

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: what happens after death, reincarnation****what happens after death, reincarnation, on: 2003/11/12 9:47**

Mt.17:12-13

"But I say unto you, That Elias is come already.... then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

**Re: what happens after death, reincarnation - posted by Jason, on: 2003/11/12 10:35**

John 1:21

And they asked , "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not."

**Re: Luke 1:17 - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2003/11/12 11:36**

Jake:

See my response in the other thread.

"And he will go on before the Lord, *in the spirit and power of Elijah...*" (Luke 1:17)

In other words, John the Baptist is not identified with Elijah as the reincarnation of him. Rather, his ministry is characterized by the same spirit and power as Elijah's.

**Re: what happens after death, reincarnation - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/11/12 12:28**

Picking a world view is not like window shopping, something little for the hungry mind to fit the empty pocket. It is certainly not like shoplifting – you cannot get away with it in this game.

There are not many options in the end. The impersonal + time + chance does not take us anywhere. Personality is lost in such a setting. We become reduced to the level of machines. This is where we find ourselves if we opt for any of the many spiritistic solutions also.

We are said to evolve into something that never talk to us. God never talk in person in these systems

We are said to stand under the harsh rule of Karma, which we never come to grips with. It judges us without revealing its rule. It is a system that cannot do away with evil.

God is silent in these systems. An incredibly pessimistic position. If there is anyone out there speaking, one find a mediator without any of the qualities which can be found in Jesus Christ, God, the Son who became man, for the sake of a true testimony about Heavenly issues.

These evolved mediators are always silent to true truth, simply because they do not adhere to it. Lip-service may be paid to Jesus, but regarding the work of the Cross – silence or abhorrence.

These mediators go together with a corrective text which always is put on top of the Bible, if this Good Book is brought in to the system at all. This interpreting factor is never validated. It must be taken for granted, accepted without solid testimony.

This is where we stand when we allow spiritistic influences to handle facts and longings concerning life after death. God, the Father is certainly not silent in this realm.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/11/12 13:02

Quote:  
-----BTW Elijah was seen as Elijah after the death of John Baptist. It was this experience which caused the disciples to ask about Elijah's future activity. In your scenario this would mean that Elijah came back as John but when John died Elijah reverted to being Elijah again. Confusing, isn't it?  
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Ron posted this in the other forum but I thought it was worth mentioning here.

**Mark 6:15 (kjv)** - Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

-It's kind of funny that the people didn't ask if Jesus could be the Messiah, if it couldn't be explained they seem to use the 'Elias' (Elijah) label. I wonder if the Elijah to come was possibly considered to be the Messiah by the Jews?

Here are all the scriptures to my knowledge that mention Elijah in context to John and also Jesus in a few cases to glean some insight:

**Malachi 4:5-6 (kjv)** - 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.

-Notice its before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, Jesus came also in the same manner before the day of wrath to show God's mercy to us. For now is the day of salvation.

**Luke 1:17 (kjv)** - And he (John the Baptist) shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

-Spirit and Power? It seems to me that John the Baptist did no miracles but had a message of repentance, can this characterize the same power of Elijah's ministry that was filled with miracles? But it clearly stated here that John is the fulfillment of the Scripture: Malachi 4:5-6

**John 1:20-21,25 (kjv)** - And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

-It's interesting that he considers himself not to be Elijah? Christ never denied being the Messiah but sometimes wouldn't answer which does not mean 'No'. But John clearly states 'I am not.'

**Matthew 11:14-15 (kjv)** - For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was to come.

**Matthew 17:2-3 (kjv)** - And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

**Matthew 17:9-13 (kjv)** - And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

**Luke 9:54 (kjv)** - And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

**Matthew 27:46-47,49 (kjv)** - And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they *that*, said, This man calleth for Elias. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

**Re: - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/11/12 16:58**

The Elijah spoken of in Malachi 4:5-6 is symbolic of John the Baptist. I'm sure all of us have spent some time over God's word and realize that there is a great deal of symbolism within the words of the prophets, and this is a good example. As far as reincarnation goes, I'm going to have to outright say that it is blasphemy. I don't say this to be cruel or unkind, but to be honest and holding to God's expectation of me, as His child and servant, to hold others accountable. I'm sure Christ would have often spoke of it had He intended us to be reincarnated, whether physically, spiritually, or any other form. The only "second life" I or any Christian will have has already come, when we were reborn of the Spirit. I have studied religions of South Asia, as of late and during my "religious search" before God found me. Reincarnation is based on karma, and God makes it clear to us that we're not righteous enough to hold onto the life we have now let alone be given a few more.

**Re: Reincarnation - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/11/21 13:32**

I am taking a class right now at college called "Honors Intro to the Religions of South Asia" and have been able to once again look at Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, Sikhism, Sufism, etc. The professor refuses to discuss Christianity, though there are Christians in India. ;)

As you know, Buddhism and Hinduism holds a philosophy of reincarnation. A recent assignment involved me writing a 1200 word essay on some of the different doctrinal concepts associated with their religions. (Fun stuff, guys.)

Well, I wanted to be accurate in my definition of these concepts and came across the oh-so-wonderful resource of an (<http://www.religioustolerance.org/glossary.htm>) online glossary of religious terms. This is what their definition for "reincarnation" is:

the belief that when a person dies, their soul is reborn into another living human. In North America, belief in reincarnation is found among Buddhists, Hindus, followers of the New Age, and most Neopagans. It was a common belief in early Christianity.

See what I saw? Yeah. So I decided to do more than shrug Jake off, and this is what I found (read it all before replying...there's a stream of thought going on here):

--- Josephus, the Jewish historian who lived during most of the first century AD, records that reincarnation was taught widely in his day. This is seen in Matthew 16:13-14, in who the people thought Jesus was.

--- In early Christianity, there were sects. Not everyone held the reincarnation was true, but some did.

--- Those who were members of the Gnostic sects, such as the Valentinians, Ophites and Ebionites, included rebodiment among their important teachings. For them it enabled fulfillment of the law, like the South Asian concept of karma, as well as providing the means for the soul to purify itself from the muddy qualities resulting from its immersion in matter and the egoism we have developed in the first stages of our journey through earth life.

--- When you read 1 John, remember that one of the reasons John wrote this book was to expose false teachers (1 John 2:26). John's readers were confronted with an early form of Gnostic teaching, specifically Cerinthian.

--- Gnosticism was one of the most dangerous heresies of the first two centuries. I compare to the modern day cult "The Way". Its central teaching was that spirit is entirely good and matter is entirely evil. Salvation, to Gnostics, is the escape from the body, achieved not by faith in Christ but by special knowledge (hence the name Gnosticism...note Paul's emphasis in Colossians 2:2-3). There was angel worship (Colossians 2:18), harsh treatment of the body (Colossians 2:21-23), and immorality (since matter, not the breaking of God's law, was considered evil...1 John 3:4).

I came across a book at Amazon.com called

([http://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0922729271/refsib\\_dp\\_pt/102-9913034-7086547#reader-link](http://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0922729271/refsib_dp_pt/102-9913034-7086547#reader-link)) Reincarnation: The Missing Link in Christianity. Click that link to look inside the book a bit. I did some more research. This is a

(<http://www.scp-inc.org/publications/newsletters/N2204/endprophet.html>) website about the author, Elizabeth Clare Prophet. You're gonna want to take a moment to skim through it.

Early "Christianity" did preach reincarnation. And this "Christianity" was condemned by Paul and John. I hold them as credible men of God, and definitely think they had a firm grasp on what is of God and what is not. Reincarnation is not in God's order of things. Gnosticism was clearly laid out as a heresy, and those are the only "Christians" who accepted it.

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/11/22 12:59**

Wow thanks for the info Mary! thats alot of great summarized information.

Quote:  
-----I came across a book at Amazon.com called Reincarnation: The Missing Link in Christianity. Click that link to look inside the book a bit  
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I love that new feature on amazon.com where you can actually look inside and read the book online abit. It's very helpful for research!

Quote:  
-----Early "Christianity" did preach reincarnation. And this "Christianity" was condemned by Paul and John.  
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Thanks for the post sure did learn alot. ;-)

**Re: the Jake and Philologos File - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/1 14:53**

A little while ago Jake and Philologos started up a side-room conversation on some issues raised here. I think it might be beneficial to return this to the forum so this is a long thread.

It begins with philologos' last note to Jake and then lists the off-line mails in order. Please do feel free to comment and challenge.

Jake  
Having reread your original note I think the moderator had not intentionally tried to sideline your questions. It was just that the thread went that way. I was as much to blame as anyone else. I think it would be much more beneficial to return this to the public domain, so I will collate your notes and mine and post them back onto Sermonindex. We can carry on our conversation there and others may have valuable contributions to make to the debate.  
best regards  
Ron

Jake's off-line note: 25th Nov 2002  
philologos

I noted that the administrator has diverted the discussion on reincarnation and the scriptures. But I am still interested to learn your responses to the questions I posed on public prayer, oaths and war fighting. Clearly Jesus opposed all of these, but, even though you reject sources of spiritual authority other than the Bible, you accept extra-scriptural arguments that rationalize support for these things. This makes all of your arguments for believing in the Bible suspect. I would like to hear your voice on this. Only one person had the courage to try to answer these points. I guess this is because you don't have an answer?

Jake

philologos' reply:  
Hi Jake  
thanks for your note.  
Oaths: I am with you. I will not take an oath. My yea is yea and my nay is nay.

War fighting: I have been a pacifist for most of my life but with the feeling that it was a little unreal in that my generation has never been called upon to go to war. In face of the inevitable questions as to what I would do if my wife or children were abused, I can only say that I would try to restrain the attacker, but not at the cost of their lives. Technically, I would hope to have the grace not to seek revenge or vindication for any such crimes. I could not premeditate all my responses because 'dying grace is only given in the dying hour' and it is impossible to create a scenario which gives God the opportunities that a real situation would give.

I have had these words on my study wall now for many a year...

"There is a spirit which I feel, that delights to do no evil, nor to avenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptations. As it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thought to any other: if it be betrayed, it bears it; for its ground and spring are the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned, and takes its kingdom with entreaty, and not with contentions, and keeps it by lowliness of mind. In God alone it can rejoice, though none else regard it, or can own its life. It is conceived in sorrow, and brought forth without any to pity it; nor doth it murmur at grief, and oppression. It never rejoiceth but through sufferings; for with the world's joy it is murdered. I found it alone, being forsaken. I have fellowship therein with them who lived in dens, and desolate places of the earth, who through death obtained this resurrection, and eternal holy life." Perhaps you recognise it? It is the testimony of James Naylor.

Public prayer: I think you are mistaken to say that 'clearly Jesus opposed'. He opposed the open show of ritualistic prayer on the street corners and commented that they 'already had their reward'. In other words they got what they wanted which was public attention. His teaching on prayer included the famous 'When you pray say Our Father' which must have implied a plurality of pray-ers. There are several examples of joint public prayer in the Acts. In the church of which I am part we have no written prayer or order of service. We gather in the Spirit and look to Him for His leading.

My lack of comment on these issues was not due to a lack of courage but to a desire to focus on the issues which were already being pursued. So your 'guess' was pretty far off target. Additionally, I do not reject sources of authority 'other than the Bible'. I embrace reason and personal revelation, but as I hold that the scriptures were the product of the Holy Spirit's inspiration I know that true reason and personal revelation must be capable of validation by reference to the scripture. Otherwise the same Spirit speaks against Himself. The scriptures are my 'final' spiritual authority, not my 'only' spiritual authority. Fox's famous 'but what dost thou say' was not an invitation for a different revelation but a plea for personal testimony rather than book learning.

I was more anxious to pursue the other topics because they present a more profound danger than any of the three above. I have genuinely tried to understand your position on re-incarnation and your references to having to 'deal with things'. If you are saying that there can be no salvation without having 'dealt with things' you stand in contradiction to the scriptures which say that God 'justifies the ungodly' on the basis of their faith not their achievements. If you saying that salvation will result in things being 'dealt with' (that the life will change as a result of salvation) I am with you, but I don't think you are. I repeat what I have said in many forms before that salvation is either an achievement or a gift. If it is a gift there is nothing I can add to it, if it is an achievement then Christ's life was wasted. It was concern for your spirit and not lack of courage which causes me to major on the major rather than on the minor. However, that does not mean that I have no convictions on issues of less primary importance.

I admire the courage of Friends of other centuries. I live in Reading, UK. In this city they imprisoned all the Friends and their children conducted meetings without their parents. I believe that George Fox was the greatest Apostle that these lands have ever seen, but I believe he would be closer to my position than to yours on these issues.

best regards  
Ron Bailey

Jake's Reply: 26 Nov 2003  
Ron,

Thanks for your reply.

Here are my comments.

You are unusual among Christians in that you refuse to take an oath. For instance, President Bush and his cabinet are mostly fundamentalist Christians, but all very publicly swear oaths. And this is approved of by their churches and ministers. I greatly distrust fundamentalist and evangelical Christians because of this.

Yes, James Naylor's description of the Holy Spirit is eloquent and profound.

Public Prayer. Jesus was very specific about this stating that we should go to our room, close the door, and let no one hear our prayers. He didn't make exceptions that I know of. I grew up in the Lutheran Church and before I was 15 I was completely disillusioned with the Church because it was obvious that the Pastor (even though I knew him and his family well outside of Church and liked the man very much) was a hypocrite. He stood before the congregation and uttered prayers for us, led us in prescribed prayer etc. I understood that all this was for show and that God heard not a word of it. So, it is with all of the TV preachers and the vast majority of church services in this country. Why do they bother having services at all? God is not paying attention.

Regarding salvation. Yes it is a gift because no matter what we do, we are unworthy. But that doesn't mean that we don't have to deal with the here and now consequences of our actions. I believe these are carried forward beyond each life span into the next one. If I come to be saved, that gets carried forward as well. (And of course you can always lose your way.)

If you haven't done so check out the Old Souls book I mentioned at the beginning of the discussion. It is quite convincing.

Regarding the authority of the Bible. It is flawed by human frailty. (But this doesn't mean that it doesn't contain the word of God.) For instance, as I mentioned, it has two different (and irreconcilable) time frames for the birth of Jesus. There are many places where it uses allegory to make points and people mistakenly read it literally. We need to discern its words (and here is the crucial point) through the leadings of the Holy Spirit. That Spirit Naylor spoke of would not condemn a person born of a homosexual nature. But a literalist Bible reader would. And my point to the group at the beginning is that if you insist on a literal reading you will be blocking out the Holy Spirit. It is necessary to have this Spirit available in reading the Bible because of the inconsistencies and inaccuracies of the Bible. The Spirit that delights to do no harm can put these problems in check.

There are fundamental problems with the Bible that are hard to reconcile. One is that Isaiah said that people will put down the sword and learn peace. Revelations says that we will all kill each other to nearly the last person. Which is correct? I reject Revelations altogether and all the End of Time crap that is fueling the crisis in the Mideast. Can you

believe it? people who profess Christ as their saviour are encouraging Armagedon? because it fits with the way they interpret the Bible. They really expect to be Raptured. In fact they are bringing about their own spiritual demise.

Philologos's reply: 28 Nov 2003

Hi Mark

As I mentioned in one of my posts the crunch issue here is the relevance of the scriptures. You will search in vain for any comments similar to your own in the early writings of the Friends; they never rejected scripture. Their interpretation often varied from the common herd but they never set inward light against scripture. You are using your 'inward light' to assess the truthfulness and validity of the scriptures. This was not the pattern of the early Friends nor of most on the sermonindex forum.

You have regularly focused on the words of Jesus to 'shut the closet door'. You have constantly attacked 'literalists' but in this area you are the most 'literalist' person I have met. Let me reduce the argument to the absurd. Does this mean you could not pray in a wilderness; there being no closet and no door? I can hear your protest! Of course, it doesn't. But that means that you have applied the literal statement to a unique context which is interpretation. You are convinced of the accuracy of your interpretation because the 'inward light' bears witness, but what of Fox's 'inward light' which bore a different witness to the place of scripture?

I wonder if you have read Robert Barclay on this? He is adamant that the inward witness and the testimony of scripture will bear witness to each other. (I have often wished he were around now so that I could talk to him, but most modern Friends seem to regard him and Penn with patronising amusement) In the end all 'religion' comes down to this issue of final (not sole) authority. For the Catholic, his final authority is the pronouncement of the church; mine is the scripture. Church is answerable to scripture. Your final authority is the inward witness; mine is the scripture. The inward light is answerable to scripture. I am very willing to give 'a reason for the hope that is in me' as regards the trustworthiness of scripture, but all your other objections are really the fruits of this prime objection.

yours  
Ron

Jakes's Reply: 1 Dec 2003

Ron

You are right about Barclay, he is known widely as the "Apologist." Question, If Scriptures are flawed, as I have shown they are, how can they be your final authority? Is there no room for discernment? What if your conscience tells you something different than what the Bible says?

Of course prayer can take place anywhere. The crucial part is that "no one hear your prayers"

Lastly, I don't reject Scripture. I readily embrace it. But where it goes against common sense or the

principle of love (as espoused by Jesus) I have to amend them with these leadings.

Jake

Additional note from Jake: 1 Dec 2003  
Ron, A quote from Barclay's "Apology."

as we do freely agree with the Protestants against the error of the Romanists, so on the other hand, we cannot go the length of such Protestants as make their authority to depend upon any virtue or power that is in the writings themselves; but we desire to ascribe all to that Spirit from which they proceeded.

Philologos reply 1 Dec 2003

Jake

What Barclay is objecting to here is the notion that the words themselves or the book had some inherent power. In this he agrees with most evangelical Christians that the 'letter killeth but the Spirit makes alive'. Christians ascribe 'all power and virtue' to the Spirit from which they proceeded. That is the whole point. It is because they 'proceeded from the Spirit' that they are authoritative for all Christians, and is because they proceeded from the Spirit that we know they cannot be different to the genuine operation of the inward witness. If so, the same Spirit would be testifying to opposing 'truths'. This is where your view takes you.

I don't mean to be impolite but your view would have been identified as the view of the Ranters in Fox's day. They started with the belief that God is in everything, that every man is a manifestation of God, and they ended with the conclusion which their bad logic gave them that therefore what the man does God does. They were above all authority and actually said: "Have not we the Spirit, and why may not we write scriptures as well as Paul?" They believed the Scriptures "not because such and such writ it," but because they could affirm "God saith so in me."

Neither Fox nor Barclay could conceive of the possibility of the inward witness being in opposition to the testimony of the scriptures. Each bore witness to the other.

In your other email you comment that you have shown the scriptures to be 'flawed'. I'm afraid you have done no such thing. You have only shown your understanding of them to be flawed, and I have to say that if it is your inward witness that is testifying against the scriptures it can only be because it is a different spirit to the one who inspired them and who indwelt Christ Himself.

Yours, with respect

Ron

Jake's reply: 1 Dec 2003

So, was Jesus born twice? Once under the reign of Herod (Matt. 2) and once under Augustus (Luke)?

Philologos's reply: 1 Dec 2003

Jake

You are just showing your own fallibility here.

Augustus was Emperor 31BC - 14AD

Herod (the Great) was King of the Jews 40-4BC, under Augustus. So Christ was born ONCE during the reigns of Augustus as Caesar and Herod as King of the Jews.

Herod received his title from the Roman Senate acting under advise from Antony and Octavian (who later became Augustus) Herod took 3 years fighting to establish his title and ultimately governed Judeae for 33 years as a loyal 'friend and ally' of Rome.

We are all born 'just once' and die 'just once' and after this the judgment.

Yours

Ron