



Future Life by Resurrection Not Reincarnation

What is Meant by Reincarnation?

Why it is Greatly Out of Harmony with the Bible's Plain Teachings?

THE BIBLE, from first to last, holds out a doctrine found nowhere else, and in opposition to the theories of all the heathen religions—that *a future life for the dead will come through A RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD*. All its inspired writers expressed their confidence in a redeemer; one declares that "in the morning," when God shall call them and they shall come forth from the tomb, the wicked shall no longer hold the rulership of earth; for "the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning" (Psa. 49: 14).

The resurrection of the Messiah and the rest of the dead is taught by the Old Testament prophets; and the writers of the New Testament base all their hopes of future life and blessing on it. Its great importance is stressed repeatedly. The Apostle Paul expresses it thus: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. ... Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are *perished*. ... But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. ... For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15: 13-22).

It is only because of Christ's resurrection and His great resurrection power that we have hope for a future everlasting life (John 14: 19; 1 Thes. 4: 13, 14). We cannot get it by reincarnation or any other means. Manmade power, though somewhat great, is limited and cannot bestow everlasting life on anyone.

But some may ask, Are there not many similarities in resurrection and reincarnation? We answer, Although there are some similarities, *there are nevertheless many irreconcilable differences*, as we shall see.

REINCARNATION DEFINED

Reincarnation is defined as "the doctrine that the soul reappears after death in another and different bodily form," or as "a clothing again with flesh [the Latin words *carne* and *carnus* mean *flesh*], or the state of being clothed with flesh." The encyclopedia entitled *Man, Myth and Magic*, p. 2346, states:

"Reincarnation implies the state of being 'embodied anew.' That is, that the soul of a deceased person, after an interim period in the otherworld, is reborn in accordance with the merits acquired during its previous lifetime. The human soul, it is believed, is a fragment of the divine, and will ultimately return to its divine source. But it is necessary for its own evolution that it should savor to the full the various experiences that life provides, and learn to distinguish the

good from the bad, the eternal from the temporal. However, its ultimate destiny is far too great for this education to be completed in one brief sojourn on earth, and in the limited range of one lifetime and a single bodily form."

As an example of reincarnation, when the Tibetan Dalai Lama dies, it is claimed that he is reborn, without any interim in an "otherworld," in an infant whose birth comes at the time he died; and so an infant which is born at that time is made the next Dalai Lama, and thus the succession continues.

THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS

Closely related to reincarnation is the transmigration of souls (sometimes called *metempsychosis*), which is defined as "the supposed passing of the soul into another body after death." Reincarnation is usually claimed to be the soul reappearing after death in another human form, whereas in transmigration of souls it may reappear in one of many other forms, such as lower animals and even in insects, trees and other plants. Buddha is claimed in 550 births to have passed through every grade of being—vegetable, animal, human and divine. According to some transmigrationists, if one has been cruel to lower animals in this life, in the next life he will reappear as a lower animal and may experience like treatment. If one kills an insect, he may reappear as an insect. The Jainist ascetics of India cover their mouths and noses with cloths, so that no insects may be drawn into their mouths with their breath and be killed, and they push brooms before them as they walk so that no living thing may be crushed by their feet.

HISTORY OF THE REINCARNATION THEORY

The reincarnation theory (we will use it to include transmigration) was in one form or another held by the ancient Egyptians and others, but came more to the fore through the Greeks—especially the Orphics, Pythagoreans and Platonists—and through the Hindus, Buddhists and others in India. The Platonic philosophy respecting the soul and reincarnation was carried over by Plotinus and others in Neoplatonism and was incorporated into Christian teaching by Justin Martyr, Origen, the Essenes, the Gnostics and others. The Jews mixed it later into their teachings, contrary to the Old Testament; in the Cabala (Zohar) the soul of Adam is said to have reappeared in David and is to reappear in the Messiah.

Others who have held and hold the reincarnation theory in some form are the Rosicrucians, Theosophists, Spiritualists, (some) Masons, the Mormons, the Hare Krishnaites, the Zen Buddhists, the Nyingma Institute and the followers of Maharaj Ji and of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (on request we will send anyone a free copy of BS 494, examining his Transcendental Meditation theory). Modern psychics, such as Edgar Cayce, Arthur Ford and Jeanne Dixon, have done much to further the increasing interest in and acceptance of the reincarnation theory in our day.

Many people have a strong emotional predisposition to want to believe in reincarnation, for the thought of death is naturally repulsive, and, losing sight of the fact that our only hope for another life lies in the promised resurrection of the dead, to be accomplished by the great resurrection power of the Messiah (John 5: 28, 29; Acts 24: 15; 1 Cor. 15: 13, 18), they are bewildered. Therefore they welcome any theory of another life, especially if it reassures and comforts them, and if it has any apparent evidence of truth and scientific demonstration. As an example, an intelligent but emotionally overwrought mother, after witnessing a recent demonstration of "age regression" under hypnotic control, wrote: "I want so much to believe in reincarnation. I lost my son, a bomber pilot, in World War II, and what a wonderful thing to feel he isn't really dead."

Time magazine (Oct. 3, 1977, p. 53) calls attention to "a growing fad known as 'past-lives' therapy," and says these "therapists use various methods: standard talk techniques, meditation and hypnosis, either with individuals or in mass sessions that sometimes seem like revival meetings."

Because of the current increased interest in colleges and elsewhere in the reincarnation theory (including "age regression"), especially as found in the mystic religions of India, it is important that all of us recognize the great and irreconcilable disagreement of the reincarnation theory with most of the basic teachings of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

RESURRECTION DEFINED AND CONTRASTED

In marked contrast to the reincarnation theory, which is based on the false, unbiblical teaching that at death life continues, the Bible teaching, from first to last, is that when a human dies he is really dead—all life has ceased—and the only hope for a future life for those who have died is *that because of Christ's death and resurrection* (John 14: 19; 1 Thes. 4: 13, 14) *and His great resurrection power they will rise from the dead in the resurrection*. Resurrection is defined as "a rising again *from the dead*," a *restanding to life again*. (The Greek word *anastasis*, the word generally translated *resurrection* in the New Testament, means *a restanding*.)

The reincarnation theory is based on the heathen teaching that when a person dies, he does not really die, but only appears to die, and goes on living somewhere. One of their favorite expressions is, "There is no death." The Bible, on the contrary, teaches that when a person dies, he is really dead, and would be dead forever if it were not that God has provided through His resurrected Son Jesus Christ for a resurrection of the dead. So reincarnation is impossible according to the Bible.

God plainly declares in the Bible, "The living know that they shall die: *but the dead know not any thing ... there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest*" (Eccles. 9: 5, 10). Also we read, "His sons come to honour, and *he knoweth it not*; they are brought low, but *he perceiveth it not of them*" (Job 14: 21). "*The dead praise not the LORD, neither*

any that go down into silence." "In death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" (Psa. 6: 5; 115: 17; 146: 4; compare Isa. 38: 18, 19.)

SATAN'S GREAT FIRST LIE

The reincarnation theory is based on Satan's great first lie. God in the Bible told Father Adam, "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die*" (Gen. 2: 17). But Satan, the father of lies (John 8: 44), contradicted God when he told his great first lie to Mother Eve, "*Ye shall not surely die*" (Gen. 3: 4). And he has continued in every way possible, including the use of the reincarnation theory, to further that first great lie.

But some will say that although the body dies and knows not anything, the soul continues to live and must live forever somewhere, either in heavenly bliss or in a place of torment. In other words, they claim that the human soul is immortal. The Greek philosophers Plato and Socrates and others taught this heathen philosophy, and it was mixed with Christian teachings by Justin Martyr, Origen and others in the great falling away in doctrine and practice that came shortly after the Apostles died (2 Thes. 2: 3).

HUMAN SOULS NOT IMMORTAL

Many mistakenly think that the Bible teaches that the human soul is immortal. The Scriptures nowhere mention the immortality of the human soul, neither in the original nor in the translations. Anyone can take a concordance and try to find the expression "*immortal soul*" and thus be quickly convinced that no such expression is found in the Scriptures. On the contrary, the Scriptures declare, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"; God "is able to destroy both soul and body"; "He spared not their soul from death" (Ezek. 18: 4, 20, 27, 28; Matt. 10: 28; Psa. 33: 18, 19; 78: 50; Isa. 53: 10-12; James 5: 20).

HOW THE FIRST HUMAN SOUL WAS CREATED

Turning to Gen. 2: 7, we read: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed [Heb., *blew*] into his nostrils the breath [Heb., *wind, power*] of life [Heb., *lives, plural*—that is, such as was common to all living animals]; and man became a living soul [that is, a sentient being]."

From this account it appears that the body was formed first, but it was not a man, soul or *being*, until animated. It had eyes, but saw nothing; ears, but heard nothing; a mouth, but spoke nothing; a tongue, but no taste; nostrils, but no sense of smell; a heart, but it pulsated not; blood, but it was cold, lifeless; lungs, but they moved not. It was not a man, but a lifeless form, an inanimate body.

The second step in the process of man's creation was to give vitality to the properly "formed" and in every way prepared body; and this is described by the words "blew into his nostrils the breath of lives." When a healthy person has been drowned, and animation is wholly suspended, resuscitation has often been effected by mouth-to-mouth breathing, or by working the arms and thus the lungs as a bellows, and so gradually reestablishing the breath in the nostrils. In Adam's case it of course required no labored effort on the part of the Creator to cause the perfect organism which He had made to breathe the life-giving oxygen of the atmosphere.

As the vitalizing breath entered, the lungs expanded, the blood corpuscles were oxygenized and passed to the heart, which organ in turn propelled them to every part of the body, awakening all the prepared, but previously dormant, nerves to sensation and energy. In an instant the energy reached the brain, and thought, perception, reasoning, looking, touching, smelling, feeling and tasting commenced. That which was a lifeless human *organism* had become a *man*, a sentient being; the "*living soul*" condition mentioned in the text had been reached. In other words, the term "*living soul*" means neither more nor less than the term *sentient being*, that is, a being capable of sensation, perception and thought.

Moreover, even though Adam was perfect in his organism, he was not immortal; for it was necessary for him to *sustain* life, soul or sentient being, by partaking of the fruits of the trees of life. And when he sinned, God drove him from the garden, "*lest* he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree [plural, *trees* or *grove*] of life, and eat, and *live forever* [that is, by eating continuously" (Gen. 3: 22). (See our *What is the Soul?* and *Life and Immortality* booklets—copies free on request.)

SOULS DIE AND ARE RESURRECTED

Accordingly, when the breath leaves the body, the "living soul" condition ceases—the soul dies, as does also the body. "As the body without breath is dead, so also the faith, without works, is dead" (James 2: 26, Diaglott). The spirit, or power, of life goes back to God who gave it (Eccles. 12: 7); that is, *the privilege of living* goes back into God's power. After the "living soul" condition ceases, the power to start that life again is back in God's hand. And, thanks be to Him, He has provided that "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice [Christ's voice, speaking for God], and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (John 5: 28-29, ASV).

Because of God's wonderful provision through Christ for the resurrection of the dead, the condition in the Adamic death state is not a condition of annihilation, absolute non-existence (as in the Second Death), but is figuratively in the Bible spoken of as sleep, out of which they eventually are awakened by the resurrection power of Christ (Dan. 12: 2; John 11: 11-14; Acts 7: 60; 13: 34, compare Acts 2: 34; 1 Cor. 15: 6, 18, 51; 1 Thes. 4: 13, 14).

We should keep in mind also the Bible teaching that it is the soul that is to be resurrected (Psa. 16: 10; Acts 2: 27, 31). The souls that died are to be raised from the dead, not in their old bodies, which moldered into dust, but in new bodies. The Bible says, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be ... but God giveth it a [new] body as it hath pleased him" (1 Cor. 15: 37, 38). Therefore we should not think that the old bodies are to be raised from the dead. (See our *Resurrection of the Dead* booklet—a copy free on request.)

REINCARNATION THEORY AGAINST THE RANSOM & OTHER IMPORTANT BIBLE DOCTRINES

The reincarnation theory is in direct conflict with other Bible teachings. Reincarnationists believe that God extends and diversifies His being into myriad forms of physical and ideational creation, and that one such fragment or emanation from God is the human soul, which will eventually return to its divine source. But first (as already mentioned), they claim that it is necessary for the soul's "own evolution that it should savor to the full the various experiences that life provides, and learn to distinguish the good from the bad, the eternal from the temporal," and that for this to be accomplished the soul must be reincarnated again and again. The Buddhist must thereby attain to the supreme goal—*nirvana*, "which represents total enlightenment and liberation [from passion, desire, suffering, *etc.*], hence freedom from the remorseless round of birth, death and rebirth."

Thus reincarnation militates against God in His attributes of personality, unity, wisdom, *etc.*, as taught in the Bible; and in Hinduism and Buddhism, God is degraded into being more or less pantheistic (see our book *God*, pp. 27-66, 401-415). In the Vedantic philosophy Brahma is conceived as beyond all attributes, including moral attributes. Brahma is neither holy nor unholy, loving nor unloving. Thus the moral challenge in God's command in the Bible, "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (Lev. 11: 44; 1 Pet. 1: 16), is lacking in Hinduism.

The reincarnationist idea that the human soul is "a fragment or emanation from God" militates against the Bible teaching that man was a new and distinct creation of God, with free moral agency—the power of choosing good or evil. Like the evolution theory, reincarnationism has no place in it for the fall of man from his perfect state and the condemnation and imperfection of all because of one man's sin. Instead, reincarnationists have what they call the law of *karma*. It comes from the Sanskrit root "kr," meaning "to do, to make," and is an abstract noun meaning "action" or "doing." One of them says, "Karma, basically, is the fate we create for ourselves as a result of our actions in this and previous existences."

Reincarnation seems not to be a very acceptable philosophy of life. As one writer says:

"Flowing from its teachings is the corollary that victims of poverty, chronic ill-health, or congenital and inherited diseases, are only suffering for their own past misdeeds, as retribution for the iniquities of their previous lives. If this idea is carried to its logical conclusion it would seem that attempting to relieve the distress and misery of others is almost meddling in the affairs

of providence. If a person has been put into this world to redress the balance of his own wicked past, what business is it of ours to interfere and disturb the ordinances of God?" Conditions and attitudes in countries where the reincarnation and transmigration theories are widely accepted seem to reflect this philosophy.

The reincarnation theory minimizes the role of Christ, for it does away with redemption through Him. The reincarnationist Origen's critics indignantly (and properly) are said to have asked, "What need was there of Christ's mission if man is to incarnate again and again until he comes to realize the purity of the very Godhead? If all men are inalienable sons of God, what need is there of a Christ to ensure their adoption into God's Kingdom?" Christ's vicarious atonement for man's sin is done away with. *Karma* would mean justification by works in repeated reincarnations, contrary to the Bible, which says justification is by faith in Christ (Eph. 2: 8-10).

The Ransom, the central doctrine of the Bible, whereby God condemned all in one perfect man, Adam, and ransoms all in the one perfect man, Jesus (1 Tim. 2: 4-6; Matt. 20: 28), has no place in reincarnationism, nor has the Bible doctrine of restitution, or restoration, whereby the non-elect world of mankind will be brought up to human perfection as it was in Adam, and live forever in peace and happiness on earth, then made into a worldwide Paradise.

REMEMBRANCE OF "PAST LIFETIMES" (?)

Reincarnationists usually claim (a) that people sometimes go to places never visited before and have strong impressions that they have been there before (called *deja vu*), and (b) that some can remember past lifetimes, especially under hypnosis, by which they "age regress" to early infancy and even back into past lifetimes.

As to (a), people's subconscious minds give them all sorts of false impressions and imaginations, as in dreams. Sometimes a place never visited before seems familiar because of recollected or similar childhood associations, which of course make them impressive. At best, such evidence is very inconclusive.

As to (b), the facts are that people in general have no recollection whatever of former lifetimes—they remember neither past lifetimes nor people associated with them therein. And with those who claim to have such recollections, the "memories" of such past lifetimes are so vague, so indefinite, that the indication is that they are largely "wishful thinking."

Reincarnationists recognize this basic weakness of their theory. Some of them even claim that before being reincarnated the individual has all recollection of his previous lifetime erased from his memory. But then the question naturally arises, How can the person benefit at all from the lessons of past lifetimes if he cannot recall them?

"AGE REGRESSION" UNDER HYPNOSIS

It is claimed by reincarnationists that while hypnotized, many people have described accurately things of previous lifetimes—such as persons, places and things. If investigated, these have in some cases—a few out of many—proven to be fairly accurate. They ask, How could a person while hypnotized give true information concerning someone who lived a long time in the past if that hypnotized person is not a reincarnation of the same person who lived a long time ago?

Obviously in at least some cases deception is used, with the hypnotized one describing persons, places and events of alleged past lifetimes because of having previously studied some personal historical records very carefully. The hypnotized one's allegedly speaking with the voice of a person long dead is no doubt sometimes faked.

THE FALLEN ANGELS

But we must not forget that the fallen angels have great power, including the ability to work through the minds of humans, especially when hypnotized. The story of the fall of the angels is given briefly in the Bible in Gen. 6: 1-4. After man's fall through Adam into sin, God permitted the holy angels to have communication with humans. And because human eyes cannot see spirit beings, God permitted the angels to *materialize* temporarily (but not to be *reincarnated*) in human bodies. *E.g.*, we note the case of the angels who briefly visited Abraham and for whom he prepared a veal dinner (Gen. 18: 1-33). Materialized, these angels in appearance were like men, and were supposed by Abraham to be men, as they ate and talked with him. Subsequently Abraham learned that they were really heavenly visitors. Such materializations occurred also briefly to others, *e.g.*, Lot, Jacob, Balaam, Gideon, David, Zacharias, Mary, Peter, *etc.* The angels dematerialized after such visitations. They were not reincarnations.

So it was with the angels before the Flood. They were permitted to materialize and to appear as men. Gen. 6 shows that some of them became lustful: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (v. 2). The angels, with powers and with knowledge superior to man's, acted as the masters of mankind, who were practically obliged to do their bidding. The result is stated in few words. The children of this misalliance were hybrids. We are told that they were giants as compared with the ordinary members of the race, not only physically, but also intellectually—"They were men of renown" (v. 4). Poor humanity could not compete with them. The result was that strife and contention and lustful, sinful practices abounded in all the earth, until God declared that every imagination of man's heart was only evil continually (v. 5).

God had foreknown all this, and a canopy of waters which then surrounded the earth, similar to Saturn's rings now, was held in readiness to cause a flood, that sinful men and the hybrid offspring of the angels might be destroyed. Only Noah and his family, uncontaminated by angelic stock, were found worthy of preservation to be the new start of humanity this side of the Flood.

Of course, the fallen angels were not destroyed in the Flood, for they not only had the power to materialize but also to dematerialize. It was at that time, however, that all of the fallen angels were put "in everlasting chains under darkness" (Jude 6), that is, under restraints.

The Apostle Peter tells us that the fallen angels at the time of the Deluge were *tartarused*. The noun *tartarus* is not used in the Bible; but the verb *tartaroo*, derived from it, is used once in the Bible (2 Pet. 2: 4) and is mistranslated *cast down to hell* in the KJV. By *tartarus* the Greeks meant a prison for wicked spirits. *Tartaroo* would therefore mean *to imprison in such a place*.

According to the Bible, the demons are imprisoned in the earth's atmosphere, in which they have been confined as in a prison, a place or condition of restraint (Eph. 2: 2; Matt. 12: 24-27; Eph. 6: 11, 12; 2 Pet. 2: 4; Jude 6).

FALLEN ANGELS IMPERSONATE THE DEAD

On the basis of human credulity—the supposition that the dead become more alive when they appear to die—the demons have advanced their deceptions and have sought to enthrall humanity. Invisible to men, yet informed respecting human affairs, past and present, they can readily impersonate the dead. The fallen angels, deprived since the Deluge of the power to materialize in daylight, use as channels of communication such individuals as they can deceive into serving them as spirit-mediums. Many of these are noble characters, and many of them are the reverse; but vicious or ignorant or good, the demons use such as they can control, none being too debased for their service. Working on the credulity of their dupes, they use the medium to describe the dead one, who is supposed to be very anxious to communicate with the living. And the description generally fits well to the dupe's last knowledge of the person—age, sex, clothing, all (see our *Spiritism is Demonism* booklet—a copy free on request).

READINGS OF "PAST LIFETIMES" UNDER HYPNOSIS

We have already referred to Edgar Cayce (now deceased). In our "*Faith Healing*" booklet (a copy free on request) we described how the demons used him to diagnose and prescribe for physical maladies. But they did not stop with this, for here was a well-known medium, and an excellent opportunity to popularize the heathen reincarnation theory in a way that would do much to undermine the Christian faith in the minds of many.

It is reported that Mr. Cayce's friends finally persuaded him to give not only "health readings" in his hypnotic trances, but also readings of "past lifetimes," of which he eventually gave about 2,500. *E.g.*, one man was told that in his previous life he had been a Confederate soldier. His former name and address having been given, a search of historical records was made, which revealed that a man by that name who had enlisted in Lee's army in 1862 had lived where Cayce had specified. Of course, the demons would know all about this and could easily through Cayce as their medium tell enough to make verification possible.

The above, together with many similar hypnotic experiments, have aroused much interest in hypnosis and the possibility of reincarnation. Large numbers of people who view programs on this subject on television, hear of it on the radio and read of it in the public press, *etc.*, have been captivated by it and take it quite seriously. A 19-year-old youth in Oklahoma reportedly killed himself to find out if he would be reborn!

HYPNOTIZED MIND BECOMES IMPOTENT

It is a well-known fact that hypnotic subjects are usually fully resigned to the controlling mind of the hypnotist and are usually fully co-operative, with a desire to please the hypnotist. Thus the hypnotized mind becomes impotent and many desired responses are the result of external mental suggestion. *E.g.*, a subject was told, "You are being born. Do you feel any pain?" The suggestion of pain and the knowledge on the part of the subject that at birth a baby's first greeting is a sound slap to cause it to cry and thus clear its throat, brought the desired response, "I feel a stinging sensation."

So, many of the reported demonstrations of "age regression" into a former life before birth may be nothing more than co-operative and imaginative responses to the suggestions of the master mind that fully controls in the hypnotic trance, or they may be the direct suggestions of demons.

As mentioned above, demons are very active through the use of hypnotism, for it is an excellent agency for their use in furthering Satan's original lie, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3: 4; John 8: 44). Additionally, they are interested in the weakening of the human mind, especially in its power to resist their attacks and suggestions; and this is accomplished by the weakening of the mind and will of the subject in submitting himself to the control of a master mind and will.

Furthermore, they do not want people to believe the statement of the Bible, God's Word, that "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18: 4, 20), so they are glad to further the theory of reincarnation, in contradiction of God's Word. Also, they are enabled by hypnotism and the excitement that it stirs up in many over "age regression" into a possible previous existence, to destroy the faith of many thousands whose faith is not firmly rooted and grounded in God's Word, and to ensnare them in the heathen philosophy of reincarnation, with which they have deceived the heathen for ages.

True Christians will, if faithful, submit their minds and wills only to God (Prov. 23: 26), and will carefully avoid coming under the control of hypnotists, remembering that "no man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6: 24). Our minds and wills should be subject only to God. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4: 8). To surrender one's mind or will to anyone other than to God is, therefore, a sin against God and a subversion of true religion.

Reincarnationists try to make it appear that the Bible teaches their theory. They point to certain Scripture passages that they claim teach it or favor it. In this way they try to influence others to believe that their theory is not out of harmony with, but is taught in the Bible. We will now examine some of these.

JESUS WAS NOT REINCARNATED

Some reincarnationists point to Scriptures which show that Jesus had a pre-existence and then became human (*e.g.*, John 1: 1-3, 14; 6: 62; 8: 58; 2 Cor. 8: 9; Phil. 2: 6-11) as favoring their theory. We agree that Jesus had a prehuman existence with God as the Word or Logos, but *He was unique in this respect*. There is no evidence whatever in the Scriptures to warrant anyone else who has lived, or is living, on earth in claiming to have had an existence before becoming human.

When Jesus became human—"the Word was made flesh"—*this was not a reincarnation*, for He had never before been made flesh. Rather, it was *a unique transfer of life* from the spirit nature to the human nature, never to be repeated, as in reincarnation. It was made for the unique purpose of Jesus becoming a perfect man, for the suffering of death, to ransom the fallen perfect man Adam and all his posterity (Heb. 2: 9, 10, 14-16). The life-principle of that mighty being, the Word, or Logos, was transferred to the womb of the virgin Mary and was used instead of human semen in fructifying and uniting with the ovum to produce the embryo that became the babe and later the man Jesus. After His death, He was raised from the dead as a spirit being (Luke 24: 39; 1 Cor. 15: 45; 2 Cor. 3: 17; 1 Pet. 3: 18), of the Divine nature (Heb. 1: 2-4). As other spirit beings had previously materialized, so He as a spirit being could and did materialize in various forms (Mark 16: 12)—as a gardener, traveler, fish buyer, *etc.* But none of these *materializations* of the risen Jesus were *reincarnations*. His body as a spirit being was a spirit body, even as angels have spirit bodies (Heb. 1: 7).

THE PROPHET ELIJAH AND JOHN THE BAPTIST

In the last two chapters in the Old Testament (Mal. 3: 1-3, 13-18; 4: 1-3), Jehovah particularly refers to the coming of the Messiah Jesus and to the special trials and trouble that would accompany it. In the last two verses (Mal. 4: 5, 6) we read, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Jesus said, about 450 years later, referring to John the Baptist, "Elias [Elijah] is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed [wished]" (Matt. 17: 11-13).

Reincarnationists point to this as evidence that Elijah was reincarnated in John the Baptist. Jesus' statement in Luke 1: 17 helps us to see that John was not the same person as Elijah, in a reincarnation, but that John came "in the spirit and power of Elijah," in other words, like Elijah he had a large measure of God's spirit (disposition) and power, and did a similar work *as a*

reformer mouthpiece to Fleshly Israel. Thus there is nothing to indicate that John the Baptist was the same person as Elijah, in a reincarnation.

The Mal. 4: 5, 6 prophecy was not *fulfilled* except in part at Jesus' First Advent, neither the portion which relates to Messiah nor that which refers to Elijah. It evidently refers especially to Jesus' Second Advent, to the coming of the Messenger of the Covenant in great glory and power, and to the testing and great trouble of the Day of the Lord.

However, Christ's presentation to typical Israel, and the great trouble which came upon them as a nation when they rejected Him, was, as God had foreseen and intended, another shadow which further illustrated in many particulars the things presented in this prophecy. John the Baptist, in the spirit and power of Elijah, did a work for Israel similar to that of the Elijah promised, but failed of success; and, as a result, trouble, "a curse," upon that nation followed, in the complete overthrow of the Jewish national polity by the Romans under the general Titus.

The real *antitypical* (not *reincarnated*) Elijah referred to by the prophet was still thereafter to come and to do a great work for the whole earth, to prepare all mankind for the Second Advent; and He would for a time also fail of success, and as a result the great Time of Trouble would smite the whole earth.

John, in the spirit and power of Elijah, failed to reform Israel; and, as a result (Matt. 17: 12), Israel rejected Jesus in the flesh, and brought upon themselves *a great day of vengeance, trouble and wrath* (Luke 21: 22). So, likewise, only on the far larger scale, *the real and greater Elijah*, the Christian Church, has failed in its attempt to convert and prepare the world to receive the King of glory; and now, consequently, the great day of wrath has come upon the world to melt, mellow, humble and prepare all to cry out from the heart, Hosanna! Blessed is He that comes in the name of Jehovah!

It is thus seen that *the Church in the flesh* has been the Elijah or forerunner of *the Church in glory*, Jehovah's Anointed. So reincarnation is not proved by the case of Elijah and John the Baptist.

THE MAN BLIND FROM BIRTH

"As Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9: 1, 2.) Reincarnationists claim that the disciples' question means that they believed in reincarnation, for unless they did so, why would they ask such a question?

The disciples were right in believing that all sickness, pain and sorrow in the world is the result of inherited Adamic sin or else willful sin on the part of individuals. The Scriptures showed them and other Jews under the Law that if they walked in God's ways they would have blessings of health and prosperity in all of life's affairs for themselves, their families and livestock (Lev. 26: 1-

13). They correctly understood that the various evils witnessed on every hand were in some degree the result of sin, either of the individual or his progenitors.

Of course, the man could not have sinned before he was born, and whatever responsibility there would be as a result of sin came to him through heredity. It is possible that the reincarnation theory had come to their attention, and that they were asking because of this. Jesus' reply was that neither the one born blind nor his parents had sinned specially (though they like all others were under the Adamic condemnation), but "that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (v. 3). There is no support here for the reincarnation theory.

JER. 1: 4, 5 EXAMINED

In this passage we read: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; ... and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." The reincarnationist Sybil Leek, in her book *Reincarnation: The Second Chance*, p. 161, asks, "Unless Jeremiah was already a great soul before his birth, how could he be worthy of the high mission of the Lord? Since there is no 'respect of persons' with God, how could the prophet have qualified himself so that God would recognize his worth before he even began his physical existence as Jeremiah—except by duty well done in other lives?"

What the questioner either ignores or does not take into consideration is God's omniscience, including foreknowledge of what will be in the future (Job 24: 1; Isa. 42: 9; 44: 7; 45: 4; 46: 10; 48: 5, 6; Dan. 2: 20, 22, 28; Matt. 24: 36; Acts 15: 18; Rom. 8: 29; 1 Pet. 1: 2; see the book *God*, pp. 56, 57). Jer 1: 4-5 shows that God in His omniscience, while the fetus was in the womb, foreknew Jeremiah would be a prophet to the nations and set him apart for that office. In Jer. 1: 5 the word *ordained* means, not *foreordained* or *predestinated*, but *disposed, fitted in disposition, qualified for*, the office at hand.

EPH. 1: 4 AND REV. 3: 12 CONSIDERED

Origen took Eph. 1: 4 as proving the reincarnation theory: "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." It is evident, however, that it simply means that the Church existed, not in a distinct disincarnate form, but simply in the mind and Plan of God.

Rev. 3: 12 reads: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." Sybil Leek asks: "Where else could 'he' go except into another incarnation?" We answer, When the overcomers would be resurrected and made pillars in the Temple, which they never were before, they would be in their fixed and eternal place in the Kingdom of God, and it would be impossible for them to cease to be antitypical pillars. Going out, if it were possible, would mean the Second Death. There is nothing here to indicate reincarnations.

We have now examined the reincarnation theory from various standpoints and have found that it is indeed very contrary to and in contradiction of many important Bible doctrines, such as its teachings on God, Christ, man's creation in perfection, the fall into sin of Adam and the whole human family in his loins, death—full cessation of life—the penalty of sin, the mortality of the human soul, the unconsciousness of the dead, the death of Jesus as a Ransom-sacrifice on behalf of Adam and all his race, the resurrection of the dead and restitution (restoration).

We have found that the alleged remembrance of past lifetimes, including "age regression beyond birth" under hypnosis, is no real proof of reincarnation, and that the Bible passages it is claimed teach or favor this theory do not do so when rightly understood. Therefore this heathen theory is to be rejected and cast aside by all, especially Bible believers. All, especially Bible believers, should trust in *the resurrection of the dead*, by the great power of the Messiah Jesus, as taught so clearly and unmistakably in the Bible, as the only hope for a future everlasting life.