

**Interview with Rev Mario Schoenmaker on Reincarnation and Karma conducted
for
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Melody: It is interesting to note that 81% of Australian people profess to believe in God. At the same time however a recent survey shows that church attendance has fallen to 18%, which poses the question, ‘Why the discrepancy?’ Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the ever increasing popularity of Indian flavoured religions and various other religious movements from which concepts such as reincarnation and karma have sprung, but as with everything that strays a little from the orthodox way, much skepticism does arise and one of the main objections that one generally has, to the preposterous notion that we could have ever lived before is that if, indeed we have, then why is it that we do not remember. We have in our studio tonight a man who not only remembers his own previous lives but who also has the capacity to help others do likewise. Rev Mario Schoenmaker is not a saffron robed guru but simply, a down to earth Dutchman who has spent much of his youth at a Roman Catholic Seminary and subsequently became a minister of the Congregational Church. It is unusual to say the very least, to find a Christian Minister actively promoting reincarnation.

Melody: Rev Mario at what stage in your life did you stumble across the idea of reincarnation?

Rev Mario: I came across it in 1965 not that I have not heard of it before or studied it before but it didn’t become a living reality until approximately that time when I was actively a Congregational Minister, actively engaged in my Parish work and as such came across an immense amount of suffering, pain and sorrow and it was at that stage that I started asking myself the usual questions, ‘why does God allow suffering? Why does he allow pain?’ And of course the usual Christian answer that you have to suffer silently and that God will reward you with heaven is outdated to say the least, and it was at that stage that I actually prayed to God and asked him to give me the answer and I was sent inwardly to a library. And when I was in the library I thought, “Now, what do I do here?” And I went across the books from row to row and I let my finger slip across all these books just touching them, until my finger stopped and I picked up the book and it was actually a book on reincarnation, which I then took home. And it is from that time onwards that it commenced.

Melody: As you were actively engaged in the Congregational Church at that time, did you ever feel any conflict between the acceptance of that belief and the teachings of the Church?

Rev Mario: Yes, there was. In Congregationalism it was not so difficult because in the original Congregational teachings there was the freedom and there was no actual dogma except the dogma of believing in Jesus Christ. But in other Churches and I was part of the total Church anyway and therefore of the total Theology of the Church, there was the conflict and consequently, I had to learn first of all to keep silent not only just about my

beliefs but also about my own inner experiences of what I experience as a person concerning my own previous lives and the way I also helped other people in discovering their own lives and later on I had to try to justify if you like, or to come to terms with the Christian Bible and how the Bible could be interpreted in such a way that it certainly allows for reincarnation.

Melody: Rev Mario why is reincarnation not mentioned in the Bible?

Rev Mario: If I'm very unkind then I would say the word, reincarnation has been taken out of the Bible centuries ago, in fact at the Council of Constantinople where the Council of Constantinople came together to discuss reincarnation and voted against it as if you can vote about the truth but that's another thing, and henceforth the Bible was being edited and the word, reincarnation was taken out. But another reason is of course that the word, reincarnation is comparatively speaking, a modern word. It is only used over the last 150 years and the word, reincarnation means to come back in the flesh. Carnation – flesh, rein – to return back to the flesh. But before that they used the word, metamorphosis which was a total wider concept of reincarnation than we have today in our modern philosophies.

Melody: Accepting reincarnation as a fact, could you perhaps, tell us why there are more souls on the earth now?

Rev Mario: I think you are making a statement not asking a question because who tells you that there are more souls on this earth. Where do you get that notion from? Simply because the birth rate has exploded lately doesn't mean to say that therefore there are more souls on this world than say 10,000 years ago. In history we have no written history until about 2 and half thousand years before Christ so we do not know what has happened before that. There is a vague memory in folklore about Atlantis and it is more or less accepted even by scientists that such a continent as Atlantis has existed with a much greater civilization than we have. From clairvoyant observations and from the few writings that we still have left such as Plato we can discover that the continent of Atlantis was much thicker populated than the present. So that in terms of that we have more souls today than yesterday, is not quite true in view of the total world history. It may be true partly when we only view say the last 4,000 years.

Melody: Thank you Rev Mario. What is it like to remember a past life and if I might be so bold how do you know that this so called memory is not just a figment of your imagination?

Rev Mario Schoenmaker: Oh my naughty mind starts playing fantasies at the moment precisely because again, you take certain statements as facts. Who tells you that imagination is not a clairvoyant faculty? Where does imagination come from? How is it possible that a person can imagine beyond what they have experienced in this life? How is it that even in dream world you dream the most unsightly and un-seeming things which in normal life is totally irrelevant, which then, the Jung philosophy comes about and says this is a symbol or an Orr memory as it is called. What is an Orr memory? These are

questions that the reincarnationist will definitely answer but which of course on this program I cannot answer because your question is ‘What is it like to remember a past life, and how do you know that this is not a figment of your imagination?’ And I would say that as far as we are concerned we see with the inner eye not the mind’s eye, the inner eye is a total vision of what we have been. We can perceive ourselves as we were how we looked like and we can describe every detail. What is more that detail can be recalled at any time years later and be precisely the same. And it is in this sameness, in this preciseness that you know that it is not just a figment of imagination, it is not just something in which you have dreamed up, it is something that you have actually seen as at this present moment, I look across and I see you sitting and I can recall tomorrow every detail of how you look like.

Melody: In that case Rev Mario why is it that I would not be able to remember a past life and is there any way that people can be trained to do so?

Rev Mario: The reason why you do not remember your past life is precisely the same reason why you do not remember how you were born and why you do not remember that you were once in nappies and why you do not remember that you crawled on the floor before you walked and that you may not even remember your second or third birthday and some people cannot even remember their 4th and 5th birthday. Now precisely that reason and the reason lies on the subconscious level where the subconscious will hold back from you certain memories for these memories may either not be pleasant and therefore it is better for you not to know consciously or, these memories may stop you in your particular growth therefore it is important that one, first grows up becomes mentally conscious, becomes intelligence, starts using the intellect and then, after that the memories can be opened to which you can be trained indeed. When you ask in what way you can be trained that’s quite a large question because there are many ways in which the subconscious can be opened. There are already today, techniques in the world through hypnosis to mention only one, through touch therapy to mention another one, by which one can start remembering but also understand that in this type of work one, must start at the bottom it doesn’t come always immediately as a clear vision. In the beginning it may just seem to be a symbol and nothing else but if you understand the symbol then you realise that that symbol may well have a relationship to a past incarnation say the Egyptian era or the Greek era or whatever. But how to explain precisely the process of training would take too long on this program.

Melody: Why is it that some people usually those considered to be mentally unbalanced, claimed to have been famous figures in a previous life, figures such as Napoleon, Cleopatra and sometimes even Jesus Christ?

Rev Mario: Well first of all, those mentally unbalanced have one step ahead of us and one advantage that their mind is not holding back their subconscious. They have a disadvantage in that they cannot discipline their memories. And for instance if you had lived in the time of Napoleon, say if you had been an aid of Napoleon or say that you have been a slave of Cleopatra, say if you had been a young boy who dashed around bringing Jesus a drink, what sort of memories would that bring up in a confused mind, a

mind that is unbalanced? Where in those days, you most likely looked up to these personalities as the highest that you could ever perceive, the best you could ever think of. Don't you think that it would be natural for an unbalanced mind to identify self with such a person and then claim in this lifetime that you have been such a person? That is one explanation.

The second explanation lies in fact in the ego. One may well have a certain association with these personalities and in fact, to claim to be Cleopatra I wouldn't shout this around if I were such a personality because she certainly wasn't someone to be proud of but that's beside the point. The point lies in the ego. If you are nothing in this lifetime it is nice to claim that you have been somebody in a past lifetime, at least you can impress people somehow and that's one of the other reasons.

Melody: Rev Mario have you ever had the privilege of coming across someone who has been an historically famous figure in a previous life?

Rev Mario: Yes I have. Whether I publicly can mention these figures I do not know. In my training and in my own ethics I've always refrained from identifying people and in fact even in associations to mention other people simply because you're dealing with souls who have their own privacy but yes, I have come across people who have been famous to a certain degree. I think the most famous one I can think of at the present is the one who was a great Pope in quite some centuries ago and who in fact dared to take on the whole world to show that Christianity should not be associated with politics and that's just one thing that I can think of. Different personalities who lived during the time of Jesus including a person called Mark who was the writer or the origin of the Gospel of Saint Mark, we came across that one. We came across people who lived in the 2nd Century in Rome and who were associated with politics to a certain degree and therefore became quite famous. I have never come across Cleopatra for some unknown reason and I have never come across Napoleon either.

Melody: Do former famous musicians and artists continue to incarnate or is Beethoven a penniless restaurant pianist now?

Rev Mario: I would say that once you have been famous you very rarely will be famous again. Once you have made your mark that mark stands in history for it is for that reason you came back. If you have been high you may have to learn how to be low. Not necessarily a musician who is today say a very good musician was a famous musician in past incarnations. The relevancy of say... let us take art. Someone who is a great artist, a painter say in the 13-14 Century is not necessarily a good artist today and in fact, may not even be able to put a line on paper for it has to be understood that in terms of karma, one has to work out his own characteristics, that is, his own character within one's self, and what one expresses is a totally different thing all together. So even though famous musicians and artists will continue to incarnate but not be famous, and they may well be penniless pianist somewhere in a restaurant, nevertheless, these people still will make a mark in their surrounding because of the character which they would display now rather than say the music or the art that they will perform.

Melody: I noticed Rev Mario that you just mention the word, karma. Could you tell us please what exactly the word really means?

Rev Mario: The word, karma is a Hindu word and indicates justice actually, the wheel of justice. It indicates the law of compensation that which you have done in one lifetime for instance, will be repaid in another lifetime in the exact measure and that may not be just in one lifetime and the other. It may actually appear within one single lifetime. Let's give an example, a person who is deaf in this present incarnation. He may be born deaf; he may be deaf through an accident or whatever. That person may well have in a past incarnation created deafness in another person say through violence or through hate or through temper, or that person may have closed his ears to a certain truth in a past incarnation so that in this incarnation he may be physically deaf, he cannot hear the truth even though such a person may want to hear it. So that's just one aspect of looking at karma. You'll find that karma consists on different levels. You have what we call physical karma. A person who would have been extremely tall say in a past incarnation and would have looked down upon people, now in this incarnation, he may well find himself very small and tiny so that other people look down upon him or her. You may find that karma even goes as far as sexuality not that one continually changes sex from woman to man and man to woman; you'll find that there are cycles in which you are a man and cycles in which you are a woman. But if sexually you have done a misdeed in the past you may find that in this incarnation you have to pay for it either by well... not being able to enjoy sex or being confused about sex or being attracted to a particular sexual area or to a particular sexual partner. This all has karmic consequences.

Melody: Is that the reason why then that many people have easy lives and yet others are subject to such tremendous tragedy?

Rev Mario: Yes. Now there are two reasons for that again. People who have easy lives have deserved this. They may have had terrible lives in the past and that this life may then be comparatively easy. We call that having a rest. Other people who have terrible painful lives may well have caused pain to others in past incarnations and therefore have now to receive the same.

Do you remember that story in the Bible where Jesus was being arrested in the garden of Gethsemane and Peter with his red hair, came along and he cut off the servant's ear with a sword and Jesus said to Peter, "Peter, put your sword away for those who use the sword will be killed by the sword." Now that was a karmic law that Jesus stated. So that if you have been cruel to another person in a past incarnation yes, sure you will receive that cruelty back again in one form or another. Time and time again in my Readings it comes out. Time and time again I see that people who have done certain things in the past have now to suffer for the consequences. But then there is another reason why people suffer terribly and that is that these people may well be deeply spiritual and that in their spirituality they have come across great truth within their life and consequently want to advance but if you want to advance then you have to be purified. Purification then means that you have to go through your karmic cycles quicker than normal. Where normally you

say it may take five lifetimes to work out a certain karmic thing, you may now have to do it in one lifetime. So that five lifetimes are crammed into one and that can cause some pain and misery.

Melody: All these lifetimes sound far too exhausting for me one would have been plenty. Do we continue to incarnate indefinitely or is there an end in sight?

Rev Mario: Well first of all, we are dealing with eternity. There is no time in eternity. I dare not say that there is an end in sight. What the hell do we... we are dealing here actually with eternity. Eternity is symbolized by... to answer your question we have philosophically to deal with the very fact that we are not dealing in terms of time. We are dealing in terms of eternity. Now eternity is not just a line starting at 'A' and finishing at 'Z'. Eternity is symbolized by a circle – no beginning, no end. So I could not say definitely that your incarnations will be finished at a particular time. What I dare to say is that your incarnations will change. So that you progress from one incarnation to another until eventually you have reached a state by which you do no longer need this physical body and the physical environment to work out your karma that from henceforth then, you have to work out your karma in a spiritual form and I cannot go into all the details that is associated with this so I could answer your question in two ways. I could say yes, there will be an end to physical karma that is, that no longer you will incarnate in this physical body once you have reached a certain point. The second answer is no, karma will not be finished because you have to continue on in the spiritual worlds as a spiritual being and grow and grow and grow. Now how this is done I would not know.

Melody: One last question, Rev Mario, our society is in love with love and I'd venture to say that it is the dream of every one to find that perfect partner, that perfect love. Is there really any such thing?

Rev Mario: I would say that for the person who deserves it they will get the perfect partner. When society says it is in love with love then I think they are saying they are in love with passion and they equate love with passion. If we can understand on the spiritual level that there are such things as twin souls that there are souls who belong to one another from the beginning of this world until the end of this world that if these two souls find one another that then a perfect match, a perfect union comes about, which will be perfect both in the spiritual, mental and physical levels. The reason why this is not happening at present is precisely because of the evolutionary cycle in which we are in. Well let us take for an example that 500 years ago we would not even have talked about love. Our parents would have picked the partner and we just had to go through it and be faithful until death do us part. In this evolutionary period in which we live at least we have gone beyond that. We have said, 'It is not unto death do us part. It is until our desires tell us we must part'. And that is progress in spite of what Churches and other organizations may tell us, and also, that the world is occupied with love now. That now the girls and the boys can find their partner in freedom even. That they can experiment with one another – are they matched with one another physically, mentally, spiritually? You may find a partner who is physically perfect for you but mentally abhorrent. Are you

going to associate with such a person over a long period of time or just for a little time when you discover that sex alone is not quite sufficient to fulfill you and so on and so on?

I think that when society progresses, when the world eventually progresses over the next few hundred years, thousand, two thousand years then yes, more and more the perfect partners will come along that at the present is very rare indeed. Those who have found it will be the great example the pioneers to show society, to show the world, to show man that it is possible that two souls can unite as one.

Melody: Rev Mario Schoenmaker thank you very much for talking with us this evening.

Interview conducted in 1983 by Melody Rawson