

## *Reincarnation—A Rational New Chance*

**T**HE DEAD HAVE never died. Death is merely God's giving us a new chance; the bestowing of a new garment on us that we may continue unfoldment and experience-getting, which evokes education and fits us for further ripening. It was a poor and impudent thing for our religious predecessors to call it a "curse" for some trivial apple incident, quite as shallow in imagination as to declare physical man "made in the image and likeness" of Deity. Did you ever think of the absurdity of Divinity looking like the physical (not spiritual) creature we call man?

Death is a wonderful devisement, a gracious new opportunity which is not denied the meanest creature. All in creation die: insect, animal, fishes, moons, suns, stars: all soever undergo change and rejuvenation. This is apparent in the dissolution of all physical matter, which finds subtle chemical forces awaiting to remold and utilize it. If matter is important, is spirit less so?

If the Creator gave us birth, does He not likewise afford us that corollary benison called death? One seems as inevitable as the other, and each supplements the other. How can we dread the one without fearing the precedent act of birth?

"Never the spirit was born. Spirit shall cease to be never." Everything cognizant possesses spirit; ergo, nothing ever perishes, but simply changes clothes, like unto the cocoon.

If we regarded death as a beneficent change, permitting renewed vitality, youth and opportunity, our hearts would glow with gratitude; nor would we be burdened by superstitious fears and groan-



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### *Cycle of Rebirth*

*"Since the matter and substance of things are indestructible, all its parts are subject to all forms, so that each and everything becomes everything and each, if not at one and the same time and in a single minute, then at various times and various moments, in sequence and in alternation."*—Giordano Bruno, Ash Wednesday, 1584

ings, with fatuous weeping and self-pitying when some one of our loved ones undergoes this excellent way of carrying on. There are no dead! "What seems so is transition."

There is purpose in all life. The ultimate cannot even be imagined. To reflective minds there is no doubt of a divinity that shapes each going. The way is long, and ever longer. Despite our momentary cares and perplexities, often involving disbelief in the Providence of our Father and His unquestioned care of all, there is an ultimate good

*When the body of an animal dies, the animal spirit has unconsciously derived a certain experience from functioning in that vehicle, and after a time it is reabsorbed into the spiritual body of the group spirit, where it remains for some time while the group spirit assimilates the experience gathered by that separate animal spirit. Thus in time the group spirit grows and evolves. So do the animal spirits which are its wards. They will become human in a future incarnation of the earth, and then the group spirit will look after them as race or a national spirit until they have become perfectly capable of taking care of themselves individually.—Max Heindel, Rosicrucian Philosophy in Questions and Answers, Volume 1, p. 333*

*Now, when all the souls had chosen their lives...they all traveled into the plain of Lethe....In the evening they encamped by the Forgetful River, whose water no pitcher can hold. And all were compelled to drink a certain measure of its water; and those who had no wisdom to save them drank more than the measure. And as each man drank he forgot everything. When they had gone to rest, and it was now midnight, there was a clap of thunder and an earthquake; and in a moment the souls were carried up to their birth, this way and that, like shooting stars.—Plato, The Republic.*

to be achieved. Nor will it be bestowed because of any vicarious intervention. We reap as we sow. Soul is developed and ripened by enduring strenuous endeavor, quite as the arm grows strong by exercise.

The idea of reincarnation or rebirth in human bodies is prehistoric in origin. Practically every one of the older nations accepted and believed it. It served to comfort many. Only moderns have presumed to say that this life is all, and such infidelity, in the goodness of the Creator, seems due to callowness and cynicism which many of this era scornfully assume as a feature of conceited sophistication—devil-may-care impudence common among the blasé.

Many of the more ancient peoples who accepted rebirth considered transmigration differently from later views, inasmuch as they reckoned that men were returned to earth in animal forms as punishment for sins in a preceding life. In this respect, transmigration and reincarnation were not the same. No advanced cult of today would accept this idea. The human ego never descends into animal bodies. Some teachers aver that animals appear on the spirit plane, and prevail there for a while with much the same disposition as while functioning on earth! but then, after a while, they disappear.

Presumably onto another plane of development.

The modern preaching of some is that there is but one life on earth and later, a weariness in a heavenly state and nothing to do. A most unattractive contemplation, really, and not based on truthful Scripture, for the Bible declares renewed life in many places. The reality of reincarnation is vehemently opposed by some because it nullifies their declaration of “belief” as being all-sufficient for entry into glory and perpetual bliss. And if once “saved” why come back to earth and revisit its temptations? Which brings only more prominently into view the disputations of the several Christian sects, their uncertainties in biblical meanings, their lassitude in thought lest their faith be disrupted by reasoning.

The subject of reincarnation is so broad and has had so many adherents and satisfied promulgators, many of whom were among the most outstanding thinkers of ancient and modern times, that it is rather a task to pick out new facts to bolster argument in this behalf. Most of the early Fathers of Christianity accepted and taught the doctrine. It never was much opposed until the more modern doctrines of salvation, and the popular notion that mere belief would carry sinners directly into unending celestial joy, made return to mundane life not only needless but a folly. Rebirth was an essential church teaching for several centuries, and was stamped with the authority of its leaders, until Western influences succeeded in having it

anathematized as heresy. Few clergymen today like to discuss it or have it mentioned. An honest interpretation of anteNicene church history would disclose the strong belief of the early Fathers of the Church in this doctrine.

We discard for the nonce all history of the subject during the ages, nor burden the page with innumerable names of philosophers and thinkers who deemed it a rational event, giving all a new chance and fresh opportunity in a new environment, another family circle, with enlarged intuition (spiritual knowledge acquired by the eductive forces of former life and lives); for despite any neglect or willful disregard, every career, however brief, carries lessons and enrichment of character. Each comes back to earth to utilize the experiences of hitherto time. The motive of life on earth is not to “save” but to gain experience and mellowness of soul that fit for an advance, new obligations, and continued education.

There is no end to life, and death in no sense completes our careers. Even the practical Henry Ford asserted: “We take up life about where we leave off, and go on from there.” He was a strong believer in reincarnation, too, as giving the simple, the falterer, the wastrel, another chance. It is the fatuous doctrine of “saving your soul” by belief, and only once, that causes so much clerical objection to the idea of return. Discussion of reincarnation in the presence of most clergymen arouses strong opposition, and in some cases the believer in rebirth is denominated an infidel, a man without faith—that is, the objector’s faith.

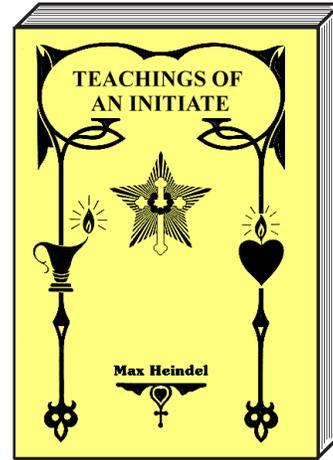
One article cannot fairly present the subject. Interested readers might enjoy looking into the words of Origen, Plato, Pythagoras, Plotinus the Zohar, the Cabala, and many poets and philosophers, as anticipating continuation of the theme. The poet Goethe says:

The soul of man is like the water:  
From heaven it cometh, to heaven  
it mounteth,  
And thence at once it must to earth  
come back,  
Forever changing. □

—Ernest Crutcher, M.D.

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