

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Sin and Guilt – a monstrosity of mind.....	1
Things <i>cannot</i> be other than they are.....	3
What leads to unswerving compassion?.....	4

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Sin and Guilt – a monstrosity of mind

Summary of the so-named book by Ramesh Balsekar

This book provided invaluable clarity to me on why the concepts of Sin and Guilt are, indeed, a monstrosity of mind. Read at least the first half of this short and amazing book! It may be helpful to start with my following brief summary of the book. But please note that I'm writing a summary of Ramesh's book – which is not, in all points, exactly what I would be saying on the topic.

Ramesh's terminology does not match mine: He writes 'God' or sometimes 'Universal or Cosmic Law'. What he means exactly by 'God' is not clear to me – he seems to use 'God' and 'Source' interchangeably. Since I do not like to use the term God, as it has been so misused by institutionalised religion, I have chosen to use the term 'The Divine' where Ramesh has written 'God' – as a compromise, I myself would use a term like 'Existence'. I have also translated some of his terms into those which I use here, to keep my work consistent for the reader.

The created object (including sentient beings) cannot know the will of the Creator Subject, and therefore the created object cannot know the basis on which Divine will works; and also, whatever happens can only be according to Divine will.

The ordinary person considers that he or she is the doer of his or her actions and is responsible for those actions; and that, similarly, every person is responsible for his or her actions. On the other hand, a Sage has the total, absolute conviction that neither he nor anyone else is the doer of any action, that all action is the Divine happening through some mind-energy-body organism and not anything 'done' by anyone. Also, you are not the thinker of any thoughts, nor the experiencer of any experiences – they happen.

You had no choice about your parents and therefore about the unique DNA in your mind-energy-body organism; nor did you have any choice about the environment in which you were born and in which your mind-energy-body organism has been receiving its conditioning from day one. Both of these together are the programming of your mind-energy-body computer. The human being is really nothing more than a uniquely programmed instrument through which the Source ... functions and brings about actions. In other words, the Source uses the billions of uniquely programmed human computers exactly as you use your computer.

Research has shown that thought input (the impulse to start a chain of thought) happens about half a second before the rational thought which results from that input kicks in. So, the individual has no control over the input, and no control (due to its DNA and conditioning) over its processing. Therefore the result is preordained, and free will an illusion. If you accept this, then the ideas of individual sin and guilt collapse, as the individual has no free will.

A Sage will experience these mechanisms in exactly the same way as everyone else – it is a misconception that a Sage would be without anger, frustration or fear. The difference is that the Sage makes no judgement about him- or herself for having those emotions, there is no personal involvement with them, no feeling of having personally done anything wrong. And a Sage can let them go immediately as well, being angry one moment, and laughing the next – the Sage is not involved in ‘horizontal time’ – not projecting the past into the future: Why bother, when all happens according to Divine will?

Suppose an action happens through the organism of a Sage. The Sage has to live their life in a society that does not have the Sage’s understanding, and therefore considers the Sage, like any other individual, to be responsible for their action. A particular action is judged by society as a ‘good’ action; the approval of society becomes an input to the mind-energy-body computer of the Sage, and the output is a sense of pleasure. But the Sage’s *total* understanding is that the action which has evoked society’s applause is not *his* or *her* action; therefore, while a sense of pleasure may arise, what will not arise is a sense of pride. For an action resulting in disapproval or anger, a Sage may feel regret, but not guilt.

Spiritual Seeking: People are seeking because they are not at peace internally, are unhappy or unfulfilled. But what are they actually seeking, and how do they think it can be attained? Many don’t really know, and many are looking for better life circumstances. In fact the search for relief from positive or negative feelings about circumstances in Manifestation can only be successful when one accepts *whatever is* as the will of The Divine, and therefore thought in horizontal time can abate, leaving inner peace (what I call Liberation). Whether a person becomes a spiritual seeker or not is also solely according to Divine will.

Finding: Every evening, sit alone quietly for some time, and think of various actions during the day which you would normally attribute to your free will. What triggered the action? What course did it take and how much control did you actually have over all that? Do this in depth and honestly and you will see that it all depended on several factors over which you had no control. The conclusion can only be that no action was truly your action. How well this process goes for you will itself be according to Divine will.

If no action is my action, and actions actually happen without any necessity of a ‘me’, then who is this ‘me’ that I am so concerned about? *Is there a ‘me’ at all?!* Notice the Source, understand that you are a minute part of Manifestation, all of which stems from the Source, and you will realise that there never was a ‘me’, all there has ever been is ‘I’. The ‘I’ which is expressed and functioning through the totality of Manifestation.

Being able to accept Divine will (which itself depends on Divine will!) means enormous relief from the monstrous load of sin and guilt on the mind.

Tim's take on Sin and Guilt

Ramesh starts off with *The created object (including sentient beings) cannot know the will of the Creator Subject...* This implies some major statements about the nature of existence:

- Objects, including beings, get created. The word created *could* be understood in the sense of emergence; but will normally be understood as a conscious act.
- Ramesh makes his view clear with *the Creator Subject*. A subject, when used in such a context, will normally imply a consciousness – otherwise, how could any distinction be made between entities as subjects or objects?
- *the search ... can only be successful when one accepts whatever is as the will of The Divine ... Whether a person becomes a spiritual seeker or not is also solely according to Divine will*. This formulation reinforces the view of there being a divine entity, which must have consciousness in order to have a own will.

My world view differs, in that I don't accept or assume a divine entity. I also don't deny the possibility. I do see existence as a holistic unity – see the section *The terms 'holistic' and 'unity'* in book one. In book three I'll be detailing various models of existence, including the computer simulation hypothesis, and existence being based on material, energy or consciousness. I will not draw any conclusion, as I see no justification for one.

But even without clarity about the correct model of existence, two topics are clear to me: The nature of existence as a holistic unity, and that determinism is a given – based on physics (see book three). These together support the view promoted by Ramesh that there is no individual sin or guilt; rather, Existence develops as one whole, and the result of the development is pre-determined. However, the predetermination includes the outcome of our choices which *seem to us* to be of our own free will.

Things *cannot* be other than they are

This article relates a personal experience of mine, which illustrates the points made in Sin and Guilt – a monstrosity of mind. It's about how I came to recognise what Ramesh Balsekar was saying through a close friendship with a dear friend of mine – she's female so let's call her X. X has been central in my life since 2012 – she rented a room in my flat, then a flat in my house. Thus we have had innumerable interactions.

X was born with a genetic condition which causes multiple malformations of the body, which include that she was born deaf and only gained very minimal hearing after an operation when she was five. It's a long story and I'll spare you the many challenging details.

I think I can reasonably assert to being, nowadays, fairly empathic and constructive. But I must say, that it took me about seven (!) **years** of frequent contact to halfway understand how she 'ticks', and how her experiences have formed (and traumatised) her. I see the reason for this as the fact that I had much easier personal circumstances in my life – robust health, loving parents, intact family, well educated, earned enough money and in general had an interesting life. So there was just no personal experience in me which could be in resonance with X's *extremely* challenging circumstances and experiences. I could *imagine* such (external) circumstances in my mind, but not how the subject would *feel*, or how that person would be shaped and traumatised.

Of course I was sympathetic and supportive, and tried to be as patient as I could, but sometimes I was frustrated with her, cross and full of silent reproach: Why so long-winded, so inflexible, so caught up with fighting circumstances and the shortcomings of society... and so on. After about six to seven years I slowly began to get a better feeling for her limitations in everyday life, especially those due to the very real problems of being hard of hearing (and totally lacking directional hearing – something I had to observe for a long time to halfway understand the problems this causes).

Then one day I had just reread my own summary of 'Sin and Guilt' – and I realised that X *could not* be otherwise than she is. If 'I' had been born in *exactly all* her circumstances (including temperament) and been through all *exactly* the same experiences as she has, then 'I' would be *exactly the same* as she is. The only difference would be that 'I' would be experiencing *her* life, rather than X.

To realise this offers up at least three further thoughts:

1. Feeling (general) frustration may be an understandable organismic reaction, but thinking that someone else *should* be different to how they are completely misses the point – they *cannot* be different to how they are!
2. Obviously this principle must apply to all people, all beings, all life; so we can extrapolate and understand that **things** (in general) *cannot* be other than they are.
3. If 'I' would be experiencing exactly X's life, what does this tell us about our oh so prized individual identity? Seems like it isn't so special after all

Try it for yourself, with people close to you, or even with everyone you meet: Don't just try to understand them mentally; instead practice openness, genuine curiosity, and *imbibe* this other shape of being, take it into yourself, let it touch you, notice it's shape – and keep in mind what Ramesh and I have written. Soon enough you will see for yourself, that things (including people) *cannot* be other than they are.

What leads to unswerving compassion?

We've all met many people, some of whom were kinder, more empathic and generally constructive than others. It's not hard to think of reasons for this, especially looking at their lives as a foetus and a small child, and the experiences which shaped them at that time. And perhaps more compassionate people have more or better trained mirror neurons¹, for whatever reasons.

But we can all transcend these shaping factors and the personalities which they have lead to – on the spiritual path we acquire two insights, which together guarantee that compassion will be the foundation from which we act:

- The noticing and knowledge of non-separation in consciousness.
- Knowing that, in regard of all beings and all circumstances, things *cannot* be other than they are.

Of course, our individual personalities don't get wiped clean simply due to having reached these insights. I experience the grumblings and frustrations of my psyche towards other people as before. But now they happen within the space of a greater, more compelling vista, where I notice and know the larger picture. The compassionate response, the wish to be helpful, arise from this larger picture, and in almost all cases have the final word. When my psyche notices this happening, it's happy with the final outcome, so in the course of time the original egocentric responses lose power more and more.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror_neuron