

14 Scientific Reasons Why No One Dies - Swami Omkarananda

As the Sun, before it sinks beyond the Western horizon, quickly collects all its myriad rays, and disappears from the human sight, so does the soul, before it takes its exit from the physical form, instantly collect all its capacities, its abilities, its inner senses, its acquired knowledge, the results of its good works, and becomes invisible to human eyes.

Preliminary Observation

Week after week, torn by sorrow, people who have just lost someone whom they dearly loved, and for whom they lived and laboured so far, almost shout at me, in agony, 'Swami, is it all over? What happened to our beloved one? Will you pray? Will you ...? Will you ...?'

To deny to such humanity in utter distress a satisfactory answer, and to conceal from them the evidence on the human survival of physical death, is a crime against God, mankind, and all canons of goodness, common-sense and reason.

To plunge people of such intense emotional suffering, - however brief that suffering be, - in intellectual darkness by denying them the light of comforting and saving wisdom and inspiring and illuminating knowledge, is a cruelty against which, though there is no action of human justice, there certainly is an action of the Justice of that supreme Intelligence which sustains the universes in existence. That wisdom and that knowledge has been bequeathed to mankind by generations of the greatest men who have themselves suffered much, exercised their reason at its best and to its ultimate strength, paid any price for extending the boundaries of human knowledge and experience.

Little wisdom and less reason asserts, 'Death ends all'. It takes the developed and enlightened intelligence and the real and most powerful reason of Socrates and Plato, of Cicero and Pythagoras, of Kant and Goethe, to know that the Light of Consciousness in man survives physical death and has a future greater than the past, opportunities and circumstances for continuous evolution, until man arrives at the Perfections of God, of infinite Existence and Delight.

Merely to assert that rebirth is true is blindness. To deny that man survives physical death is greater blindness. Reason requires that we dismiss no phenomenon and no possibility, without adequate examination.

As the evidence against the doctrine of rebirth is too little and too brittle we are compelled to approach, observe, investigate, examine and re-examine, understand and explain the overwhelming evidence that is all around us, ever since the dawn of human life on earth, in favour of rebirth.

Fourteen Scientific Reasons Why No One Dies

Little knowledge is dangerous and is full of doubts. More knowledge dispels illusions, brightens the capacity of the human reason and illuminates life.

No scientist, no psychologist, no medical man, no philosopher however great, can claim omniscience to dictate truths to humanity. Only those who have the richest experience in life and command deepest insights into its real nature and sources can pronounce a valid judgement on anything bound up with life and present truths that are acceptable, universally valid and completely open to critical examination, reassessment and research in their validity and their results.

The truth and validity of man's survival of the bodily death can, conclusively, be settled on these fourteen scientific grounds:

1. the inadequacies of the biological account of heredity;
2. the inability of the scientific attitude to trace the genealogy of genius;
3. the incapacity of the logical thought to explain the glaring inequalities and cruel anomalies of life;
4. the soundness of the philosophical, valuational and moral arguments;
5. a close examination of the psychological evidence;
6. the spiritualistic experiments, communications, photographs;
7. the implications of the results of psychical research;
8. the recent but important, though unreliable, technique of 'hypnotic regression';
9. an appeal to the testimony of the world's great sages, prophets and founders of religions;
10. the academic acknowledgement of the presence of order and purpose in the scheme of the universe;
11. the principle of the evolutionary nisus in biological nature;
12. the laws of conservation of energy and compensation;
13. a reference to the several instances of persons who bore memories of their past lives;
14. a recourse to the lives of the men of universal love, the enlightened, the Truth-knowers, the sages, who have, by virtue of their inner Perfection, recounted their own and other people's past lives.

Value of Accepting the Fact of Rebirth

A recourse to the logical enunciation of the law of rebirth, the law of the deathlessness of the inner consciousness in the human individual, aids us extend the modern vision beyond the petty span of the few mortal years of a single existence.

It also opens for the modern view the vistas of a divine meaning the brief human life bears in, between, and beyond its apparent 'birth-pangs' and its unfounded death.

The deathless genius in human life asserts as its fundamental and ultimate right a metaphysical destiny and a citizenship in the Kingdom of infinite divine Consciousness. That divine Kingdom interpenetrates this kingdom of matter and sustains this world by being its Essence, Existence and divine Dimension.

The importance and the value of the fact of rebirth is demonstrated by the following reasons:

1. the great significance and meaning it assigns to life;
2. the integrity and dignity with which it invests the human soul;
3. the sting it takes away from death;
4. the extension of the interests of life beyond the brevity of a single earthly existence it brings about, and
5. several other benefits in perspective, purposiveness, moral progress and spiritual development it holds out for those who believe in it, and also for those who, unable to believe in it, examine critically the overwhelming evidence in favour of it and accept it as scientifically indisputable.

Scientific Evidence for Persistence of Existence Beyond Bodily Death

The atheistic, materialistic, and least sentimental, scientist of England, Professor Huxley, says, 'None but hasty thinkers will reject the doctrine of rebirth on the ground of inherent absurdity. Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality'.

Observe the remarks of another great British scientist, Sir Oliver Lodge, 'I am, for personal purposes, convinced of the persistence of human existence beyond bodily death; and though I am unable to justify that belief in a full and complete manner, it is a belief which has been produced by scientific evidence; that is, it is based upon facts and experience.' *The Proofs of Life after Death*, p. 134.

'I assert emphatically that there is evidence for survival and that some of the evidence is thoroughly good. It can no more be treated superficially than any other scientific experiences.' Oliver Lodge, 'Making of Man', p. 35

'The seeming end is not really the end, for it cannot touch the real essence of the individual, nor his realized consciousness which ... is preexistent, surviving and eternal. What does then, death matter? It destroys only the semblance, a temporary representation. The true and the indestructible individuality assimilates and so preserves all the requirements of the transitory personality, then, bathed for the time in the waters of Lethe, it materializes anew in personality, and thus, continues its evolution indefinitely.' Geley, 'From the Unconscious to the Conscious,' p. 304.

'What we call death is only the introduction to another life on earth, and if this be not a higher and better life than the one just ended, it is our own fault. Our life is really continuous and the fact that the subsequent stages of it lie beyond our present range of immediate vision is of no more importance and no more an evil than the corresponding fact that we do not now remember our previous existence in antecedent ages.

Death alone, or in itself considered, apart from the antecedent dread of it which is irrational, and apart from the injury to the feelings of the survivors which is a necessary consequence of that attachment for each other from which so much of our happiness springs, is not even an apparent evil: it is mere change and development, like the passage from the embryonic to the adult condition, from the blossom to the fruit.' Francis Brown, Professor, Harvard University: An Article on 'Christian Metempsychosis' in Princeton Review, May 1881.

No Extinction but Change in the Circumstance of Existence

'The latest developments of science agree with the occultists and poets that there is no death and that nothing is dead. What seems to be extinction is only a change of existence.' E. D. Walker: Reincarnation, p. 289.

'When death severs the soul from its mortal shell, the ruling tendencies of the soul carry it to its strongest affinities. The escape from material confinement allows the freest activity, in which the dominant desires, unconsciously nourished in the spirit, have the mastery.' Ibid, p. 292.

'The condition of the period intervening between death and birth, like all other epochs, is framed by the individual. The inner character makes a Paradise, a Purgatory, or an Inferno of any place. As Jesus said he was in heaven while talking with his followers, as Dante found all the material for hell in what his eyes witnessed, so, in the environment beyond death where the subjective states of the soul are supreme, the appearance of the universe and the feelings of the self are created well or ill, by the central individual. There must be as many heavens and hells as there are good and bad beings.' Ibid, p. 293.

‘The divergence in all these alleged liftings of the veil betrays their subjectiveness.’ Ibid, p. 293.

‘The residual impulses coming from the momentum of past lives determine what and when shall be the next embodiment. The time and manner of reincarnation vary with each individual according to the impetus engendered by his lives.’ Ibid, p. 294.

‘Reincarnation is necessitated by immortality, analogy teaches it, ... science upholds it, ... nature of the soul needs it, many strange sensations support it, and ... it alone gradually solves the problems of life.’ Ibid, p. 47.

‘According to all probabilities, the sequence of events is as follows: for animals and men of a very low grade, the phase of existence which follows death is short and dark. Bereft of the support of the physical organs, consciousness, still ephemeral, is weakened and obscured. The call of matter asserts itself with irresistible power, and the mystery of rebirth is soon brought about. But, for the more highly evolved man, death bursts the narrow circle within which material life has imprisoned a consciousness which strained against the bounds imposed by a profession, family and country. He finds himself carried far beyond the old habits of thought and memory, the old loves and hatreds, passions and mental habits. To the degree that this evolutionary level permits, he remembers his past and foresees his future. He knows the roads by which he has travelled, he can judge of his conduct and his efforts ... Thus from one experience to another, the self comes slowly and by the vast accumulation of stored experiences, to the higher phases of the life that are reserved to the complete development of its consciousness that realises all.’ Geley: ‘From the Unconscious to the Conscious’, p. 322.

‘(1) Nature bears witness to a process of incessant renewal. At the zoological level, this process appears to be concerned solely for the perpetuation of species. At the human level of development, the perpetuation of the individual seems to be the end in view ...

(2) Nature bears witness to continuity; to continuity that is within a general pattern ... There is no reason why the human selves should be regarded as exception to the principle ...

(3) The object of the self is the fulfilment of the function or development of individuality. This object cannot be secured in one life ...

(4) It is an admitted principle in science that, if we see a certain stage of development in time, we may infer a past to it ... We appear in the world not as clear slates for the writing of environment and circumstances, but as slates already inscribed. For example, we inherit talents, ‘an eye for beauty, a taste for music’, which are not common qualities of the species but individual variations. We cannot believe that the rise of the self with a definite nature is simply fortuitous, therefore, we must presuppose a past for the self, in which the individual inheritance which it brings with it into the world has been built up.’ C. E. M. Joad: ‘Counter Attack from the East’, p. 182-183 .

Biology, Evolution and Rebirth

Survival of the bodily death is an evolutionary necessity. It is a scientific fact. It is a demonstrable spiritual truth. There is any amount of evidence for it.

No one in this twentieth century with any claim to an educated life can afford to be unaware of the open acknowledgement of the leading scientists of Europe to the effect that 'evolution becomes meaningless if we do not survive death of the physical body'.

The nisis of individual evolution and the progressive unfoldment of the cosmic purpose compel the operation and therefore the human acceptance of the law of the survival of physical death and rebirth.

The rationale of preexistence and reincarnation holds its own inviolable status, and accentuates the inadequacies and limitations of the biological account of heredity.

Some Leaders in Science and Psychology Are Tacitly Acknowledging Man's Survival of Physical Death

Specially in the fields of science and psychology in England and in America, many leaders are coming to a full recognition of the fact that we continue to live after the body perishes, falls off.

In the United States the famous leader in parapsychology, Dr. J. B. Rhine, has many emphatic statements on the fact of the continuity of consciousness after physical death.

The theory of a soul without any past to it but with a future before it, is untenable. If the soul were created at the time of birth, the dissolution of the body would destroy it.

Some people object to the theory of rebirth on the ground that we do not remember the past life. But the objection has no strong reasons to support it. It breaks under scrutiny. We do not deny the reality of our childhood because we have lost all memory of a good deal of our childhood experiences. Even of our present life we forget so very much, and then, what right have we to insist on a memory of the past life? The past life of a person is quite visible in the form of the effects in his present life, of his past life's thoughts, actions and experiences.

'At the level of psychology there is no answer with regard to the past and future of mind. But there is the answer that body and mind are not the same kind of reality, and it is equally important to consider that we have not the slightest idea of such an event as death happening to mind or spirit ... There is enough on the psychological level to warrant an affirmation that the mind or spirit is a reality which tabernacles in a tent of clay for seventy years and then disappears into some other state of existence. The whole centre of gravity lies, even on the level of psychology, in the affirmation and not in the negation of the continuity of life after death.' W. Tudor Jones, 'Metaphysics of Life and Death.' p. 183-186.

All over the world, and specially in America, England, and in some parts of Europe, there are a number of spiritualistic societies where the mediums and seances constitute an outstanding proof of the fact that we survive death and that we can always contact those who have left the earth.

Anthropology, World-Cultures and Rebirth

Anthropologists have uncovered the presence and the currency of the doctrine of rebirth among the indigenous ideas and in the legends of almost every country upon the face of the world.

A little research in modern and ancient cultures and schools of thought will disclose to us that the Indian Upanishads, the Egyptian priesthood, the ancient Greek thinkers, the Chinese books, the Christian scriptures, the modern European philosophers, the recent psychical researchers and parapsychologists, the spiritualists and the scientists, meet on, and tread, a common ground in the affirmation of the fact of man's survival of physical death, the meaning and value of rebirth, for all mankind.

Many world religions support the truth of the Life after Death, and speak elaborately of the states and conditions of the souls beyond.

The Talmud of the Jewish people makes many statements on cases of rebirth. Examine these words of Christ which He pronounced when questioned whether John the Baptist was Elijah reborn: 'If ye will receive it, this is Elijah which was to come'. Matth. XI, 14.

The idea of rebirth was current among the druids of the ancient Gaul. Julius Caesar tells us that the young Gauls were taught rebirth, and as a result of this, they had no fear of death.

Instances of Those that Conquered Death

Human history does not lack any number of instances of great men that triumphed over death. And the systems of spiritual discipline in the world contain a number of philosophic, theistic and mystical methods for consciously conquering death.

Embedded upon the five millennia of popular Indian spiritual history, we find a cluster of illustrious personalities that wrestled with the power of death, wrested from it the secrets it enshrouds and the mysteries it conceals.

Instances of Those that Remembered Their Past Lives

The argument that the absence of the memory of past lives disproves reincarnation is too crude, and stands falsified by cases that do have memories of past lives.

What is more, we can obtain the memory of past lives by appropriate disciplines of our inner nature, by methods which humanity has evolved, and the hand of time tried and proved valid.

In the ancient Greek world many could not only accept the idea of rebirth as a fact, but were in a position to recount their own past lives. The Greek mystic philosopher Pythagoras told his students that in his past lives he had been a warrior at the siege of Troy, and later was the philosopher Hermodotus of Glazomenae.

Buddha was one of those enlightened ones who recovered a knowledge of their past lives. Yoga-practice helps us to recover a knowledge of our past lives. There are some in our own times who bear memory of their past lives. Today, now and then, we find in newspapers children who have retained a perfect memory of their past life.

European Philosophers on the Fact of Rebirth

Lacking the spirit of industry essential for investigation of any proposition, the irrational mood grows sceptical of the doctrine of reincarnation. But the doctrine itself holds the highest appeal and a convincing force to reason in its alert and brave functions.

Among philosophers there are many who argue in favour of our survival after physical death. The great German philosopher Kant proves it on the basis that our moral growth requires it.

Schopenhauer, a European philosopher, says of the truth of reincarnation, 'I have also remarked that it is at once obvious to everyone who hears of it for the first time'.

'What sleep is for the individual, death is for the will. Through the sleep of death it appears refreshed and fitted out with another intellect, as a new being ...'

The German philosopher Fichte says, 'All death in nature is birth, and precisely in dying, the sublimation of life appears most conspicuous. There is no death bringing principle in nature; for, nature is only life throughout. Death and birth are only the struggles of life with itself to manifest itself, in ever more transfigured form, more like itself.' J. G. Fichte, 'Die Bestimmung des Menschen', cited by D. E. Walker, in 'Reincarnation', p. 75.

'The supposition of a previous existence would best explain these differences of character, the harvest of a seed that was sown in other states and whose fruit remains although the sowing is remembered no more'. Frederic Henry Hedge, 'Ways of the Spirit and other Essays', Chap. XII

'Processes begun in this life are sometimes finished in it, and sometimes left incomplete. We, continually, find that death leaves preparation without an achievement. If men survive death, we must expect that these processes, when not worked out before death, will be worked out in a future life.' Mc. Taggart, 'Human Immortality and Preexistence', p. 84.

‘Granting’, says E.D. Walker, ‘the permanence of the human spirit amid every change, the doctrine of rebirth is the only one yielding a metaphysical explanation of the phenomenon of life. It is already accepted on the physical plane as evolution, and holds a firm ethical view in applying the law of justice to human experience. In confirmation of it, there stands the strongest weight of evidence, argumentary, empirical and historic. It disentangles the knotty problems of life, simply and grandly. It meets the severest requirements of reason.’

A great writer says, ‘The ancient doctrine of transmigration seems the most rational and most consistent with God’s wisdom and goodness. It answers the purposes both of justice and utility.’

Great Men on Rebirth:

Emil Ludwig and Goethe on Life after Death

The world-famous German biographer, Emil Ludwig, says: ‘As to the question of existence after death, I can only sum up my ideas in words which Goethe, after having expressed the thought a dozen times, formulated it thus: ‘The conviction of my subsequent existence arises in me from the conception of activity, for if I work without intermission till my end, nature is obliged to give me another form of existence when that present one is no longer able to support my mind’.’

Goethe himself has this to say: ‘The thought of death leaves me in perfect peace, for I have a firm conviction that our spirit is a being of indestructible nature: it works on from eternity to eternity; it is like the sun, which, though it seems to set to our mortal eyes, does not really set, but shines on perpetually’.

Cicero, Ovid and Virgil on Rebirth

From these modern minds, let us go back to the ancient days in Europe. Here are the views of the great Romans.

Cicero says, ‘Know that it is not thou, but thy body alone, which is mortal. The individual in his entirety resides in the soul, and not in the outward form. Learn, then, that thou art a god; thou, the immortal intelligence which gives movements to a perishable body, just as the eternal God animates an incorruptible body’.

Ovid has this to say, ‘Nothing perishes, although everything changes here on earth; the souls come and go unendingly in visible forms; the animals which have acquired goodness will take upon them human form’.

Virgil declares, ‘After death, the souls come to the Elysian Fields, or to Tartarus, and there meet with the reward or punishment of their deeds during life. Later on drinking of the waters of Lethe, which takes away all memory of the past, they return to earth’.

When the Sun sets, do you say, it is dead, and all is over? The light, the warmth, the rays of the Sun are not destroyed with the setting of the Sun. Even so, nothing essential in the human individual perishes with the death of the physical body.

By the Grace of God, through love, faith, devotion, growth in inner perfection, experience the immortal and imperishable Godhead in the perishable body.

- Swami Omkarananda