
A Discussion Of Whether Reincarnation Is Real

Reincarnation is a pre-eminent topic that staggered the idea of our existence; why we live and why we die. Science connotes that life is a continuous cycle of birth, growth, and death. But at what point does it exactly stop and where does the rebirth of life begin? For my philosophical paper, I would be questioning first if reincarnation is evident in the first place before proceeding to answer whether or not I believe it.

Dr. Ian Stevenson, a renowned psychiatrist that worked for the University of Virginia School of Medicine in the span of 50 years and has dedicated a part of his life in investigating over 3,000 cases of children around the world who have significant cases of recollecting their past lives, the phobias that they have, the illnesses that they experience, all of which cannot be explained by the environment or inheritance. In his research about children remembering their past lives, he mentioned the malformations and aberrations in the children's bodies, none of which science could explain. He proposed that only thirty to sixty percent of these anomalies can be related to genetic factors before birth such as alcohol and Thalidomide that these children who seem to have inherited questionable disease have not acquired them from their parents, but rather from what their past selves had. Birthmarks became a superior part of this research. He noted that it may be evidence of life before life and how it ended. In my defense, birthmarks are congenital diseases on the skin due to the abundance of blood vessels, smooth muscles and fat, none of which are in any relation to rebirth or other cosmic reasons upon science and life but we also cannot question the efficacy of this research since reincarnation is still a mystery without proof of existence. Dr. Stevenson proposed the five common characteristics during his study.

The first feature of this study reckoned that a person who believed in reincarnation can require to be reborn to a couple or a single person only because they assumed that they would be well taken care of by those people. In my opinion, if a person could relive its life and is presented with the freedom to choose which family, couple, or person would take care of them then they would pick someone well-off and could raise them. How come we still have children knocking on people's doors for food? If we were given a choice for our next life, I'm positively sure that it is not something to gamble with. The second point in his study suggested that pregnant women or soon-to-be pregnant women would often dream about the person who has died in its past life to tell her that that person would be reborn through her. I believe this one is closely related to the first characteristic he proposed. Though, I couldn't agree with this. Dreams are as complex as the topic of reincarnation. There's just this fine line in-between of these two. The third part implied that the variable marks on a person's body indicate whether he or she has been reborn. The tribes in Africa would often a former person's body in order to recognize that person in its second life. Their search for a past tribe member could be easier if there aren't billions of

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humans dying each day with the same mark that deceased tribe member has. Still, birthmarks could mean something other than a flap of excess skin.

The fourth section of this investigation quite frankly intrigued me. It said that some children around the ages of two to ten would be discussing intricate details of their past life. I, myself, would believe that a child would be making up stories but this part has some hooks in it. I also find it fascinating that a child as young as two would be able to narrate portions of his past life effortlessly and without a doubt. James Leininger was only two years old when he started talking about his past life as a man named L.t. James McCreedy Houston, a fighter pilot during World War II. His mother said that his knowledge about aircraft and aviation is faultless that even she and his husband were puzzled by it. James went on and talked about his death in Iwo Jima fifty years ago because of a Japanese plane that shot him. He revealed details about drop bombs that killed hundreds of people and even how he died. His father started investigating what James is saying to prove whether or not this is true and to his surprise, there was a person named L.t. James McCreedy Houston and he died due to plane crash after being shot down by a Japanese plane in Iwo Jima. I believe this is something a child as young as two would be able to say. Children have wild imaginations but it is nothing like remembering the death of your past self vividly. The fifth part proposed that if a child is born wealthy in its previous life and born poor in its second life, then that would explain why he or she acts way more different than most poor people do. This theory has some holes in it. Like, a child learns to behave based on what it is told. As well as learning whatever it is taught. However, it is an interesting theory, just not completely believable and factual.

The main cause of where the topic of metempsychosis arose is from various religious concepts. It is a continuous cycle of life from one soul to the next and its physical existence.

Transmigration is the central principle of Indian religions such as Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism. All four of these navigate around two core concepts such as the Brahman and Atman. Brahman is the Hindu tenet that everything that surrounds us in life came from Brahman. Except, Brahman is not like the Western Judeo-Christian type of god. It does not mention that souls would either go to heaven or hell. It simply is an 'it'. It is ahead of mankind and solely is everything including all the answers to life, death, and all the inevitable possibilities of life. Atman, on the other hand, is our spiritual self. The part of us that lives on, our souls. Only the atman goes through the process of rebirth. But Atman is also a part of Brahman. Both are a part of everything, even the cosmic vastness of the universe. In a nutshell, all that Hindus want is to put an end to the endless cycle of life and death, also known as 'Samsara'. For them to succeed in this intention, they must first find Moksa. Moksa can be defined as a supernatural place beyond anything that exists. When this is attained, the Atman would connect with us and only the Brahman would exist. Thus, eternal peace is accomplished.

For me to answer the question of whether reincarnation is real or not, it would mean that

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everything we believe in today shall be put into questioning. Every belief, every religion that supposes the other, and even the science of every living thing shall be doubted. Therefore, my answer is both yes and no. I cannot say so myself. Do I believe in reincarnation? I don't know. I believe in the reality of life and everything that comes with it. But if we look at this from a different perspective, without present researches and scientific explanations with provided pieces of evidence, and spirituality and religious credos, the definition that we give on life is in the complete retrospect of what we have learned and on what we thought we knew; and yet, there are still punch holes in the justification of mankind between life, death, and everything in-between. We are still continuously searching for answers on everything but we're already vindicating definitions on the unknown simply because we demand something to believe in. Life is a constant string of questions and we're blindly hunting for answers.

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