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# ***Reincarnation*** **& Charles Fillmore**

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## **Introduction**

### **The Spiritual Goal**

- The Spiritual Goal**
- Mysticism**

### **The Evolutionary Process**

- Forms of Consciousness**
- The Evolutionary Process**
- Jesus' Evolution toward Christ Consciousness**

### **Spiritual Psychology**

- Three Phases of Mind**

### **The Logic of Reincarnation**

- History of Reincarnation**
- The Logic of Reincarnation**
- Reincarnation References from the Bible**
- Charles and Myrtle Fillmore**
- Famous People**

### **Karma**

- Karma—The Law of Sowing and Reaping**

### **Benefits of Past Life Knowledge**

- Benefits of Past Life Knowledge**
- Why Bother with Previous Lives?**
- Previous Lives**

### **Consciously Participating in Your Soul's Evolution**

- Consciously Participating in Your Soul's Evolution**
- Prescription for Spiritual Growth**
- Seven Steps for Successful Life Transitions**

## REFERENCE KEY

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
ACR	A Case for Reincarnation	James Dillet Freeman
ASP	Atom Smashing Power of the Mind	Charles Fillmore
AY	Autobiography of a Yogi	P. Yogananda
CC-R	Closed Collection--Reincarnation	L.W. Rogers
DPW	Discover the Power Within You	Eric Butterworth
DR	The Divine Romance	P. Yogananda
ES	The Emerging Self	Ernest Holmes
ESR	The Essence of Self-Realization	J. Donald Walters (Kriyananda)
GL	Game of Life	Florence Shinn
HHR	The Hidden History of Reincarnation	Noel Langley
HNA	Charles Fillmore: Herald of the New Age	Hugh D'Andrade
HKG	How to Know God	Swami Prabhavananda+ Christopher Isherwood
HWLB	Have We Lived Before?	Ernest Holmes
IM	Immortal Journey	James Dillet Freeman
JC	Jesus Christ Heals	Charles Fillmore
KTL	Keep a True Lent	Charles Fillmore
LFOA	Light for Our Age	Robert P. Sikking
LIFL	Life Is for Living	Eric Butterworth
LIT	Lessons In Truth	H. Emilie Cady
MEQ	Man's Eternal Quest	P. Yogananda
MG	Mysteries of Genesis	Charles Fillmore
MJ	Mysteries of John	Charles Fillmore
MSM	More Stately Mansions <i>(Unity Magazine, Aug., 1981)</i>	Susan Downs
NSF	Never So Few	Tom T. Chamales
OLNL	Old Lamps, New Lights	Warner
PAWY	The Path: Autobiography of a Western Yogi	Swami Kriyananda (J. Donald Walters)
PCY	Practical Christianity for You	James E. Sweaney
PUSBR	Preserving the Unity of Soul and Body: Reincarnation (pamphlet)	Charles Fillmore
R-UA	Reincarnation, from the Unity Archives	Charles Fillmore
RE	Reincarnation	Emmet Fox
RLK	Reincarnation and the Law of Karma	William Atkinson
RW	Revealing Word	Charles Fillmore
SR	Spirits in Rebellion	Arthur Braden
TM	Twelve Powers of Man	Charles Fillmore
TT	Talks on Truth	Charles Fillmore
TWTC	The Way to the Christ	Donald Curtis
UNITY	<i>Unity Magazine</i>	Various Authors
YGP	Your Greatest Power	Eleanor D. McDonald

### FURTHER READING:

*Spiritual Power Tools: Support for Your Soul*, Jane E. Hart  
*Ponder on This*, Alice A. Bailey  
*Many Lives, Many Masters*, Dr. Brian Weiss  
*Through Time into Healing*, Dr. Brian Weiss

## OUR SPIRITUAL GOAL

The goal of man is eternal life, and in each incarnation that goal is brought nearer if Spirit is given an opportunity to express itself. When this is done, the true spiritual body will replace the physical body and all men will become like Jesus Christ" (TT, 159).

There is nothing the human heart so longs for, so cries out after, as to know God, "whom to know aright is life eternal..." With a restlessness that is pitiful to see, people are ever shifting from one thing to another, always hoping to find rest and satisfaction in some anticipated accomplishment of possession. Men fancy that they want houses and lands, great learning or power. They pursue these things and gain them, only to find themselves still restless, still unsatisfied...At the great heart of humanity there is a deep and awful homesickness that never has been and never can be satisfied with anything less than a clear, vivid consciousness of the indwelling presence of God, our Father (LIT, 88).

The primary purpose of life is to evolve our latent spiritual power. Perhaps this is what Jesus had in mind when He said, "You, there fore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48)...Jesus teaches that rebirth or reincarnation is the unifying force of nature at work in its effort to restore man to his original deathless state. Man, through his disregard of the law of life, brought death upon himself, as taught in the third chapter of Genesis. But a single span of life, from the birth of an infant to the death of an old man, does not constitute all of man's opportunity for living. Life is continuous and in harmony with the wholeness of Being only when it is expressed in a perfect body; hence man must have a body in order to gain an abiding consciousness of life (KTL, 94).

Hitherto we have turned our heart and efforts toward the external for fulfillment of our desires and for satisfaction, and we have been grievously disappointed. The hunger of everyone for satisfaction is only the cry of the homesick child for its Father-Mother God. It is only the spirit's desire in us to come forth into our consciousness as more and more perfection, until we shall have become fully conscious of our oneness with All-perfection. Man never has been and never can be satisfied with anything less (LIT, 22–23).

God is All-Good—always good, always love. He never changes, no matter what we do or may have done. He is always trying to pour more of Himself through us into visibility so as to make us grander, larger, fuller, freer individuals...While the child is crying out for its Father-Mother God, the Father-Mother is yearning with infinite tenderness to satisfy the child (LIT, 35).

Jesus was the great Way-Shower. We might say that man was earthbound by the law of karma. His karmic burden was so great that his plight on earth was little short of hopeless. Then Jesus made his great discovery, that the law of the Spirit transcends the law of 'sin and of death,' and that by knowing the truth man can remove the mountains of human suffering and find abundant life here and now (Unity, Feb., 1964, 11-23).

Reincarnation is a way provided by a loving Father for man, who through ignorance extends himself so far in material sensation that he loses his body...Keep your mind focused on God, and you may be sure that you achieve your spiritual goal..." (Unity, Aug., 1936, 81)

Reincarnation is not a goal in itself but a means by which we are enabled to continue toward the real goal of life in spite of failures...When the final goal of unity with God is reached, reincarnation will disappear. (PCY, 139).

"Too often we forget that reincarnation is but a step in our development. When we have fully mastered our spiritual self, we no longer seek new bodies and new experience on the earthy plane..." (Unity, Mar., 1973, 48)

In truth, however, the higher activities of the soul cannot die. It may seemingly become entangled in thoughts on the natural plane and disappear for a season from the conscious mind. However, it is enjoying a period of rest in preparation for a new and higher expression (MG, 189-190).

The complete redemption of the body may not be accomplished in one incarnation, but whoever accepts the Christ as life and substance, and conforms to righteous living as taught by the Spirit of truth, will finally sit with Jesus on the throne of dominion over disease and death (TM, 120).

Every person in his heart desires, though he may not yet quite know it, this new birth into a higher life, into spiritual consciousness. Everyone wants more power, more good, more joy. And though to the unawakened mind it may seem that it is more money as money, or more goods that he wants, it is, nevertheless, more of good (God) the he craves; for all good is God...Many today are conscious that the inner hunger cannot be satisfied with worldly goods, and are with all earnestness seeking spiritual understanding, or consciousness, of an immanent God (LIT, 84-85).

It is just a question of giving up a little for the all and gaining eternal life. So if re-embodiment frees one from the old personal relationships, it is not such a dreadful thing after all, for it gives us new personal relationships. Rising out of these into the universal is a work that everyone must do willingly for himself. Death and re-embodiment do not give redemption. Reincarnation serves only as a further opportunity to lay hold of redemption (KTL, 95).

The purpose of reincarnation is to provide opportunity for man to go on working out all his desires and expressing all that he wants to express, until he realizes his true nature as a child of God, and understands that union with God is the true object of all his seeking, the Goal of all mankind (DR, 271).

## The Evolutionary Process

Man, who is at first living in the selfish animal part of himself, will grow up through various stages and by various processes to the divine or spiritual understanding wherein he knows that he is one with the Father, and wherein he is free from all suffering...Somewhere on this journey the human consciousness, or intellect, comes to a place where it gladly bows to its spiritual self and confesses that this spiritual self, its Christ, is highest and is Lord...Here and forever after, not with sense of bondage, but with joyful freedom, the heart cries out: "Jehovah reigneth" (Ps. 93:1). Everyone must sooner or later come to this point of experience (LIT, 7).

Man is the last and highest manifestation of divine energy, the fullest and most complete expression (or pressing out) of God. To man, there fore, is given dominion over all other manifestations (LIT, 20).

The "plot" of the cosmic drama of creation embraces not only biological evolution, but individual, egoic evolution as well. For the ego to achieve ultimate perfection, many lifetimes are needed...Egoic development begins, just as the outward life forms it assumes do, at the lowest levels of conscious identity. It moves upwards automatically at first, through plant, insect, and animal forms, until at last it reaches the human level. Thereafter evolution ceases to be automatic, for in man's more highly developed brain and nervous system the ego experiences for the first time the ability to exercise discrimination, and thus develops a certain amount of free will. Spiritual evolution from this time onward becomes speeded up, or delayed, or temporarily reversed, according to the caliber of the individual's own efforts (PAWY, 345).

The Hindu Scriptures state that to reach the human level requires from five to eight million incarnations in lower life forms (PAWY, 345n).

[In India,] caste was not originally intended as a hereditary system. Rather, it constituted a simple recognition of universal realities of human nature. The whole human race, Yogananda explained, consists of four natural castes, known in India as *sudras*, *vaisyas*, *kshatriyas* and *brahmins*. *Sudras* are those who live uncreatively, on a purely physical plane. *Vaisyas* live more *creatively*, but for personal gain. *Kshatriyas* devote their energies primarily to society. And *brahmins* are those whose interests are essentially spiritual. Obviously, those only whose nature places them in this fourth category are fit for *sannyas*, the definition of which is a life lived for God alone, and for the spiritual upliftment of others. Nationality is not a consideration here. India's millenniums-old adoption of the caste system constituted a recognition, merely, of universal stages in human evolution (PAWY, 568).

# JESUS' EVOLUTION TOWARD CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS

With each degree of dawning spiritual consciousness, we are coming closer to that great ultimate, the incarnation of Christ. We would not be content with less than that...Our human incarnations are steps along the way to the great incarnation (HWLB, 7).

Why would the disciples even refer to John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or any of the other prophets in reference to Jesus if they did not believe that the souls of these men, having gone through the passage of death, were available to be reembodyed or reincarnated in the person of Jesus? Only Peter realized that Jesus was primarily the embodiment of the Christ--God's only begotten idea of perfect man--although he knew that Jesus' soul might have experienced reincarnation many times to have attained the divine proportions He demonstrated before their eyes (MSM, 57).

Christ--The incarnating principle of the God-man; the perfect Word or idea of God, which unfolds into the true man and is blessed with eternal life by measuring up to the divine standard, thus fulfilling the law of righteousness. "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11).

Christ is the divine man. Jesus is the name that represents an individual expression of the Christ idea. Christ existed long before Jesus. It was the Christ Mind in Jesus that exclaimed, "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5).

Christ abides in each person as his potential perfection. Jesus Christ, the embodiment of all divine ideas, exists eternally in the Mind of Being as the only begotten Son of God, the "Messiah" or "anointed one," and is the living Principle working in man (RW, 35).

Christ in you-- The true light, which guides every man coming into the world, is, and ever has been, in man. Even the outer man was formed and came into existence through it. This is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27) (RW, 35).

Christ, first coming of--The dawning in mind that spiritual man is the real Son of God (RW, 36).

Christ, formation of--When man appropriates words of Truth, he partakes of that which forms the spiritual soul, substance, and life of Spirit and which manifests as Christ in the perfect body. Every student of Truth is letting "Christ be formed" (Gal. 4:19) in him when he constantly abides in the Christ Mind through daily meditating on words of Truth (RW, 36).

Christ, indwelling--The Son of God or spiritual nucleus within each person. All our thoughts must harmonize with this spiritual center before we can bring into expression the divine consciousness. Each man has within himself the Christ idea, just as Jesus had. Man must look to the indwelling Christ in order to recognize his sonship, his divine origin and birth, even as did the Savior. This real self is "closer...than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." It is the

kingdom of God in each person. "Neither shall they say, Lo, here! or There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21) (RW, 36).

Even though liberated, the divine ones play, at God's behest, their human roles in the seeming reality of the earth-life drama. They have their weaknesses, their struggles and temptations, and then, through righteous battle and right behavior, they attain victory. In this way, they show that all men can be and are meant to be spiritually victorious over the forces that would keep them from realizing their inherent oneness with God (MEQ, 295).

Jesus did not go to a faraway heaven, there to abide to the great day of His "Second Coming." He explained again and again, in language that anyone who has even a slight understanding of the interrelation of Spirit, soul, and body may comprehend, that He would continue to exist in the etheric realm that He called "the heavens" (JC, 12).

Jesus still lives in the spiritual ethers of this world and is in constant contact with those who raise their thoughts to Him in prayer (JC, 11).

We may understand, too, how the perfect life of Jesus on earth was the result of several previous incarnations in which he had developed self-mastery. His miraculous life as Christ was the result of many past lives of spiritual schooling. He became...a divine incarnation because in previous lives as an ordinary human being he fought the temptations of [desires] and conquered. His example gives the rest of mankind definite hope. Otherwise, what chance have we? If God had sent angels to teach us I would say, "Lord, why didn't You create me as an angel? How can I emulate beings who were created perfect and who have had no experience with the tests and temptations that You have given me?"

We need for our ideal a being who is essentially like us. Jesus *had* temptations to face. "Get thee behind me, Satan," he said. And he conquered. Had he never known temptation, his saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan," would have been playacting, and how could that inspire us? Although he had already conquered the flesh in other lives, he had to feel its weaknesses again in his incarnation as Jesus, to show humanity by his mastery how high he had grown spiritually, and to give heart to all men by his example (MEQ, 231).

Sectarian Christians have a difficult time explaining the Second Coming as an objective event in history in the light of these words of Jesus, "When you are persecuted in one town, take refuge in another; I tell you this: before you have gone through all the towns of Israel the Son of Man will have come" (Matt. 10:23). And again these words, when Jesus was discussing his Second Coming: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matt. 24:34). And how could "all the tribes of the earth see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30)? There would have to be millions of Christs on as many clouds for all the nations to see him! But to great saints and yogis Christ's statements are perfectly clear. He meant that, in clouds of divine vision, he would come again into the souls of men anywhere, at any time, whose hearts were pure, receptive to his grace...As Jesus put it, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8) (PAWY, 448–449).

## **MYSTICISM - A Path toward the Ultimate Goal of Being**

Most of us, when we think of mysticism think of something mysterious, strange, occultish. That is because the word in common usage has acquired a second meaning, and when we say of some belief, "It's a mysticism," we usually mean it is something spooky and insubstantial, without sound basis. But mysticism as it appears in religion and philosophy, is not a vague philosophy and perhaps has had more adherents than any other approach to life.

The dictionary defines mysticism as:

*"The belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience (intuition or insight)."*

That is not a bad definition, but it leaves out certain essential elements of mysticism.

The mystic believes that you can know and experience reality, but you cannot adequately describe it. It is from this belief that mysticism derives its name. Reality is beyond grasping with your mind or putting into words. Nothing you can say about it suffices. The names that can be given are not the absolute name.

But though you cannot describe Reality, the mystic believes that you can have a direct encounter with it. For in and through and under all that is, within and beyond all the evanescent phenomena constantly appearing and fading away on the surface of this swarming world, there is an underlying universal, enduring reality, a world-ground, and undifferentiated, indeterminate continuum, a central truth of being. You may call it what you will. Most of us simply say, "God!"

You can experience this central truth of being, and when you do, you discover that is is the central truth of your own being. The indescribable universal reality, that is the essence of all that is, is one with the equally indescribable reality that is your true self. You are one with the One (ACR, 151-153).

### **Mystic:**

***One who desires and believes in being able to know God; allows God to BE God in him/herself.***



## THREE PHASES OF MIND

The subconscious mind is the vast, silent realm that lies back of the conscious mind and between it and the Superconscious...The subconscious may be called the sensitive plate of mind...Its true office is to receive impressions from the Superconscious and to reproduce them upon the canvas of the conscious mind...Man, however, having lost the consciousness of the indwelling Father as an ever-present reality, has reversed the process and impresses the subconscious from the conscious mind (KTL, 88-9).

The Superconscious mind lifts up or regenerates both the subconscious and the conscious, transforming them into the true image and likeness of God. The conscious must be faithful during this transformation. It must look ever to the Superconscious for all direction and instruction. It can of itself do nothing with assurance, because the Spirit of wisdom rests in the Superconscious (KTL, 89)

**The regeneration of the subconscious is not the work of the conscious, but of the Superconscious mind acting in harmony with the conscious (KTL, 91).**

The scope of the mind is very grand. God has given you waking consciousness, subconsciousness, and superconsciousness. Your conscious mind has certain limitations; after a few years it begins to forget various things. But your subconscious has a greater memory capacity; every thought and experience is stored in the repository of subconsciousness. Your conscious mind may forget every word that I am saying, but your subconscious mind is registering them all.

Behind the subconscious is your superconscious mind, which never forgets anything. The superconscious mind has kept a record of everything you have done, every thought you have thought. When death comes, all these thoughts and experiences flash through your mind before you leave the body. These impressions that are strongest determine the environment and habits of your next life.\*

As an ego your consciousness is present everywhere within yourself, and is therefore present in each thought that you think. If you can expand your consciousness beyond ego into the realm of superconsciousness, you can watch from that point all the thousands of thoughts passing through your conscious mind. Those who have developed the superconscious mind can remember all the thoughts of a lifetime and of previous lives as well. In divine memory nothing is forgotten. Our thoughts are real and they are eternal, ever present in the ether (MEQ, 331).

\*"The thought with which a dying man leaves the body determines--through his long persistence in it--his next state of being" (Bhagavad Gita VIII:6).

# HISTORY OF REINCARNATION

The writings of the Early Fathers of the Christian Church are filled with many allusions to the current inner doctrine of the preexistence and rebirth of souls. Origen in particular has written at great length regarding these things. John the Baptist was generally accepted as the reincarnation of Elias, even by the populace, who regarded it as a miraculous occurrence, while the elect regarded it as merely another instance or rebirth under the law. The Gnostics, a mystic order and school in the early church, taught reincarnation plainly and openly, bringing upon themselves much persecution at the hands of the more conservative [religious groups]. Others held to some form of the teaching, the disputes among them being principally regarding points of doctrine and detail, the main teachings being admitted. Origen taught that souls had fallen from a high estate and were working their way back toward their lost estate and glory, by means of repeated incarnations. Justin Martyr speaks of the soul inhabiting successive bodies, with loss of memory of past lives. For several centuries, the early Church held within its bosom many earnest advocates of reincarnation, and the teaching was recognized as vital even by those who combated it.

Lactinus, at the end of the third century, held that the idea of the soul's immortality implied its preexistences. St. Augustine's "Confessions," makes use of these remarkable words: "Did I not live in another body before entering my mother's womb?" Which expression is all the more remarkable because Augustine opposed Origen in many points of doctrine, and because it was written as late as A.D. 415. The various Church Councils, however, frowned upon these outcroppings of the doctrine of reincarnation, and the influence of those who rose to power in the church was directed against the "heresy." At several councils were the teachings rebuked, and condemned, until finally in A.D., 538, Justinian had a law passed to take the doctrine out (RPLB, 60-61).

It was known and taught in the most ancient civilizations of which we know. It was the highest wisdom of oldest Egypt. It was, and is, the religion of Asia. It was taught by the greatest philosophers of greatest Greece. It is found in the ancient scriptures of the world; and the Council of Constantinople, A.D. 551, is said to be responsible for its elimination from the present Christian Bible. Origen one of the great authorities among the Christian fathers, refers to preexistences as the common belief; and Clement of Alexandria taught it as a divine tradition authorized by St. Paul (CC-R, 6-7).

The first gospels must have contained teachings which the early Christians were prepared to preserve with their lives. Unfortunately, they appear to have died in vain. Our orthodox versions of the Old and New Testaments date no further back than the 6th century, when the Emperor Justinian summoned the Fifth Ecumenical Congress of Constantinople in 553 A.D. to expunge the Platonically inspired writings of Origen, an early Church Father, who had upheld reincarnation until his death three hundred years before (HHR, 6).

The early Christian church accepted the doctrine of reincarnation, which was expounded by the Gnostics and by numerous church fathers, including Clement of Alexandria, the celebrated Origen (both 3rd century), and St. Jerome (5th century). The doctrine was first declared a heresy in A.D. 553 by the Second Council of Constantinople. At that time many

Christians thought the doctrine of reincarnation afforded man too ample a stage of time and space to encourage him to strive for immediate salvation. But truths suppressed lead disconcertingly to a host of errors. The millions have not utilized their "one lifetime" to seek God, but to enjoy this world--so uniquely won, and so shortly to be forever lost! The truth is that man reincarnates on earth until he has consciously regained his status as a son of God (AY, 199).

# THE LOGIC OF REINCARNATION

According to the doctrine of reincarnation, life on earth is a school containing many grades. The ultimate goal of human experience is graduation from limited, egoic awareness into cosmic consciousness. Stepping stones to this unconditioned awareness are the removal of all confining attachments and desires, the expansion of love, and a growing realization that God is the one underlying Reality of the universe (PAWY, 344-345).

Jurgen Keil studied a boy born in Turkey in 1980. Before his second birthday the child was describing details of a life lived in a nearby village and calling himself by the name of a man who had indeed lived there. The boy insisted he be taken to the other village, where he accurately identified the man's family members and possessions and recounted true episodes from his life. Seventeen of his 22 specific statements proved accurate. None was definitely wrong. Keil and other witnesses were impressed with the boy's "adult-like" manner and the consistency of his story over time.

Mills tracked the case of an Indian boy with a curious fascination for camels. Around age two he announced that he was from another village and had met his death on a business trip near the Ganges River. Offering details of his other "family member," he begged to be taken to his wife and identified a passing camel dealer as his brother.

As it happened, this dealer had indeed had a brother, also a camel trader, who had lived in the village the child had named and died near the Ganges. When the man's relatives came to visit the child, his behavior and explicit knowledge convinced them that he was the dead man reborn. Mills rated 15 of 17 specific statements made by the boy as accurate.

Haraldsson's study of a Sri Lankan girl was one of 19 cases in which a child's statements were recorded before any match was found. The girl described living as a married woman with the last name of Nanayakkara in the distant city of Akuressa, becoming pregnant, then drowning after falling from a rope bridge into a river.

Years later, one of Haraldsson's research assistants traveled to Akuressa and learned of a pregnant married woman bearing the correct surname who had died in exactly the manner described. The rope bridge was the only one in the vicinity of this city of 20,000, and the woman's death was the only such drowning on record at the site in the past 20 years. Most of the girl's other purported recollections correctly matched the woman's life. Although a few details were wrong, many of these were grounded in fact. For instance, her husband had not been a postman but his brother had been. As Haraldsson prepared to bring the girl to Akuressa for tests of recognition, her long-reluctant family barred her further participation in the study (Brain/Mind Bulletin, January 1995, 1-2).

(For further reading on these and other studies, see *Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief among North American Indians and Inuit* (University of Toronto Press), by Antonia Mills. Her address: 3333 University Way, University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, B.C. V2N-4Z9)

# REINCARNATION REFERENCES FROM THE BIBLE

In John (9:1-3), there is an interesting story about a blind man:

"As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not this man who sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him."

I'm sure you have read or heard this passage many times, but did you ever question what the disciples were actually referring to in their question to Jesus? If they did not believe in reincarnation, what could they possibly have meant by asking when the man could have sinned--if he had been born blind? Only if he had lived before could he have sinned before he was born into this present lifetime (MSM, 60)!

Jesus Christ Himself made a veiled reference to the process of reincarnation in the Book of Revelation. In the letter to the church in Philadelphia He promises, "He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; never shall he go out of it..." I believe that this is actually an idiom referring to the going out into new bodies, an experience each of us has had in the process of reincarnation. When we have overcome the temptations and limitations of worldly existence, we will enter into the resurrecting process of the body just as Jesus did. We will no longer need to go out into earthly incarnations, for we will have spiritualized our bodies.

If Jesus and His disciples believed in and spoke about reincarnation, why are we so hesitant to accept the idea? There can be many reasons for this. Reincarnation was believed to have been officially deleted from the Christian Church canon in A.D. 553, so there is little theological history to support those who include it in their belief systems (MSM, 58).

In the words of Jesus Christ there are several references to the concept of reincarnation. The first is from Matthew 11:11-14:

"Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if you will accept it, he is Elijah who is to come."

Jesus Christ seemed to realize that the idea of reincarnation, though widely believed in His culture, was a difficult one to accept and understand. However, He understood with divine insight that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah.

Another reference to Elijah comes in the 17th chapter of Matthew (11-13):

"Jesus answered, saying to them, 'Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of man will suffer at their hands.' Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist" (MSM, 59).

The re-embodiment of Elijah was promised: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come." Before the birth of John the Baptist an angel told

his parents that this promise concerning Elijah should be fulfilled in their child--"in the spirit and power of Elijah." The priests washed John: "Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not." This shows that the intellectual consciousness does not apprehend the previous experiences of its ego. To portray more fully the confusion of the intellectual consciousness and its lack of understanding of its true location in Being, John further answered: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." So the intellect by itself is always a voice "crying in the wilderness," and it will never get its bearings until it consciously recognizes its higher wisdom, the Christ consciousness. This consciousness knows who it is that is wearing the mask of John the Baptist, and, when questioned, it says: "If ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, that is to come." In more fully explaining the ignorance of the people in this matter, Jesus further said in Matthew 17:12: "But I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they would. Even so shall the Son of man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist" (UNITY, Aug. 1924, 118).

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Revelation 3:12).

## CHARLES AND MYRTLE FILLMORE

Perhaps no teaching of Charles Fillmore has caused more comment than his acceptance of reincarnation. In the 1890's, when he spoke out so boldly about reincarnation, his words were startling. Sensible people knew that a man lived only once and that when he died he went to hell, purgatory, or heaven (HNA, 94).

We are confronted by the question from thousands, "What is reincarnation?" It is a question so deep and far reaching that it cannot be answered so that those who expect mere words to convey the fullness of meaning may be satisfied. Not what you have been, but what you now are is the issue. All that you ever have been is in the now-existing and now-present mind about you (UNITY, Jan. 1912, 18).

The whole man, Spirit, Soul and Body, must be lifted up into the Christ consciousness of life and perfection, which is the goal of man's existence. The Western world in general looks upon re-embodiment, or reincarnation, as a heathen doctrine. Many people close the door of their minds to it, without waiting to find out what message it may bring when interpreted in the Light of Truth (KTL, 93).

Charles Fillmore had the courage to step out in 1890, a hundred years ago, and proclaim to the world that he indeed believed in this theory. Not only did he believe in it, he understood its importance in spiritual growth (Reference unknown).

She will draw more freely and fully upon the infinite resources, and stir up the gifts of God in the midst of her, and the experience will be good for her. Her mother is in the heart of the Father, and the dear soul will rest, and come again, into a new world of new understanding and in a new body, to go on with her development.

Those who find it a burden to stay in the body, and go through the change called death, will find that they are still a living soul, and they will again desire to live and to unfold and make use of the life which we now know. So, they will again be attracted to those who will help them to build the physical body, and they will be born again as babes. The soul which can build one body can, if it fails to learn to take care of and to continue to transform the body, build another body.

It is a rest, and an opportunity, to lay aside the body for a time, and to break the conscious connection with things going on around her, until the divine urge within her again prompts her to build the body temple and take up lessons here in the physical (*Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters*, ?)

The teaching that man in his spiritual ego lives over and over again in many personalities, is as old as religion itself, because it is found in every religion under the sun. It has been taught in India, China, Egypt, Palestine—in fact, every nation ancient and modern has its great teachers who accepted and expounded in some degree this universally understood reality of man's personal life (R-UA, 1).

Some persons hold that reincarnation is one of the natural evolutionary steps of man's development. We teach, and our doctrine is sustained by the teachings of Jesus, that rebirth is the unifying force of nature at work in its effort to restore humanity to the original deathless estate...A single span of life, from the birth of an infant to the death of an old person, does not constitute our opportunity for life...[W]e must have bodies in order to gain an abiding consciousness of life. Through repeated trials at living, we are finding out that we must learn to control the issues of life (PUSB:R, 4-5).

That you do not remember your past lives proves nothing. Neither do you remember the day on which you were born, but you do not question the fact of your birth on that account. Comparatively little of your present life is remembered. But that does not alter the fact that you have lived...[I]n the great Mind of the universe, all identity is sharply marked, and [as] we as individuals become quickened and raised out of personal consciousness into the universal, we will be able to bridge over the breaks in personal experience. We will come into oneness. Realizing spiritual identity as the son or daughter of God, we will not entangle with either present or past personality, but will claim and demonstrate divine sonship. We will no longer be limited to a brief span of life, beginning with birth and ending with death, but will live in the consciousness of eternal life, which has neither beginning nor end (PUSB:R, 14-15).



## FAMOUS PEOPLE

The prominent author Jack London felt much the same way. He once wrote: "All my life I have had an awareness of other times and places. I have been aware of other persons in me...I...remembered that I had once been the son of a king...that once I had been a slave, and worn an iron collar round my neck...I am all of my past...I am man born of woman...I have been woman born of woman...I have been a woman and borne children. And I shall be born again."

Famous Mark Twain tells a true story in his writing *My Platonic Sweetheart*. He tells of an unusual dream which occurred in many forms over a period of forty years. In the dreams, he met a girl of fifteen whom he loved with a deep, reverent, and chaste love. In each dream she, as well as he, had a different name, and a different appearance and facial characteristics. The location changed: it may have been England, or India, or America, or Hawaii. He was convinced that the people, the animals, and the experiences in his dream were real, immortal and indestructible. His dreamland sweetheart was to him a real person, not fictional.

Henry David Thoreau had a vivid impression that he had lived in Judea eighteen hundred years earlier; but, as he stated, "I never knew that there was such a one as Christ among my contemporaries...As far back as I can remember I have unconsciously referred to the experiences of a previous state of existence."

Many of the original Indian tribes also believed in the soul's rebirth. So, too, have a number of well-known figures in modern times, such as Benjamin Franklin, Emerson, Edison, Henry Ford, General George Patton and Charles Fillmore, to name just a few.

In religious thought, the purpose of rebirth is for salvation of both soul and body. Charles Fillmore, Ernest Wilson, and other modern thinkers consider rebirth as the gospel of a second chance. That is, through reincarnation we are given many opportunities to atone or make amends for our so-called sins of mistakes, or to reap the rewards we have previously earned through right thinking and right action in another lifetime. It also provides opportunity to continue growing and unfolding the talents and abilities that often lie dormant within the soul (IBRB, 16).

Rabbi Abraham Yehoshua, a Hasidic master who died in 1825, spoke of ten lives that he had lived previously, concluding, "And so I was sent forth again and again in order to perfect my love. If I succeed this time, I shall never return again..." Voltaire wrote, "It is not more surprising to be born twice than once." And the British philosopher Hume stated that reincarnation is "The only system to which Philosophy can hearken" (PAWY, 344).

## **KARMA--THE LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING**

Cause and effect--the law of sequence: the balance wheel of the universe. This law, like all other divine laws, inheres in Being and is good. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Man lives in two worlds, the world of cause (the within) and the world of effect (the without) (RW, 31).

Some people say that the idea of karma is not Christian, but Paul called attention to this law in no uncertain terms when he said "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is true. If you sow thoughts of thistles you will reap thistles, which will tear your fingers and cause you real sorrow. But if you sow thoughts of sweet peas, you will reap beauty and fragrance in your affairs" (UNITY, May 1934, 23).

Karma, correctly understood is...in the Christian teaching...There are numerous karmic references throughout the Bible, some made by Jesus Himself. The Golden Rule is a karmic reference by implication: "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them." Simply defined, karma is the law of cause and effect. It does not carry a negative connotation in its true definition" (UNITY, Aug. 1970, 22).

One of the most important and basic law of life has been called "THE GREAT LAW." This Great Law was called the law of karma by the ancient enlightened one (YGP, 175).

Whether or not one believes the eastern doctrine of karma, it is worth thinking about. The karmic framework declares that everything has a price, a cost, a consequence, a working out in the universe. It is like a kind of cosmic bookkeeping system in which every thing eventually must balance...When we make major decision in our life, it is good to seek spiritual guidance...to set down all the aspects of the decision (UNITY, June 1974, 52).

We learn...whether or not we agree with the theosophists in all things, there is a central truth in the doctrine of karma, for our spiritual life lives on with us in the form of deeds done and continues with us in their effects till we have learned their meaning or lesson (UNITY, May 1924, 49).

Thoughts are seeds that, when dropped or planted in the subconscious mind, germinate, grow and bring forth their fruit in due season. After sowing the plants must be tended. After using the law we must hold to its full fulfillment (JC, 112).

We are always creating karma, either good karma or bad karma. Actually, there is no such thing as bad karma, because this means that we are going through the results of our negative, destructive and selfish thoughts and that we have the opportunity of learning lessons of great overcoming through them. So even apparently negative or bad karma serves a purpose of good...

Let no man think that he can escape the creations of his mind by breaking the physical chains that bind him to the earth. Nor does death in any of its phases relieve him of the states of

mind that dominated him at the time of passing. The law of God is not mocked at any time or under any circumstances. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." What we have sown in the flesh we shall reap in the flesh unless we repent, change our minds. When we do repent, we shall break mortal thoughts and ascend into a spiritual thought realm, the kingdom of God (JC, 189).

Every sin must be atoned for, all karmic debt must be paid. However, the choice is ours whether we work it out in the cycle of retribution, through prolonged suffering in the furnace of affliction or whether our payment of debt is through the discipline of rising above the consciousness from which the act was committed into the freedom of spiritual understanding where we go forth and sin no more. This is what Jesus called forgiveness (DPW, 137).

The more man knows, the more he is responsible for, and a person with a knowledge of spiritual Law, which he does not practice, suffers greatly in consequence. "The fear of the Lord (law) is the beginning of wisdom." If we read the word "Lord" as "law" it will make many passages in the Bible much clearer.

"Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord (law)." It is the law which takes vengeance, not God. God sees man perfect, "created in His own image" (imagination) and given "power and dominion."

This is the perfect idea of man, registered in Divine Mind, awaiting man's recognition; for man can only be what he sees himself to be, and only attain what he sees himself attaining (GL, 40).

Every year when new models of cars come out, there are always some that are "lemons," having mechanical defects. Is life like this, too? That somehow in the process of nature some souls are made with firm, sound bodies and minds and others are accidentally given weak bodies and defective brains? Are we just factory productions, with no control over what happens to us?...There must be some justice in the law that creates the infinite differences among human beings...We find it in the law of reincarnation, with its corollary of karma, the principle of cause and effect (DR, 166-167).

The equilibrating law of karma, as expounded in the Hindu scriptures, is that of action and reaction, cause and effect, sowing and reaping. In the course of natural righteousness (rita), each man, by his thoughts and actions, becomes the molder of his destiny. Whatever universal energies he himself, wisely or unwisely, has set in motion must return to him as their starting point, like a circle inexorably completing itself. "The world looks like a mathematical equation, which turn it how you will, balances itself. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty."--*Emerson, Compensation*. An understanding of karma as the law of justice underlying life's inequalities serves to free the human mind from resentment against God and man (AY, 301).

You may or may not believe in the law of reincarnation; but if this life is the beginning and the end of human existence, it is impossible to reconcile the inequalities of life with a divine justice. Why is one man born in a rich family, whereas another child arrives in a poverty-stricken home, only to die of starvation? Why is one person healthy enough to live 100 years, and someone else

is sick all the time? Why are Eskimos born in the cold north and other peoples in moderate climates, where the struggle to survive is easier? Why are some babies born blind? Why? Why? Why? If you were God, would you do such unjust things? What is the use of reading and living according to the scriptures, if life is predestined by a whimsical God who deliberately creates beings with bodies or brains that are imperfect?

According to the law of cause and effect, every action creates a commensurate reaction. Therefore whatever is happening to us now must be a result of something we have done previously. If there is nothing in this life to account for present circumstances, the inescapable conclusion is that the cause was set in motion at some prior time; that is, in some past human existence. Your strongest moods and character tendencies did not begin with this birth; they were established in your consciousness long before. Thus we may understand how some persons show from early childhood certain definite talents, or weaknesses, and so on (MEQ, 230).

In Sanskrit, a mental or physical act is called a karma. Karma is also the word used to describe the consequences of this act, and hence to describe what we call our "fate"--since our fate is nothing but the sum of the consequences of our past actions in this and previous lives. After a man has achieved liberation...his acts will cease to produce karma. The remainder of his earthly life will be governed only by the karma which were already in existence before his liberation. He is like an actor on the last night of a play. He knows that the play will never be performed again, no matter how well he does his part, no matter whether the audience boos or applauds. He has nothing to gain or lose by his performance. Nevertheless, he must play it through to the end until the final curtain falls and he can go home (HKG, 32).

Throughout this enormous journey toward total consciousness, the individual is subject to the Law of Karma. His desires and acts regulate the speed of his progress. He builds or removes his own obstacles to enlightenment. His present state is continually being conditioned by the karma of his past and continually productive of future karma. Death does not interrupt this process. Neither does rebirth. The individual is merely reborn with a body, a mind, a character and social surroundings which express, as it were, the sum total of his karmic balance at that particular moment in time.

The doctrine of reincarnation is exceedingly unpalatable to many people because it makes each one of us directly responsible for his present condition. We all dislike having to face this responsibility, and some of us prefer to blame God, or our parents, or the existing political system for making us what we are. If we deny reincarnation and claim that this birth is our first, we are, in fact, disclaiming responsibility for our condition; since it then logically follows that this condition must have been ordained by God, or brought about by the influences of heredity and environment. Hence--if we have been born physically or economically underprivileged--we are provided with a permanent grievance, which permits us to spend a lifetime sulking and cursing our fate, and with a permanent excuse for all our own weaknesses and failures.

This doctrine of reincarnation, which at first seems so grim and heartless, actually implies a profoundly optimistic belief in the justice and order of the universe. If it is we--and not God, or our parents, or our fellow men--who have made our present predicament, then it is we who can change it. We have no excuse for self-pity and no reason for despair. We are not helplessly doomed. We are under no mysterious prenatal curse. "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars..." All we need is courage and determination not to give up the struggle (HKG, 82-83).

There are three kinds of karma: the karma which has already been created and stored up, so that it will bear fruit in some future life, the karma created in the past or in some previous life, which is bearing fruit at the present moment, and the karma which we are now in the process of creating by our thoughts and acts. Of these, the already existing karma are beyond our control; we can only wait until they have worked themselves out, and accept their fruits with courage and patience. But the karma which we are now creating--"the pain which is yet to come"--can be avoided. Not by ceasing to act--that would be impossible, even if it were desirable--but by ceasing to desire the fruits of action for oneself. If we dedicate the fruits of action to God, we shall gradually unwind the wheel of karma and thus avoid its pain (HKG, 88-89).

Karma can only operate and produce tendencies as long as certain causes are present. These causes are ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and the desire to cling to life. The effects of these causes are rebirth, a long or a short life, and the experiences of pleasure and of pain. Basically, karma is rooted in ignorance of the Atman [Christ within]. Remove this ignorance, and you destroy karma.

"This vast universe is a wheel," says the Swetaswatara Upanishad. "Upon it are all creatures that are subject to birth, death, and rebirth. Round and round it turns, and never stops. It is the wheel of Brahman. As long as the individual self thinks it is separate from Brahman, it revolves upon the wheel...But when through the grace of Brahman it realizes its identity with him, it revolves upon the wheel no longer. It achieves immortality (HKG, 147).

Karma means, simply, action. Any action implies movement from a point of rest in the Spirit. And such movement inevitably results, sooner or later, in an equal and opposite movement: a reaction in kind. Hatred given, that is to say, hatred received. Love given attracts love. Gradually, as the ego develops in wisdom, it learns to allow actions to flow through it without feeling in any sense personally involved with them. The fruits of its actions, too, then cease to affect it. The sage, who represents the pinnacle of spiritual evolution, rests unshaken in the calm center of his being, blissful in the realization that he and the unmoving, Infinite Spirit are One.

Spiritually speaking, karma has different levels of manifestation depending on how clearly it expresses the divine consciousness. Love, for example, is a more spiritual karma than hatred, since it reinforces the awareness of life's essential oneness. Hatred increases the delusion of separateness from God, and from other people. To tell the truth is a more spiritual karma than to tell lies, because truthfulness helps to develop a refined awareness of what really is—of the Divine Reality behind all appearances.

Karma, then, may be described as the system of rewards and punishments by which the ego learns ultimately to manifest its innate divine nature. Suffering is the karmic result of action that is, in some way, out of tune with that true nature. Fulfillment is the reward for living, to some degree at least, in harmony with that nature. To learn these lessons thoroughly requires many more opportunities for error and self-correction than can be gained in only one lifetime. Often, indeed, more than one incarnation is needed to learn even one important lesson (PAWY, 346-347).

## **BENEFITS OF PAST LIFE KNOWLEDGE**

What does an understanding of the law of reincarnation do for us? It gives us right perspective, new understanding. It gives us peace of mind. It helps to explain some of the apparent inequalities of life (TWTC, 86).

The value of an acceptance of the doctrine of reincarnation, for the practical Christian student, is less in the remembrance of who we have been in the past than that we have been, and that we are and ever shall be. It assures us that life is continuous, that it is good and just (HWLB, 1).

The reincarnation possibilities of certain life experiences may help you realize that life is not unjust but is simply the outworking of constantly operating laws...(UNITY, July 1968, 22)

It is for a very good purpose that GOD gives us the gift of forgetfulness and allows us to start over, so to speak.

Yet, as we progress and develop spiritually, also as a special gift, GOD releases seemingly random bits of information from past lives to us that He thinks we may well use to spiritual purpose and advantage...by means of dreams, meditation, reflection, visions, in "deja' vu" types of intuitions at certain geographical locations, and in other ways. And of course if we use this information wisely and to help others, He may well release further information. Yes, there is even a spiritual gift of past life recall. It is one rarely mentioned but one that is very real. In this, the spirit uses a variety of the above methods to reveal to us bits of information that GOD thinks we can use. In this kind of thing, one's head may vibrate when one meets someone close from a previous life. Perhaps this particular gift comes only to those who have a need for such knowledge in accomplishing the mission of their present life (OLNL, 3).

## **WHY BOTHER WITH PREVIOUS LIVES?**

To truly know thy whole self.

To know and live our oneness with others and with the universe.

Exploring our past lives, especially the more pertinent lives, can greatly help us to understand our average day to day problems, weaknesses, cravings, vices and ailments; and can give us some ideas on recognizing, understanding and correcting them, or at least in dealing with them in a more constructive way.

If we have had bad experiences in previous lives--such as a horrible death, for example, which left us with psychotic phobias in this life in response to certain stimuli--we can understand what our fears are and deal with them by getting to the root (or cause) of the fears.

To heal ourselves at a deep, soul level.

To understand our skills and hobbies.

To answer the question, "Why am I here?"

Most people who explore their past lives and develop an appreciation of reincarnation truths will be much happier people. They will come to a greater understanding of the nature of GOD and the world, of their own nature, and of the nature of others.

To improve our understanding of GOD, GOD's will, and GOD's laws.

To discover more opportunities. We realize that there are many more possibilities for us than we have thought in the past, and learn how to use these opportunities to advance our souls' growth.

To dissolve prejudice; we have lived in many countries as different races, and have done the behavior that we may be judging now.

To learn to truly forgive and clear our karmic files and free ourSelves.

To learn how the past influences our present life.

To learn how strong and sacred our desires are.

(Jane E. Hart)

## PREVIOUS LIVES

Man's body represents the sum total of the animal world, because in its evolution, it has had experience in nearly every type of elemental form. These memories are part of the soul (TM, 81).

That you do not remember your past lives proves nothing. Neither do you remember the day on which you were born, but you do not on that account question the fact of your birth (KL, 99).

So the people in this world today, you who read these lines, have stored up in your consciousness a higher wisdom, which when touched by the right idea, will spread through your mind and reveal to you a little at a time the book of your life since you started forth to learn about existence. You will there find answers to all your questions about your present condition; about why things are as they are when you apparently had nothing to do in bringing them about (UNITY, September 1948, by Fillmore).

Many people express a remembrance of past lives. There are even those who feel that their psychic powers enable them to give life readings of the previous lives of others...Reincarnation is a concept that is disturbing to many people...one who wishes to maintain a relationship with traditional Christianity would dare not give consideration to any such idea...Reincarnation presents no logical difficulties, whatever be the emotional reaction to it (LFOA, 56).

I, myself, have entered some Old World city for the first time in my life, so far as I was aware, and found the streets familiar, known just where to locate a certain house, for instance (UNITY, May 1927, 465-466).

Charles Fillmore himself believed in and taught the doctrine of reincarnation or rebirth. Indeed, he once told the author that in an earlier incarnation he had been born as St. Paul (SR, 260).

Without doubt, the secret of Paul's great illumination at the time of his conversion is that in previous lives he had built up a spiritual consciousness, and on his way to Damascus he "stirred up" the gift that was within him. The new race that is now being born on this planet will develop these unused resources of the mind by realization, audible prayer, and thanksgiving, and bring to the surface the riches of both the subconscious and the superconscious mind (ASP, 28).

The realization of perfection takes root in the soul and may come forth in a flash as perfect health. We should not confine ourselves to the present life of the individual but go into previous incarnations in which the work was done that made the genius in this incarnation (JC, 49).

A winged globe...appeared on the first issue of the new magazine in June 1891. It attracted much interest because of the way Charles explained its symbolism. "It is a symbol that I feel I knew in a former incarnation in ancient Egypt," he declared. In the 1890's such a declaration was sure to disturb the climate of orthodox belief. At that time it was regarded as a non-Christian belief (HNA, 41).



The life you once lived can only be found in the life you now express. You could conceivably find a long chain of tombstones and possessions and niches in history, but the wave has moved on (LIFL, 167).

This belief seems to verify Jesus' presentation of God as a kind, loving, impartial Father, whose only desire is to give us His kingdom of good, but we must accept that good. When we realize that we are responsible not only for our actions in this present life, but also for the results of actions in our previous lives, we can begin to build for a better future life (IBRB, 5).

Regardless of your identity in your previous incarnation, you start this life anew, with no recollection of who you were before. Because of that limitation in our consciousness, we see this life as the beginning and the end (DR, 266).

## CONSCIOUSLY PARTICIPATING IN YOUR SOUL'S EVOLUTION

What we are in this lifetime is a reflection of the choices we have made in our previous lives. If we have concentrated our attention upon expressing ideas of Truth--wholeness, beauty, joy, abundance, love, peace, and wisdom--that is exactly what we will express and experience in this lifetime. If we have placed our attention and spent our time in negative or un-Godlike pursuits--illness, unforgiveness, resentment, anger, selfishness, violence, or pridefulness--those experiences in expressions are what we will bring with us into this lifetime. God gives us chances to change our patterns of thinking and feeling, not only with repeated incarnations, but also with repeated opportunities to learn and grow in this present lifetime. A challenge that comes to us that we do not understand or feel we deserve, may be an opportunity to erase some mistake committed in a previous lifetime. So, instead of crying, "Why me?" try saying, "Thank You, God, for giving me a second chance to do this right!" That is what reincarnation is all about.

I believe reincarnation is part of the divine plan of God for our spiritual unfoldment. And, I believe it is evidence of His perfect love. We are able, through his wise provision for our re-embodiment, to have, as does the chambered nautilus, continuing opportunities to leave our low-vaulted past and build ever more stately mansions for our souls. Reincarnation is a divine gift and a divine answer. Receive it and accept it now with God's blessings (MSM, 61)!

Loving service results in good karma. We give our self to living the spiritual life and to helping others to do so. We pray, meditate, think, study, and seek to expand our thoughts toward an ever wider viewpoint of life...We know...that the experiences that lie ahead are the result of our own consciousness--our thoughts, our words, and our deeds, our karma (TWC, 90-91).

We direct the law of karma intelligently by our choice. We may choose to seek harmonious, positive directions in life. In this way, our karma responds with fulfilling, joyful experiences. Through our chosen path, we can rise above the law of negative cause and effect (TWC, 87).

Everyone should learn to analyze himself dispassionately. Write down your thoughts and aspirations daily. Find out what you are--not what you imagine you are!--because you want to make yourself what you ought to be. Most people don't change because they don't see their own faults (MEQ, 73-74).

Above all, you should learn the most you can from this life, and strive to pass to the highest grade of spiritual development in the school of life. Commune with God. When you can do that, the deficiencies of all lesser grades of living are forgiven. To free yourself from karma that binds you to the lesser duties of life, develop wisdom and God-consciousness (MEQ, 228).

Our life is like a term in school. In the grades we all are required to take about the same course of study. In high school, we are allowed to select courses and major in those which we most want or need. In the university, still greater freedom is allowed. The sensible university student will not look down upon the high school pupil. The lesson each is learning measures his

experience rather than his capacity. Sometimes an advanced student will voluntarily join humbler students for review or to take some course he missed and now desires. We cannot always be sure how immature or how advanced a student may be by reason of the lessons he is learning. We can only wisely say that he is learning that lesson.

So with life itself. The doctrine of preexistence reconciles the apparent inequalities of life with the universal law of justice. It may not be pleasant to suffer any limitations in life for which we can see no obvious explanation, but the limitations become much more tolerable and can be borne with greater optimism and assurance of divine justice, if we can see that the limitations may very well be the result of some path of life followed in the past (HWLB, 54).

That in our own case we do not remember the steps along the way, the overcomings and shortcomings that characterized our course, is not very important. If it comes to that, we do not remember very much of what happened even so short a time ago as yesterday.

We do not so much need memories as we need a justifiable faith in divine law. Having this, we can face any difficulty with poise and courage, because we know that just as every infraction of law brings its corresponding undesirable result, so every conformity to righteousness brings the corresponding good result. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked" (Gal. 6:7). Every good thought and word and act brings its corresponding result with unhurrying accuracy and justice. "What we give out returns to us increased and multiplied" (HWLB, 56-57).

God doesn't readily respond to us, because we are shy before Him; we fail to show how much we want Him. Don't be afraid of Him. Call Him your own and pursue Him unceasingly, in thought and action, and you shall find Him to be the Greatest haven of safety (MEQ, 183).

The glory of God is great. He is real, and He can be found in this life. In men's hearts, there are many prayers--for money, fame, health--prayers for all manner of things. But the prayer that should be first in every heart is the prayer for God's presence. Silently and surely, as you walk on the path of life, you must come to the realization that God is the only object, the only goal that will satisfy you; for in God lies the answer to every desire of the heart (MEQ, 121).

If you want to make rapid progress in growth toward spiritual understanding, stop reading many books...What you want is revelation of Truth in your own soul, and that will never come through the reading of many books...Seek light from the Spirit of Truth within you. Go alone. Think alone. Seek light alone, and if it does not come at once, do not be discouraged and run off to someone else to get light...(LIT, 28).

We are in process of growth into the highest spiritual manhood and womanhood. We get many falls and bumps on the way, but only through these, not necessarily by them, can our growth proceed. Father and mother, no matter how strong or deep their love, cannot grow for their children; nor can God, who is omnipotence, at the center of our being, grow spiritually for us without making of us automatons instead of individuals (LIT, 32).

After all our beating about the bush, seeking here and there for our heart's desire, we must come right to Him who is the fulfillment of every desire; who waits to manifest more of Himself to us and through us. If you wanted my love or anything that I am (not that I have), you would not go to Tom Jones or to Mary Smith to get it. Either of those persons might tell you that I could and

would give myself, but you would have to come directly to me, and receive of me that which only I am, because I am it...In some way, after all our seeking for the light and Truth, we must learn to wait, each one for himself, upon God for the inner revelation of Truth and our oneness with Him (LIT, 100).

We do not need to grow ourselves, only to let the Son [Christ within] "grow" us...But we are consciously to let it; not merely to take the attitude of negatively letting it by not opposing it, but to put ourselves consciously where the Son can shine on us, and then "be still, and know" (Ps. 46:10) that while we wait there it is doing the work...Yet there is something more than a lax passivity to be maintained through it all. There must be a sort of conscious, active taking of that which God gives freely to us (LIT, 105).

It should be understood that the karmic law is quite impersonal. We can learn from our karma if we've a will to. But it is quite possible *not* to will to. An unwise reaction, for example, to a stolen inheritance would be to try to "get even" with the world by cheating others. One who takes this course will only reinforce the tendency which attracted his misfortune in the first place. Thus he will sow the seeds of still greater suffering in the future (PAWY, 354).

"Remember this," [Yogananda] replied with deep earnestness, "it takes very, *very*, VERY good karma even to *want* to know God!"...Through love of God, and only through that love, may one win final release from physical rebirth, and the right to advance to higher spheres of existence. Victory comes not by hating this world, but by beholding God's presence in it everywhere, by paying reverence to the veriest fool as though to a holy shrine..."You must be very joyous and happy," [Yogananda] said, "because this is God's dream, and the little man and the big man are all nothing but the Dreamer's consciousness" (PAWY, 356).

# **Prescription for Spiritual Growth:**

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**Take 3 times in the morning and before going to sleep.**

**I am aligned with the presence of God within.**

**I am protected by God's Love,  
Wisdom, Knowledge and Grace.**

**The God Consciousness within  
helps me discover more about who I am.**

**Thank You, God, for the gift of Spiritual Discernment.**

**Thank You, God, for aligning  
my conscious, subconscious and superconscious mind.**



## **Grace Prayer**

**Loving God, I thirst.  
Into Thy hands I commit my spirit  
(my soul, my body, this problem).  
Thy will is mine.  
Heal me at depth.  
Reveal what needs to be revealed.  
Heal what needs to be healed  
So that I may glorify Your Life.**

# **Amen.**

## **EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS**

**Living through the many dimensions of Being**

**1<sup>st</sup> Form – 1) Vegetable – Simple Consciousness  
2) Absence of thinking**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Form – 1) Animal – Instinct  
2) Beginning of logic  
3) Identifies sounds  
4) Beginning of emotions**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Form – 1) Human – Intelligence  
2) Reasoning, thinking things through  
3) Lives in the opposites  
4) Free will – learns concept of good and evil  
5) Group and family ties  
6) Being outwardly one way, yet thinking and feeling differently  
7) Faces world and faces self  
8) Out of harmony with self  
9) Feels separate and alone  
10) Thinks in past or future  
11) Lives in fear  
12) Lives under the law of karma  
13) Identifies with mind  
14) Happiness outside of self**

**4<sup>th</sup> Form – 1) Abstract/Intuitive Mind  
2) Direct knowledge  
3) Self consciousness  
4) Higher emotions  
5) Logic of the unity of All  
6) The part can be equal to the Whole  
7) The starting of actions with the understanding of their cosmic meaning  
8) Ecstatic states  
9) Transition to Cosmic Consciousness  
10) New sensation of time  
11) Knowledge of the hidden substance of things by their outer signs  
12) The attainment of inner harmony  
13) The beginning of personal immortality**

## **KARMA**

Karma is the basic law of life and is called “THE GREAT LAW.”

It is the Law of Cause and Effect.

Whatsoever a man sows he shall reap.

It is the cosmic bookkeeping system in which everything must balance.

It is the balancing wheel of the universe.

We are always creating Karma.

We can rise above Karma by FORGIVENESS.

Whatever we do not forgive we draw into our future life.

Karma resides in our sub-conscious.

We are 1/10 conscious and 9/10 sub-conscious.

There is a veil between the sub-conscious and the conscious mind.

## HOW TO PLAY THE KARMIC GAME AND WIN

<b>GAME BOARD</b>	<b>YOUR LIFE</b>
<b>OBJECT OF GAME</b>	<b>PAY OFF KARMA WITHOUT CREATING MORE</b>
<b>PLAYERS</b>	<b>YOU AND EVERYONE IN YOUR LIFE</b>
<b>WHAT WILL STOP GAME</b>	<b>RESENTMENT AND REVENGE</b>
<b>HOW TO GET BACK IN GAME</b>	<b>FORGIVENESS</b>
<b>WINNER</b>	<b>GETS OFF KARMIC WHEEL AND ADVANCES IN CONSCIOUSNESS</b>

### HOW TO SCORE POINTS

*(See also "Karmic Scorecard" handout)*

<b>FORGIVENESS</b>	<b>100 POINTS</b>
<b>MEDITATION</b>	<b>60 POINTS</b>
<b>TAKING ACTION AND LETTING GO OF OUTCOME</b>	<b>75 POINTS</b>
<b>GOING BEYOND YOUR FEAR</b>	<b>55 POINTS</b>
<b>GIVING UNCONDITIONAL LOVE</b>	<b>45 POINTS</b>
<b>NOT RESPONDING TO ANGER</b>	<b>30 POINTS</b>
<b>STAYING IN CLEAR THINK</b>	<b>30 POINTS</b>
<b>STAYING OUT OF EGO</b>	<b>75 POINTS</b>
<b>LISTENING TO INTUITION</b>	<b>60 POINTS</b>
<b>LISTENING TO HEART</b>	<b>55 POINTS</b>
<b>BEING OPEN TO NEW OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>50 POINTS</b>
<b>WHEN IN DOUBT PRAY FOR GUIDANCE</b>	<b>35 POINTS</b>



## **THE IMPORTANCE OF DESIRES**

1. Desires have an energy
2. Each desire demands fulfillment
3. Desires create Karma
4. If the desire is not fulfilled in this life time, it will be fulfilled in a future life.
5. Desire is the driving force behind the evolutionary plan.
6. The inquisitive Soul will eventually desire its next step in evolution.

## **COOPERATING WITH OUR SOUL**

**We have a sincere desire to find the answers to the meaning of our life.**

**We are willing to move out of our comfort zone.**

**We recognize that we are a Soul in evolution.**

**We want to support our Soul rather than our personality.**

**We desired to explore all the avenues of knowledge.**

**We are willing to let go of self interest.**

**We are ready to merge our individual will with the divine will.**

**We are ready to merge our Intellectual Mind with the Intuitive Mind.**

**We can then consciously participate in our own Evolution.**

**By moving into our next dimension of Beingness, we become one with our Whole Self which existed in God Consciousness.**

## WHAT ARE YOUR DESIRES FOR YOUR NEXT LIFETIME?

- 1) Do you desire to be a man or a woman?
  
- 2) What physical characteristics would you have?  
  
    eye color:  
    hair color:  
    weight and general build:
  
- 3) What type of parents would you have?
  
  
  
  
- 4) Where would you like to live?
  
  
  
  
- 5) How much education would you desire?
  
  
  
  
- 6) How much money and material acquisitions would you like?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 7) What talents, skills and hobbies do you have right now in this life?



8) Which talents and skills would you wish to develop in your next life?

9) Name five souls you would like to have in your next lifetime and why.

10) List five souls you do NOT want in your next life and why.

11) Would you like to be married in your next lifetime? If yes, who would you choose and why?

12) Would you like to have children? If yes, which souls would you select and why?

13) What is your greatest desire this lifetime and how would you like to fulfill that desire next lifetime?

14) What type of spiritual talents and abilities would you like to develop in your next lifetime?

## **BENEFITS OF PAST LIFE KNOWLEDGE**

1. GIVES US RIGHT PERSPECTIVE, AND NEW UNDERSTANDING.
2. GIVES US PEACE OF MIND.
3. HELPS TO EXPLAIN SOME OF THE APPARENT UNFAIRNESS IN OUR LIFE
4. ASSURES US THAT LIFE IS CONTINUOUS
5. LIFE IS NOT UNJUST BUT IS SIMPLY THE OUTWORKING OF THE LAW.

## **WHY BOTHER WITH PREVIOUS LIVES?**

TO TRULY KNOW OUR WHOLE SELF

TO LIVE OUR ONENESS WITH OTHERS AND WITH GOD

TO HELP US TO UNDERSTAND OUR AVERAGE DAY TO DAY PROBLEMS

TO HEAL OURSELVES AT A SOUL LEVEL.

TO UNDERSTAND OUR SKILLS AND HOBBIES.

TO IMPROVE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD, GOD'S WILL, AND GOD'S LAWS.

TO LEARN HOW THE PAST INFLUENCES OUR PRESENT LIFE.

TO LEARN HOW TO COOPERATE IN THE EVOLUTION OF OUR SOUL.



# LEAKAGE FROM THE SUB-CONSCIOUS

BY MEANS OF:

DREAMS  
MEDITATION  
REFLECTION  
VISIONS  
INTUITION

## 3 KINDS OF KARMA

1. KARMA WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN CREATED AND STORED UP
2. KARMA CREATED IN SOME PREVIOUS LIFE, WHICH IS BEARING FRUIT AT THE PRESENT MOMENT.
3. KARMA WHICH WE ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF CREATING BY OUR THOUGHTS AND ACTS



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