Indra Dev will get only a '*joothan*' (non virgin) or '*utaran*' (product already used by someone)", they often say. Very soon, prince Indra Dev also comes to know the facts.

Early one morning, he comes with his soldiers in order to force me to marry him. However, God sends Rana to defend my honour. There is a fight between Rana and Indra Dev. Rana kills two soldiers of Indra Dev who flees the scene. The matter comes to the knowledge of my ailing father. He cooks up a plan. Indra Dev is a good horse rider. My father invites Rana and Indra Dev. He stages a competition to bring a black coloured rose from a neighbouring hill. He who brings the flower first will get my hand in marriage. Although I know that it is a trap for me because Indra Dev is a very good horse rider, Rana will do anything for my love. Both of them get a horse each. Indra Dev rides faster but loses time at the top of the hill. On the other hand, Rana who is a

slow rider, directly reaches the area of the hill where the black flowers are available, since he is familiar with the vicinity. He brings the flower first and gives it to me. My father's conspiracy has backfired. My wedding with the slave Rana is almost certain now. However, my father and Indra Dev have not lost hope.

Indra Dev comes after midnight. He wants to take me by force. However, Rana accompanied by his loyal friends, is already there and ready to face him. An unexpected battle starts at midnight. Shocked, I can only cry out and ask myself "Is falling in love a crime?" Both groups are prepared to fight the battle to the finish. About 500 persons have died, leaving an equal number grievously injured. Indra Dev runs towards Rana, crossing everything in his path. Rana sees him and stabs him. Blood gushes out of Indra Dev like a fountain, who dies soon thereafter. Seeking revenge, his soldiers attack Rana and pierce his chest with a javelin. Somebody hits me too and I lose consciousness. A while later, I come back to my senses and move towards Rana, who is gravely injured. Holding hands, we go to a nearby well. Our enemies are approaching us, so we jump into the well, still holding our hands tightly. The traitors get an opportunity. They kill my entire family. All people of royal origin are slain. There is chaos in the kingdom. What was once a happy kingdom is now transformed into anarchy. I am happy that I have honoured my love. 'What is wrong with falling in love', I keep asking myself."

The author now glimpsed the solution but Pinky alias Indrayani still could not get the answer. He invited Indrayani to the scene of her death. She continued her story, "People are crying. They miss me and are not happy with my death. Many birds and animals flock to where I am being cremated because I loved animals and was loved by them in return." Indrayani was still not getting the hint. Because of her love, a kingdom had come to ruin. Many people lost their lives and many families had been ruined. In her trance, the author guided her to visit the mourning families who were cursing her.

Indrayani got the hint. She reached a family. "I am at the home of a slave and close friend of Rana who has been killed in this battle. His mother is crying, 'Go to hell

Indrayani, God will not have mercy on you. I have lost my only son, as have so many others. May you too never bear a child. This is the curse of an old widow – who has lost her sole support at the altar of your illicit love.” Things were becoming clearer to Indrayani. A newly wed young girl, who had lost her husband, was crying. She cursed Indrayani that she would not get a husband in her future life.

Moving around, she saw many such bereaved families who were cursing her. Someone cursed that Indrayani would not be able to make love or marry in her future life. Finally, light dawned on Pinky alias Indrayani. She asked me again “What is wrong with falling in love?” But she already had her answer. Pinky’s PLR was over.

The author explained the answer to her problem – “Pinky, there is nothing wrong with falling in love. But life carries certain responsibilities. You were the princess. You could have sacrificed either your love or your kingdom. You could not have kept both, as you wanted to do. This was wrong. So in time, you lost both. If you had renounced your kingdom in order to pursue your love, then there would have been no problem. Now go to the people who have suffered heavily due to your selfishness and apologise.”

Pinky was convinced. During the next session of PLR, she went to two persons who had suffered heavily to apologise. The mother of the slain man and the widow of the newlywed young man slammed their doors in her face and refused to talk to her. Indrayani went from door to door but was turned away. She felt frustrated and realised the gravity of her fault. The author explained that people did not forgive her because her sins had wrought havoc and could not be forgiven easily. Pinky has now realised her mistake and repented for it, so in her next birth, she will get a gender. She is more relaxed now and feels much better in her present life.