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Reincarnation, Fiction or Fact?

By Ernest L. Martin Ph.D., 1980

Edited by David Sielaff, January 2024

Read first the "[January 2024 Newsletter](#)"



EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: This article by Dr. Martin is “new” to the ASK website. It was published in 1980 when he was Director of the Foundation for Biblical Research (FBR). The false doctrine of reincarnation is similar in some ways to the unbiblical teaching of the immortal soul.¹ Demonic spirits experience a kind of reincarnation each time they possess individuals and learn their experiences. Later they find others to possess or oppress. This may be one source of “memories” of past lives. On a social level the concept of reincarnation can be used as a method of social and political control using familiar pagan religious concepts. *DWS*

[Dr. Martin's written 1980 reincarnation article ...] All intelligent people from the beginning of time have endeavored to find reasons for the existence of human life. There is even more to it than that. The matter of what represents life itself is the real issue — whether that life is animal life or plant life (the fauna and flora). The search for such answers is as active today as ever, and we moderns are no less interested in these matters than were the ancients. It is a simple fact that most humans have a desire to know and to understand the essential factors which comprise this thing we call life.

The most bothersome of problems that confronts us is that of death. Whether we observe life in humans, animals, or plants, we also witness the universal inevitability of death. All things die. We humans especially seem to be short-changed with our allotted lifespans. Life appears so short. The proverbial “seventy years” seems a disappointingly limited period for existence. The shortness is almost humiliating because there are specimens in the plant world (the giant sequoia trees and the bristlecone pine trees of the White Mountains in California) that live to be 3,000, 4,000, and even 5,000 years old.

But we human beings are — supposedly the most sophisticated expression of God's creative art — with far greater physical intellect and apparent spiritual awareness than any animal or plant, yet our lifespans are so puny compared to some other life forms.

This brevity of life causes most of us to rebel against that reality. We find it difficult to accept that our

¹ See Dr. Martin's powerful evidence against an immortal soul or an immortal spirit in the article "[The Pagan Immortal Soul and Double Doctrine](#)." *DWS*

longevity only represents “seventy years.” It has always been fashionable to look for ways, or to look for reasons, how we can (or will) experience an extension of life beyond our present physical existence. One of the suggestions that has been in vogue for centuries is called reincarnation. It is a belief that man can continue to live beyond the normal human lifespan that we witness.

What Is Reincarnation?

The teaching of reincarnation is not new. It has been in existence, in various forms, from ancient times. Indeed, some of the major religious beliefs that much of mankind accepts today have at their base some form of teaching involving reincarnation. These religions are found mostly in the east (India, Southeast Asia, China), but even the Western World is now beginning to wonder if the doctrine of reincarnation may not be an essential key that unlocks the meaning of longevity beyond the grave. But just what is reincarnation?

The doctrine is not difficult to define on the surface. In a word, the term reincarnation means the act of “coming into flesh again.” The normal interpretation concludes that we humans have a spirit or a soul that is presently housed in flesh, within our fleshly bodies. When the body dies, our spirit or soul is believed to enter another fleshly body so that it may continue to exist beyond one’s physical death.

Just why the spirit or the soul must come back into a fleshly body has nothing to do with the simple belief in reincarnation (we will look at the “why” in just a moment), but reincarnation itself simply suggests that we humans who are presently living in fleshly bodies have lived in one or more bodies (often numerous bodies) in former generations. This can be called the experience of “past lives.”

This explanation is the simple and unadorned teaching of reincarnation. But when people accept the general premise, and then begin to ask “Why?” — that is when interpretation begins to take over. Through human elucidation, and the manufacture of theological, moral, and ethical reasonings, the basic belief of reincarnation enters a very diverse (and even contradictory) field. Look at just a few of the major explanations.

Some define “coming into flesh again” to mean any type of “flesh.” It could mean that one could enter the flesh of a lower animal (if one has been “wicked” or failed to develop “spiritual awareness”), or one’s spirit or soul could reach a “body” on a higher plane (if one has been “righteous” or developed a higher “consciousness”). But what is “wickedness” or “righteousness”? Numerous and contradictory opinions abound. These things, of course, are a consequence of believing in reincarnation. Finding out the “Why?” of the doctrine brings the discussion of it into the realm of a theological and philosophical environment. It is these moral and ethical determinations that make the teaching a part of the many religions in the world today.

In this article, we will not discuss the so-called moral, ethical, or theological concepts relative to a belief in reincarnation or “past lives.” What we want to investigate is reincarnation itself — whether the matter itself is fiction or fact! There is no use talking about its moral or ethical effects if the teaching itself has no relevance.

The “Evidence” of Science

The possibility of reincarnation being true has recently gained the approbation of many learned individuals. There is yet no landslide of belief in its favor within our Western World, but it is now getting quite respectable, and even fashionable, to speak of its possibility of relevance. Interest has become fervent enough that experiments are now being conducted by some of the most prestigious universities to determine the pros and the cons of the whole matter. Strangely, at least from our western traditionalist point of view, the evidence of the experiments seems to be leaning in favor of reincarnation as being a fact, rather than the reverse. There has been a plethora of articles in the popular press about some of those experiments. They need not be repeated here, but we do wish to give the three general types of “evidence” which seem to suggest reincarnation to be a fact. Let us look at them.

There are case histories of people who feel they have lived previous lives. It is said that General George Patton, of World War II fame, was able to describe in detail the layout of an ancient Roman camp in North Africa, even to the very spot where it was, though he had never been to the area before. This could easily be interpreted as “proof” that he had served there as a Roman more than 2000 years before.

There is also the case of a woman who thought she once lived in Germany, and was killed by a gang of youths at age 16. This is a type of “previous life recall” that is dependent upon remembering very strong emotional events — usually those involving trauma. As a “proof” that the woman did in fact live in Germany at that time, she (in this case under hypnosis) was able to speak fluent German though she did not know a word of the language by learning.

There was a recent experiment in Britain of seventy people (not under hypnosis) being questioned intensely about their “past lives.” The experiment resulted in every one of the seventy being able to “recall” a “past life.” To the experimenters this was solid proof that reincarnation is a fact.

The result of these three types of examples has convinced some people (and the number is growing every day) that reincarnation is the answer. And, one must admit, some of the cases are very impressive indeed. So outstanding have some of them become that even practical minded scientists are now wondering if there is evidence to support reincarnation.

Is Reincarnation a Fact?

We at [ASK] do not wish to ridicule any serious attempt to investigate matters concerning the purpose of life. After all, we ourselves, are a research institute devoted to the understanding of what essential truth really is — especially if the investigation concerns the teaching of the biblical revelation. We see nothing wrong in scientific experiments (as long as no one is hurt in the process) in trying to determine the reliability or falsity of any philosophical or theological belief. All that we demand, and any true scientist would insist on, is that the experiments be done objectively (with as little bias as possible) and that all avenues of interpretation be utilized and taken into consideration. In our view, this is where the vast majority of present “scientific experiments” concerning reincarnation need criticism. It is not the experiments themselves we wish to criticize, but the deductions that are being made concerning them without full discussions on alternative interpretations.

Let me explain. General Patton may well have “seen” through some kind of “sixth sense” an ancient Roman camp over the next hill during his African campaigns when he had never visited the area at all. His deduction (when he saw the camp exactly as pictured in his mind) was that he had lived there some 2000 years ago. This is where the problem lies. Was the interpretation that he had lived a “past life” at that camp a proper one? In a word, was his deduction correct?

All of us humans are very prone to believe what we want to believe. We sometimes “jump to conclusions” without looking at alternative suggestions in a proper investigative way. We are prone to do this, but this is not science — it is opinion (and often very subjective opinion). Granted, our deductions may well turn out to be true, but one can hardly call such opinions scientific proof, unless all alternate explanations are eliminated from consideration.

And what about the woman who was able to speak German under hypnosis? The deduction she arrived at (and probably by most of the “experimenters” who heard her speak) was that this was evidence of a “past life” in which she lived. But are other interpretations possible? True scientific investigation demands that all alternate explanations be thoroughly considered as well.

As for the seventy people in the experiment in Britain, all of them (including those who conducted the experiment) came to the conclusion that each of their “past lives” was proved. The truth is, though, each of the seventy was only able to give his own opinion. And what was devastating to the experiment is that the investigators themselves believed in reincarnation as a fact. This is a subjective approach that vilifies the whole “experiment.” Such one-sided “evidences” are not scientific!

The deductions of the seventy were adulterated by the personal bias of the examiners. What was most unscientific about the experiment was the profound lack of looking at other alternatives of interpretation. There could be a number of explanations to show why the seventy “saw” the things they did, and they may have nothing to do with an interpretation of “past lives.”

This is the problem with the whole matter. Hundreds, even thousands, of so-called “past lives” experiences are available for research today. But true scientists must put the words “past lives” in quote marks because the majority of testimonies are plainly and clearly very subjective. Other explanations are quite possible.

The Complexities of the Human Brain

The human brain — or better, the human mind — is the most intricate mechanism known to man. There is nothing more complicated, more profound, and especially more mysterious! So infinite are the seeming potentialities of the mind, and so ignorant are we of its functions, that no human today can adequately appraise its capabilities. It is really impossible for us to explore (and to understand) all the dynamic possibilities resident within the mind. A neurosurgeon recently said that mankind is so destitute of knowledge regarding the workings of our minds, that the tissues of the brain could just as easily be made up of cotton wool for all we know about what makes it “work” or what its potentials are! This is true.²

It has been said, and no doubt truthfully, that man uses only 10% or 15% of his brain potential. Housed within our cranial structure is the most complex, sophisticated, “computerized” system known to man. The power of the mind is magnificent beyond compare, yet we are probably working at a miniscule level of our mind potential. This deficiency represents a real problem in the investigation of reincarnation.

[This is also a problem in analyzing all psychic phenomena. DWS]

The fact is, the mind could well be able to produce extraordinary feats (and it may be constantly doing it in some people) that could deceive us into believing reincarnation is proved, when actually nothing of the kind would be in real evidence. What needs to be done are scientific experiments to determine what the abilities of the mind really are rather than arriving at subjective deductions based upon one-sided experiments.

Take for example the “experiment” with the seventy people in England. They all deduced they lived “past lives.” But I dare say that if seventy intelligent people some 600 years ago were asked to look at the movements of the heavenly bodies, would they not all arrive at a unified conclusion that the earth is the center of the universe and that the sun and stars revolved around it? This would surely have been the unanimous conclusion because that was the normal scientific belief at the time. But they would have all been wrong! The sun is the center of our system, not the earth! Such early deductions were based upon insufficient knowledge of the universe.

Regarding the “experiment” in England, it makes no difference if seventy, seven hundred, or seven million people believe they have lived “past lives,” and even if they can “visualize” with their minds such “past lives,” it is no proof whatever that reincarnation is a fact. They may be dealing with mental powers resident within their minds that have capabilities of visualizations of which we know nothing about. As said before, the almost universal belief by people of the 14th century was that the earth represented the center of the universe. If fifty million people at the time believed it, they would still have been wrong!

The Power of the Mind to Visualize

One of the most elusive characteristics of the mind is that of memory. Though the general areas of the brain in which memory functions are retained are presently known, ask any professional neurosurgeon HOW memory (and visualization) is retained, and he will admit his thorough ignorance. But memory is a fact of life, and it has powerful effects on us humans.

As for myself, I lived in England for 13 years. My experiences in Britain were normally very pleasant. It is so easy for me to recall memories of many wonderful experiences — and I can do so quite vividly. I can lay my head on a pillow, relax for a few moments, and recall many beautiful experiences. I can actually “feel” the atmosphere of some events — smell the newmown hay on certain farms — I can still see and hear the children playing in the fields. I can also see my own children very vividly (all born in England) some 10 years ago as if it were yesterday.

Is there anything unique about me in being able to visualize such things? No, because each of you reading this Exposition can do the same thing with events in your own lives — and some of you can probably do it better than I.

² Since Dr. Martin wrote this in 1980, advances in understanding brain function have led some to think a connection between the human brain and computers (called “AI” or “artificial intelligence”) is possible and is being attempted by many researchers. This may make communications between human beings and spirit entities easier — only to evil ends. See Genesis 11:6. DWS

What does this have to do with reincarnation? Let me explain. I have also had many impressive dreams while asleep (especially if I ate certain foods before going to bed). I have dreamed many dreams of places and people I have never seen or met in my life. Since my profession is that of a historian and theologian, I have had to study much about Greece, Rome, and ancient Israel. Especially if I have had a long day's study of a particular subject — and I get to bed with it on my mind (which is quite usual for me) — I have experienced dreams in technicolor, cinemascope, and full stereophonic sound of those ancient events. In fact, my dreams have been better than most movies I have ever seen, certainly more accurate. When I have seen Roman cavalry charging on their horses, none of the soldiers in my dreams has stirrups on his saddle in which to put his feet for balance. Why? Because I know better! The stirrup was not invented until about 700 years after Christ. And in my dreams I always subconsciously adjust for this fact — at least, since I found out this point some twenty years ago.

Does this all “prove” that I had a “past life” in Roman times? Of course not! In fact, even though I am a historian and study history on a daily basis, I feel like a fish out of water in any age other than the one I am now living in. I always say: “I am thankful I am living now, and not back then.”

Let me say, however, that this does not “prove” that reincarnation is false. Certainly not! But there are alternatives other than the teaching of reincarnation to interpret the phenomena of what the human mind is able to visualize. And, whatever “dreaming” is, it is an alternative. This is the point I wish to make. To subjectively state that some mental visualizations must be evidence of “past lives” is not proper evidence until all alternate possibilities are eliminated.

A Major Alternative to Reincarnation

We now bring in the Bible to our discussion. [The following points could be made without recourse to the biblical revelation, but I wish to introduce the biblical evidence at this juncture. *ELM*] The Bible acknowledges that there are psychic abilities in people both good and bad. There are examples recorded in the Bible of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles receiving vivid mental visualizations given either by God himself or by angelic beings (Genesis 15:1; Acts 9:10; Revelation 1:12–20). It also gives information about some manifestations which originate from spiritual powers that the Bible calls bad (1 Chronicles 21:1; Mark 5:9).³

The present factor we wish to emphasize is simply this: The Bible shows there are spiritual powers at bay within the environment of our earth which are capable of causing the human mind to visualize vast and marvelous scenes. These displays upon the mind can embrace things of the past (Revelation 12:1–4), things of the present [which some people call telepathy today] (John 1:48), or to visualize events of the future (Revelation 1:10). These phenomena mentioned in the Bible are inspired by spiritual forces external to the person himself.

Do these grand scenes experienced by the prophets and apostles suggest that they saw them within their own mental capacities? No! The visualizations came from without. It was an external spiritual power that impressed upon their minds the scenes (the visions). Could it possibly be construed that the prophets actually lived in the past when they “saw” things happening in the past? Of course not! And it would be absurd to suggest that the prophets, who saw things of the future, actually lived in the future. In no way can this be true. It simply means that the prophets or apostles were able to see precise visualizations from external spiritual sources (directly from God) that gave them knowledge either of the past, the present, or the future.

Even today (and forgetting the biblical revelation for a moment), it is a common thing for some people to receive vivid premonitions of impending events. Some people have claimed to have “seen” events of the future (or what is happening in other parts of the world at the present). In some cases there have been some uncannily accurate descriptions. But really, have the persons “seeing” such future events (or present ones) actually been there in person? Experiencing such visualizations does not mean the persons have been in the

³ It is not our purpose in this Exposition to discuss the merits or demerits of the spiritual forces which the Bible says exist on earth, in the universe (heavens, plural), or under the earth (Philippians 2:10–11. *ELM* See Dr. Martin's article, “[Angels - the Facts and the Fictions.](#)” *DWS*

future. It is possible that another explanation provides the answer. The Bible even calls attention to the fact that some people have extraordinary powers to “see” things of the future. Not all the time are such phenomena good, from the biblical point of view:

“If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass

... You shall not hearken unto that prophet or dreamer of dreams.”

• Deuteronomy 13:1–3

The Bible calls such abilities as being in affiliation with familiar spirits (Leviticus 20:6, 27). The biblical explanation shows that such occurrences are of external origin to the human. They are inspired by outside spiritual forces. [The Bible also says that it is possible for some spirits to be internal to the person (Mark 5:9), but the powers of visualization (whether past, present, or future) would be activated in the mind in the same manner, no matter if internal or external.]

External Sources of Remarkable Experiences

However, when one looks at the issue, visions (whether good or bad) are able to be seen by some people inspired from external sources to the human himself. It is possible to get in tune with such spiritual powers if people seek their cooperation. This is usually done through trances, hypnosis, deep sleep, constant questioning on psychological or spiritual matters, concentrations on extra-sensory phenomena, etc.

Fortune telling, seances, divination, and other occult arts are all in the same classification of using familiar spirits as far as the Bible is concerned. The general term we moderns use for such things is “psychic phenomena.” In evaluating the evidence for reincarnation, the possibility must be considered that visualizations of “past lives” could be caused by these external spiritual forces. Of course, some of the visual mental effects may not have an external origin at all.

It is possible for many people to have ordinary dreams of scenes they have never experienced before, or even in a wakened condition people have had mental images come to their minds. But again, such things do not prove that one is “seeing” scenes of “past lives.” One may subjectively claim they prove reincarnation as a fact, but this is not the case at all. In the final analysis, until proper scientific research can accurately eliminate all the alternate possibilities of explanation, the doctrine of reincarnation has to be looked on as an adjunct of faith!

This is especially true because of certain inherent weaknesses in the theory that defy rational explanation. Take for example the fact that in most cases the experiences of a “past life” bring only the sensual side over into “the next life” — not the educational or intellectual abilities. I once knew a man who claimed he was at one time Moses, the great lawgiver to the ancient Israelites. However, this man (who was quite intelligent) could still not write a single word in Hebrew. The man could “see” scenes of the Exodus. This was, to him, a proof of his “past life.” But he was presently incapable of writing Hebrew. Why was Moses’ knowledge of Hebrew not carried over if reincarnation is a fact?

[True enough, some people under hypnosis or spiritual spells can speak in foreign languages. Some Christians do it today and claim that the Holy Spirit is inspiring them. Others in Haiti can do it under voodoo spells. But again, these occurrences can be explained as coming from external sources, and they are no proof that one once lived a “past life.”]

The normal inability to carry-over knowledge learned in “a previous life” is a major stumbling block to the teaching of reincarnation. From my own point of view, the attributes I would want to “carry-over” into another life would be my accumulated knowledge. This is what makes me mature, satisfied, and what makes my life worthwhile and gives me self-esteem. My memories of sensual matters (either extreme periods of pain or happiness — which are usually what people who experience “past lives” are able to remember) are of little interest to me.

I suspect Albert Einstein would have thought the same thing. Since he died in 1955, is his spirit or soul

now inhabiting some other human at the present? Is the person now about 25 years old? If so, where was Einstein's intellect and accumulated knowledge while the new "Einstein" was being formed in his new mother's womb? Where were they in the infant stage? Why, most of us cannot recall any events of the first two years of our lives. Where were our former "intellects" during that period? Where was Einstein's? At what time of life will the "new Einstein" assume the same intellect as the "old Einstein"? Or will he ever attain it again?

None of these questions can be rationally answered by anyone who believes in reincarnation. Every explanation offered is unprovable in a normal scientific manner. Really, no one knows the answers. In the end, the theory of reincarnation must be relegated to the realm of faith.

Reincarnation Is Not Biblical

There are three major lines of evidence that show reincarnation is not a fact from the biblical perspective. Let us look at them.

(1) If reincarnation is the major way by which mankind obtains longevity of life (by the spirit or soul occupying one body after another until "perfection" is reached), why is it that the Bible says not one word about it? This is an argument from silence, but in this case the silence is a powerful evidence against the teaching of reincarnation being a fact — at least, from the Bible point of view. The reason for this is not difficult to see.

The central theme of the Bible is a message of how mankind can know God and how he can be saved from his present earthly existence to a state of perfection. It is inconceivable that reincarnation should find support (not even a hint) if that is truly the method by which "salvation" is obtained. The fact is, the teaching of reincarnation is conspicuous in the Bible for its absence. This is tangible evidence that such a concept was completely alien from the thinking of the biblical writers.

(2) What the Bible does teach are numerous doctrines that absolutely forbid such a concept as being proper. Almost all who believe in reincarnation see it as a development process towards some kind of spiritual improvement — and finally to arrive at a spiritual "perfection" of some kind. All of us have certain imperfections that we need to eliminate from our beings. The reincarnationist assumes that more than one life (in fact, numerous lives) are needed to "weed out" all of the demerits of life. [Granted, this part of the theory involves the moral and ethical side of the reincarnation question, but such evaluations are a natural corollary to the teaching.]

In a word, it is believed that man must work at improving himself throughout the "various lives" that he lives. But such a concept is utterly contrary to New Testament teaching!

The central fact of the Gospel is that man is awarded salvation by grace, and not by any works on his part (Ephesians 2:8–10). True, works are essential for salvation, but those works were accomplished by Jesus Christ on behalf of mankind. We are made righteous and holy by Christ's obedience, not by our own works (Romans 5:18–19). For a full discussion on this matter, see Dr. Martin's article, "[The Way to Salvation in the Christian Gospel](#)."

The Bible says that salvation is something that is accomplished in us once (2 Timothy 1:9). Imagine, if reincarnation is a fact, then what if "you" accepted Christ in a previous "past life" (say four generations ago), should you have to "accept Him" three generations ago too? Two generations ago? And should you have to "accept Him" all over again in your "present life"? In no way is such a teaching compatible with the Bible revelation!

The fact, however, that your own human works are not the means to Bible salvation, is a sure sign that reincarnation is not an acceptable biblical teaching. Going from one body to the next in order to "improve" oneself is not necessary. Christians are already legally justified in Christ without our works being involved (1 Corinthians 12:12; Colossians 1:22; Ephesians 2:8–10). And we have a complete assurance of total salvation at the second coming of Christ (1 John 3:2). But with the doctrine of reincarnation, we have to get saved "a little at a time" in each life until we reach some kind of spiritual perfection. All this is unbiblical!

(3) But the most important argument against reincarnation in the Bible is the example of Jesus Christ. Jesus was incarnated once [not **RE**incarnated] — that is, He came into human flesh once. From the time of Adam until Christ’s appearance on earth, He did not inhabit one body after another. Actually, the Bible teaches that Jesus was in heaven with the Father until He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary (Philippians 2:6–7). He remained in His fleshly body for about 33½ years. He died on the tree of crucifixion and His spirit went back to God in heaven (Luke 23:46). This was not Christ Himself going back as a conscious being to the Father, because His body still lay in that tomb for three days. The spirit must be united with a body [either flesh or spirit] for any consciousness to exist (Genesis 2:7).

Actually, Jesus was dead for three days. Note that Jesus was resurrected from the dead — not from the living (Acts 26:23). Only after Christ’s spirit again entered His body, did He once again become alive. And though His spirit was in the care of the Father for those three days while He was dead, Christ Himself was not with the Father. Remember what He told the woman soon after His resurrection: **“Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father”** (John 20:17).⁴

After showing Himself alive forty days (Acts 1:3) Christ returned to heaven, and remains at the right hand of God (Romans 8:34). He will remain in heaven until His second coming. This example of Christ tells us much. He was the one who lived and died for each of us. The experience He went through on earth is reckoned as applying to all of us — in the eyes of the Father. Thus, He did not live from one body to the next from the time of Adam until His first coming, and He certainly has not been living from one body to another since He returned to heaven (Hebrews 8:1). He lived once in human flesh to secure a permanent salvation for each of us (Hebrews 9:26). The Bible makes it clear that we humans, like Christ, have to live this human life once:

“And as it is appointed unto men ONCE to die, but after this [death] the judgment. So Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

• *Hebrews 9:27–28*

And the only hope for a future life is the resurrection from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:51–52). This is the teaching of the New Testament from beginning to end. No other alternative is even discussed.

Conclusion

The doctrine of reincarnation really rests upon a single premise — and that premise is faith. The evidence that has been presented to prove its validity is subjective and certainly incomplete. Only until all alternate possibilities of interpretation for the “experiences of past lives” are fully explored (and eliminated) can it be said to be proved. However, matters concerning “faith” can never be proved fully. Faith must be replaced by fact, for evidence to be truly scientific.

In all fairness, though, it ought to be mentioned that the biblical method of retaining life beyond our deaths is also based on faith. None of us has yet witnessed the resurrection of the dead, nor have we seen the second coming of Christ which ushers in our redemption. Nevertheless, there is something very dogmatic that can be said about the two “faiths.” They are certainly incompatible with each other. If one is right, the other has to be wrong! It is our conviction that the Bible has by far the better answer to the problem of human longevity than the teaching of reincarnation.

Dr. Ernest L. Martin, 1980
David Sielaff, 2024

⁴ Jesus did not go and preach to the spirits in prison during the three days He was dead (1 Peter 3:19–20). He did that after His resurrection, as 1 Peter 3:18 says. Jesus was already “quicken” from the dead. See Chapter 17, “[Just What Are Human Beings?](#)” in Dr. Martin’s [Essentials of New Testament Doctrine](#). DWS