

Dickens' Christmas Carol: Where Is Marley's Ghost... This Christmas, When We Really Need Him?

The overwhelming preponderance of dead-end box store jobs and part-time positions offering little or no benefits is what we have become in this so-called modern era.

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It is yuletide season once again. What better book to read or film to watch than Dickens' A Christmas Carol? This writer watches that movie every December and always takes more out of it each year. It took me perhaps a multitude of viewings to finally realize the true gist of the tale. For years I thought the story was about the personal redemption of Ebenezer Scrooge. No! Now I realize that the crux of the story (and film) was centered around Jacob Marley's ghost (image left) and Karma.

Scrooge was the recipient of and future receiver of the *karma* that Marley's ghost forecast. Sadly, and most often the case of those among us who are able to peer into the future through whatever *supernatural* means, Ebenezer Scrooge was thus driven by *fear*. It was such a fear of the future laid out for him... by his own actions, that opened his eyes to truth. The ghost of Jacob Marley, destined to trudge the earthly ethers dragging his chains of Karma, is the key to the whole story. His ghost finally understood the 'errors of his earthly ways' and chose to save his partner Ebenezer from the same fate.

But... there is another aspect of the Dickens story.



The interlude revealing the life of the Cratchit family addresses how much Dickens felt for the working poor... not just the poor, but those who labored for lousy pay working long hours. Similar to our 21st Century America, yes? The overwhelming preponderance of dead-end box store jobs and part-time positions offering little or no benefits is what we have become in this so-called *modern era*. The diminishing effect of fewer and less powerful labor unions has made us into a two-tier republic of haves and have-nots. Boy, would Dickens have a field day now! Getting back to the *Scrooge* story, how many of us can identify with the health crisis faced by Tiny Tim? Of course, today such a problem would warrant the needed surgery, but then the 21st Century Cratchits would be in debt forever. Sad, but true, because today's insurance system could not let a working stiff like Cratchit, no matter how little he made, completely off the hook financially... but that's for another column.

Marley's ghost could sure come in handy this Christmas. He would need an army of fellow ghosts dragging their chains (with Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan leading the way) to visit all our fellow Americans who act like old Ebenezer. There would be lots of folks to visit: the whole Bush Sr. and Jr. gangs, the Pentagon *War Machine*, the super-rich who control them all while financially squeezing the rest of us dry. Lest we not forget the Clintons, Mr. 'Hope and Change' Obama, the megalomaniac demagogue Mr. Trump, along with the prostitute mainstream media. They all most likely will blame those visits on 'an undigested piece of meat' and hide under the covers. Ah, how great this thing called *Karma* is!

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