

## **Philosophic Encyclopedia**

### **Rebirth and The Bible**

A basic cosmic law taught in the Scriptures is that of rebirth: the doctrine that as differentiated Spirits in God we are reborn again and again in bodies of increasing efficiency on the physical plane to learn the lessons incident to material existence, and to unfold our latent divine potentialities into dynamic powers.

It is evident that the Jewish priests believed in the theory of rebirth, or they would not have sent to ask John the Baptist, "Art thou Elijah?" as it is recorded in the first chapter of [St. John's Gospel, 21st verse](#). In the 14th verse of the 11th Chapter of [St. Matthew's Gospel](#) we have the words of the Christ concerning John the Baptist which are unambiguous and unequivocal. He said, "This is Elijah." Upon a later occasion, at the time when they had been upon the Mount of Transfiguration, as recorded in the 17th Chapter of Matthew, the Christ said, "Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. . . . Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist."

In the [13th verse of the 16th Chapter of Matthew](#) we find the Christ asking His disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

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"And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias, and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

"And He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?"

"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

We notice from these passages that Christ Jesus did not contradict His disciples and this is quite significant. He was essentially a teacher, and if they had entertained a wrong idea concerning the idea of rebirth, it would have been His manifest duty to have corrected them. He did not indicate that there was any need for correction, however, and Peter's reply conveys a knowledge of the deeper truths involved in the present mission of the Christ.

As further biblical substantiation for the doctrine of rebirth, we find cases mentioned in the Scriptures where a person was chosen for a certain work before his birth. An Angel foretold the coming of Samson and his mission: to slay the Philistines. In the [13th Chapter of Judges](#) it is related: "There was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and bare not.

"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.

". . . and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

". . . and the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson."

In the first Chapter of Jeremiah, 5th verse, the Lord said to the prophet, ". . . before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto all nations."

We are all familiar with the stories in the Bible telling of the coming of Jesus and John and of their special missions. A person is chosen for a special mission because of a specific fitness for the particular type of work to be done. Proficiency presupposes practice, for as we have often heard, "Practice makes perfect." Ability is not handed to us on a platter, as convenient as it may be to believe it at times! Practice prior to birth could only have been in a previous life, so by implication, and by using logic and reason as guides, we find that the doctrine of rebirth is taught in the cases we have mentioned. It may also be observed that there are other passages in the Bible, the first Psalm, for instance, which can be sensibly interpreted only by using a belief in rebirth as a basis.

Working along with the Law of Rebirth to bring about the perfect justice becoming to an all-wise Creator is the Law of Cause and Effect, or the Law of Consequence. The Law of Compensation or Retribution, it is also often called. The esoteric investigator finds that this law works perfectly on all planes, bringing to fruition exactly what we have sown — in thought, word and deed.

In the [6th Chapter of Galatians, 7th to 9th verses](#), we are told:

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.

"And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap."

In [2nd Corinthians, 9th Chapter, 6th verse](#), St. Paul tells us again: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

In the [9th Chapter of St. John's Gospel](#) we find an interesting parable which teaches the working of this law. It reads as follows:

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from birth.

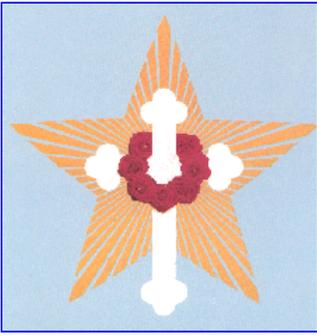
"And His disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?

"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

In this passage Christ Jesus endeavors to make clear that the law back of all physical limitation is not punishment, but enlightenment. Here we find the perfect justice of the Law of Causation which underlies all disease and deformity. When an Ego breaks a law of Nature in one life, it returns in another life to face the limitation which results as a violation of that law.

Transgressions of divine laws upon the mental and moral planes of action are quite as responsible for physical disorders as the hidden side of the Moon is effective in producing the tides. Through the sorrow and suffering which accompany limitation, the Spirit learns its lesson and the infirmity is removed.

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