

Reincarnation and the Bible



By [Kevin Williams](#)

In many documented near-death experiences involving Jesus, the concept of reincarnation appears. In the NDE testimony of [Jeanie Dicus](#), she was asked by Jesus if she would like to reincarnate or return. [Sandra Rogers](#) was asked the same question by Jesus during her NDE. One of the reasons many Christians reject the validity of near-death testimony is because they sometimes appear to conflict with their interpretation of Christian doctrines. But Christians are usually very surprised to learn that reincarnation was a doctrine once held by many early Christians. Not only that, as you will soon see there is overwhelming evidence in the Bible of Jesus himself teaching it. More Biblical evidence can be found in Herbert Puryear's outstanding book entitled [Why Jesus Taught Reincarnation](#) and Dr. Quincy Howe, Jr.'s excellent book entitled [Reincarnation for the Christian](#).

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1. Introduction

Many Christians have misconceptions about reincarnation. One particular misconception is that it means people don't inhabit heavenly realms between Earth lives. The misconception is that people reincarnate immediately after death. It ignorantly assumes people will never be permanent residents of heavenly realms. But near-death testimony reveals these misconceptions

to be just that - misconceptions. People are free to spend an "eternity of eternities" in afterlife realms before reincarnating to Earth again. There is freedom of choice. This is because [time, as we know it on Earth, does not exist in the afterlife realms as it does here](#). The ultimate purpose for reincarnation is for us to learn enough lessons and gain enough experience from Earth lives that reincarnation is no longer necessary. Like a graduation. Reincarnation is not the goal. Eternal life means never having to die anymore. That is the goal - overcoming death and rebirth. Reincarnation is the method and means to attain this goal. For more information on this visit my [research conclusions](#) on reincarnation.

A good understanding of reincarnation begins by understanding the ancient teachings on the subject and comparing them to what we know about NDEs. The following are teachings of the various ancient religions on reincarnation.

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2. The Resurrection of the Dead

For thousands of years, Christians believed that when a person dies their soul would sleep in the grave along with their corpse. This soul sleep continues until a time in the future known as the "last day" or also known as the "final judgment." This doctrine concerns a time when Jesus supposedly returns in the sky and clouds with the angels to awakened sleeping souls in the graves. Then all corpses will crawl out of their graves like in the movie "Night of the Living Dead." This doctrine is the orthodox Christian doctrine called "resurrection" and it is the result of a misunderstanding of the higher teachings of Jesus concerning the reincarnation of the spirit into a new body and the real resurrection which is a spiritual rebirth or "awakening" within a person already alive. The orthodox concept of resurrection as the "Night of the Living Dead" is also the result of a great schism which occurred in early Christian history concerning pre-existence and the nature of Jesus. Was he a man who became God? Was he God born as a man? The struggle was between the Church established by Paul in Rome and the remnants of the Jerusalem Church who fled to Egypt after Rome invaded Israel in 70 AD. The Roman faction rejected pre-existence and reincarnation and believed Jesus was God become man. The Jerusalem faction knew Jesus was a man who achieved the human-divine at-one-ment which is the goal of everyone to escape reincarnation cycle of birth and death and have eternal life. But Rome won the political battle and the orthodox definition of resurrection was reduced to an end-of-time "Night of the Living Dead."

Many Christians would be surprised to learn that the resurrection of corpses did not originate with Christianity or with Judaism. It originated with the [Zoroastrian religion](#) in ancient Persia (of Magi fame). During the Babylonian exile of the Jews in Old Testament times, the Jews were influenced by Zoroastrian concepts such as the resurrection of corpses, a final day of judgment, the dualism of good versus evil, the hierarchy of angels including fallen angels, and the arch rival

of God called Satan. Over time, these Zoroastrian doctrines were incorporated into the religious doctrines of Judaism. From those days forward, a foreign concept of regeneration called "resurrection" competed with the much older concept of reincarnation and the concept of Sheol - concepts that can be found in the Hebrew scriptures.

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3. Judaism and Reincarnation

The first-century Jewish historian [Flavius Josephus](#) wrote about the [Pharisees](#) being believers in reincarnation. The Pharisees were the Jewish sect which Paul belonged to before his NDE and conversion to Christianity. Josephus wrote about the Pharisees' belief that the souls of evil men are punished after death. But the souls of good men are "removed into other bodies" and they will have "power to revive and live again."

From time to time throughout Jewish history, there was a persistent belief about dead prophets returning to life through reincarnation. But the [Sadducees](#), a purist sect of Judaism, rejected the Persian concepts of resurrection and all Hellenistic influences involving reincarnation that was happening in Jesus' day. The Sadducees accepted only the orthodox Hebrew belief in Sheol. So there were a variety of influences going on in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus.

When Jesus began his ministry, many people wondered if he was the reincarnation of one of the prophets. Some people wondered the same thing concerning John the Baptist. And even Jesus affirmed to his disciples that John the Baptist was indeed the reincarnation of the prophet Elijah. Throughout his ministry, Jesus taught people about the true resurrection - a spiritual rebirth within a living person. Thus, when Jesus stated that he was the resurrection and the life, he was teaching them a radical new principle. It was a rebirth of the spirit - not into a new body - as when we are born from our mother's womb - but a rebirth of our spirit within the body we now inhabit. Jesus was distinguishing between what was already believed in those days concerning the afterlife and a new teaching concerning a spiritual change within us that can lead to liberation. He was making a distinction between "the resurrection of the body" (returning to life from physical death) and "the resurrection of the spirit" (returning to life from spiritual death). As you will soon see, this confusion concerning Jesus teachings is documented in John 3 when Jesus had to explain to Nicodemus the difference between physical rebirth and spiritual rebirth.

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4. Early Christianity and Reincarnation

The first great Father of the early Orthodox Church was [Origen](#) (185-254 AD) who was the first person since Paul to develop a system of theology around the teachings of Jesus. Origen was an ardent defender of pre-existence and reincarnation. Pre-existence is the religious concept of the soul as not being created at birth; rather the soul existed before birth in heaven or in a past life on Earth. Origen taught that pre-existence is found in Hebrew scriptures and the teachings of Jesus.

Origen was a disciple of Clement of Alexandria who was a disciple of the apostle Peter. Clement and Origen wrote about receiving secret teachings of Jesus handed down from the apostles. One of these secret teachings was the concept of physical and spiritual rebirth. The existence of secret teachings and mysteries from Jesus is recorded in the Bible. Here are some of them:

"He replied, 'The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance.'" (Matthew 13:11-12)

"I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness - the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:25-27)

"Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed." (1 Corinthians 15:51)

The doctrines of pre-existence and reincarnation existed as secret teachings of Jesus until they were declared a heresy by the Roman Church in 553 A.D at the [Second Council of Constantinople](#). It was at this time that the Roman Church aggressively destroyed competing teachings and so-called heresies within the Church. Along with the destruction of unorthodox teachings came the destruction of Jews, Gnostics, and ultimately anyone who stood in the way of the Inquisition and Crusades.

But on December, 1945, writings containing many of these [secrets of early Christianity](#) were unearthed in Upper Egypt. This area was one of the the main locations where Christians fled to when the Romans invaded Israel. It was here that these secrets were continued to be taught. Undisturbed since their concealment almost two thousand years ago, these writings of the secret teachings belonged to a early sect of Christians called [Gnostics](#) and these writings ranked in importance with the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#) which were discovered two years later. These so-called

secret teachings concerning life and death are strikingly similar to what we know about near-death experiences.

In early Christian Gnosticism, the [pneumatics](#) (from Greek "spirit") were people of the highest level of spiritual development who are fully initiated into the mysteries of Christ and are spiritually resurrected. The [hylics](#) (from Greek "matter") were people of the lowest level of spiritual development, the general public, those outside of this "[gnosis](#)" (from Greek "knowledge") taught secretly by Jesus. Those of the mid-level type of human being were called "[psychics](#)" (from Greek "soul"), who were considered "soulful", partially initiated, matter-bound beings. The pneumatics, "people of the spirit," saw themselves as having escaped the fate of the "flesh" and the material world through the way set down by Jesus. In Christian Gnostic terms, Jesus became the "[Word](#)," i.e., the "[logos](#)," who acts in the world on God's behalf and can appear in human form and through whom all things are made as divine. The Gospel of John identifies Jesus as the incarnation of this Logos.

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5. The Secret Teachings of Jesus

There are many passages in scripture where Jesus affirms the reality of reincarnation. Here we will examine some of them.

The episode in the Bible where Jesus identified John the Baptist as the reincarnation of Elijah the prophet is one of the clearest statements which Jesus made concerning reincarnation.

"For all the prophets and the law have prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who was to come." (Matthew 11:13-14)

In the above passage, Jesus clearly identifies John the Baptist as the reincarnation of Elijah the prophet. Later in Matthew's gospel Jesus reiterates it.

"And the disciples asked him, saying, 'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?'

"But he answered them and said, 'Elijah indeed is to come and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also shall the Son of Man suffer at their hand.'

"Then the disciples understood that he had spoken of John the Baptist." (Matthew 17:10-13)

In very explicit language, Jesus identified John the Baptist as the reincarnation of Elijah. Even the disciples of Jesus understood what Jesus was saying. This identification of John to be the reincarnation of Elijah is very important when it comes to Bible prophecy. By identifying the John with Elijah, Jesus identified himself as the Messiah. The Hebrew scriptures mentions specific signs that would precede the coming of the Messiah. One of them is that Elijah will return first.

"Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (Malachi 4:5)

The above Bible verse is one of the major Messianic promises from God that is found in the Bible. And these John is Elijah references clearly demonstrate the reality of reincarnation. So there are two important conclusions we can draw from this:

- 1.** The Old Testament prophesied that Elijah himself - not someone like him or someone in the same ministry as him - but Elijah himself would return before the advent of the Messiah. (Malachi 4:5)
- 2.** Jesus declared John to be Elijah when he stated that Elijah has come. (Matthew 17:10-13)

Now, based on the passages **1.** and **2.** alone, either **3.** or **4.** must be true:

- 3.** John was the reincarnation of Elijah the Prophet; therefore, reincarnation must become once again a part of Judeo-Christian theology. It also means the current concept of resurrection - the "reanimation of corpses on judgment day" - can be discarded and replaced with "the reanimation of spiritually dead LIVING people." In other words, becoming "born again," or receiving "eternal life," or becoming free from the slavery of the birth-death-rebirth cycle. or ...
- 4.** John the Baptist was not Elijah himself, meaning that Elijah himself had not returned. But if this is true, then we must conclude the following:
 - a.** The Old Testament prophecy about Elijah returning before the advent of the Messiah failed to come to pass (meaning that Biblical prophecy is fallible), **or...**
 - b.** Jesus was not the Messiah.

So based upon the above logic, only one of the following can be true:

- (1)** Reincarnation is a reality or...
- (2)** Jesus was not the Messiah or...
- (3)** Bible prophecies are not reliable.

But because Jesus' declaration of John as Elijah was overt and direct, then the only logical option is option **(1)** Reincarnation is a reality. Jesus explains in clear language that John is the reincarnation of Elijah:

"After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them.

And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus ...

"As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

"They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what 'rising from the dead' meant.

"And they asked him, 'Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?'

"Jesus replied, 'To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things.'

"Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected?"

"But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him." (Mark 9:9-13)

The passage above describes the disciples seeing the spirit of Elijah and wondering again about Elijah's role. Jesus again identifies John to be the reincarnation of Elijah.

The description of Jesus shining with light as the sun and clothes as white as the light is remarkably similar to descriptions of Jesus in many near-death accounts. This transfiguration of Jesus event in the Bible is just one of many events in the Bible that corresponds with near-death experiences.

Another point to make is that the appearance of Elijah and Moses in spirit with Jesus refutes the concept of people sleeping in graves until the last day. In other words, it refutes the concept of resurrection.

Skeptics of reincarnation like to quote the following Bible verse in an effort to refute Jesus' clear teaching of the reincarnation of Elijah as John the Baptist.

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

Skeptics claim that the above Bible verse affirms John to be merely a prophet who performed the same ministry as Elijah - not that John was actually the reincarnation of Elijah. But this is not what the verse actually says. In fact, the verse gives a perfect definition of reincarnation: the return of a person's spirit and power into another body. It is the spirit and power that reincarnates. Therefore this verse clearly states that John the Baptist had the spirit and power of Elijah. And this is exactly what reincarnation means. It does not get much clearer than this.

Although John carried the living spirit of Elijah he did not carry his conscious mind and memory. Reincarnation involves only the higher consciousness of the spirit. Because John did not have the conscious mind and past-life memories of Elijah, John denied being Elijah. With very few exceptions, nobody has a conscious memory of past lives. The following is the Bible passage that shows John denying that he is Elijah.

"They asked him, 'Then who are you? Are you Elijah?'

"He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.'

"Finally they said, 'Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?'

"John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, 'I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

"Now some Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, 'Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?'

"I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

(John 1:21-27)

Notice that the Pharisees questioning John were expecting the reincarnation of an Old Testament prophet. And John did not refute the concept of reincarnation when he stated his ignorance about having a past life as Elijah. But Jesus was not ignorant about John. Jesus knew better and said so in the plainest words possible:

"This is the one ... there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist ... And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has ears, let him hear." (Matthew 11:11-15)

Jesus revealed John to be Elijah; but John denied it. Which of the two people are right - Jesus or John? The answer should be very clear. John's denial of his own past identity as Elijah does not mean he did not have a past life as Elijah. This is especially true when Jesus claimed that John was indeed Elijah.

The following is another Bible passage which describes other people who believed John to be Elijah or some other prophet:

"Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed, because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life." (Luke 9:7-8)

Perhaps it was the appearance of Elijah at the Mount of Transfiguration that led some to believe that John was still alive even after he was killed by Herod. This would also explain the rumor going around then that Elijah was raised from the dead.

Even when we compare the physical description of John with Elijah we find a striking similarity.

John the Baptist: "John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist." (Matthew 3:4)

Elijah the prophet: "He was a man with a garment of hair and with a leather belt around his waist." (2 Kings 1:8)

The similarity between John and Elijah should not be dismissed as a coincidence. Believers of the concept of reincarnation know that personality traits can be passed on from one life to the next - even though conscious memories are not passed along.

Another interesting parallel between John and Elijah has to do with karma. The Bible describes how Elijah had the priests of Baal killed with the sword because their sacrifice failed to catch fire whereas his did. Here are the two Bible verses that describe it:

"Then Elijah commanded them, "Seize the prophets of Baal. Don't let anyone get away!" They seized them, and Elijah had them brought down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered there." (1 Kings 18:40)

"Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword." (1 Kings 19:1)

Having all the priests of Baal beheaded seems like an incredible injustice on Elijah's part. This may explain why Elijah had to pay the karmic debt for this injustice by reincarnating as John the Baptist and having his own head cut off:

"Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted and had John beheaded in the prison." (Matt. 14:6-10)

Because Elijah had people beheaded, the law of "eye for an eye" and "reaping what we sow" demanded that Elijah be beheaded. This is a good example of how those who live by the sword will die by the sword - if not in the same lifetime then in another.

The Bible does not limit the reincarnation of Elijah to John the Baptist either. The Bible suggests that another reincarnation of Elijah will occur around the time of Jesus' second coming. And not only does Elijah appear again at this time, but Moses is reincarnated as well. In the same way that John and Elijah appeared together on the Mount of Transfiguration so they will appear together at Jesus' return. Here is the Bible passage:

"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the Earth. If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies.

"This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die.

"These men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the Earth with every kind of plague as often as they want. (Revelation 11:3-6)

While this verse does not specifically identify these two witnesses as Elijah and Moses, the miraculous powers they perform suggest it is them. Just like the two witnesses in the Book of Revelation, Elijah had the power to prevent rain from occurring (1 Kings 17:1; Jam. 5:17) and Moses is shown having the power to turn water into blood and to bring plagues (Exod. 7-12). The Bible passage in Revelation describes two prophets who have these identical powers as Elijah and Moses. Is this a mere coincidence? You be the judge. But if Elijah and Moses are to appear again at the second coming of Jesus then the only realistic way for this to occur is through reincarnation.

With the appearance of Elijah and Moses at the first coming of Jesus, it is not a stretch to believe that Elijah and Moses will appear again at the second coming of Jesus. Also, the Malachi prophecy may actually be a reference to both of these incarnations of Elijah.

"Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (Malachi. 4:5)

There are two comings of Jesus to the world and it would be logical to assume that God will send Elijah at the second coming as he did at the first coming.

During his first coming, the Bible records people wondering if Jesus was the resurrection of John the Baptist or a reincarnation of Elijah or some Old Testament prophet. Here is the verse:

"When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

"They replied, 'Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.'" (Matthew 16:13-14)

First of all, in the above Bible passage Jesus actually asks his disciples the identity of the person he was in a past life. Notice that the disciples knew exactly what Jesus was talking about and their answer to Jesus referred to people who died a very long time ago. Notice also that there is no Bible passage that shows Jesus refuting the concept of reincarnation whenever the concept is brought up. Instead Jesus teaches reincarnation.

The next Bible passage shows Jesus telling his disciples that they don't know the spirit they possess. This is an important statement coming from the lips of Christ concerning one particular fact concerning reincarnation. People did not have a conscious awareness of the spirit they possess from a past life. Because of this people do not know who their spirit previously incarnated. The following passage demonstrates this:

"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?'

"But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.'

"And they went to another village." (Luke 9:54-56, KJV)

The above passage shows the disciples asking Jesus if they should call down fire upon a city just as Elijah did. Jesus responded by telling them that they don't know what spirit they have to be able to accomplish this. The spirit of Elijah can call down fire but this does not mean the disciples can.

Note: In the original text, the phrase "manner of" was not part of the above Bible verse nor in the Vulgate version. The phrase "manner of" was added at the time that the Bible was being translated into English. Without the words "manner of" in the verse it would be even more a clear reference to reincarnation. It would show Jesus telling his disciples that they "don't know what spirit they are of." However, in modern translations of the Bible this mistranslation is corrected.

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6. The Pre-Existence of the Soul

As previously mentioned, pre-existence is the doctrine that a person's soul (and spirit) existed before they were conceived. This also means that all the Bible verses referring to reincarnation also refer to pre-existence. The pre-existence of the soul naturally assumes that reincarnation is a reality. Both reincarnation and pre-existence were concepts that were common knowledge in Jesus' day. And although the Jewish doctrine of reincarnation and the Persian doctrine of resurrection was common knowledge in those days, Jesus taught a more exalted form of resurrection - a spiritual rebirth (awakening) within the body by the Spirit of God. This teaching of Jesus was one of his higher teachings which he passed on only to his closest disciples. But it was frequently misunderstood by the public - especially in later centuries when the Church of Rome yielded more political power. This new form of "resurrection" is a mystical union and at-one-ment of the human body and spirit with the divine Spirit of God. In fact, this mystical teaching of uniting the human with the divine is a very ancient teaching that has been around for thousands of years before Jesus but has existed primarily in the East. Jesus referred to this mystical process as becoming "born again of the Spirit." It is the liberation of the spirit from the cycle of birth and death. And it means eternal citizenship in heaven never to experience death again. To be "born again of water" is a reference to reincarnation (the resurrection of the spirit into a new body).

The pre-existence of the soul was a secret teaching held by early Christians until it was [condemned by the Roman Church in 553 A.D.](#), perhaps because it implied reincarnation spirit. The following Bible verses describes the pre-existence of souls.

"He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish in his sight and love." (Ephesians 1:4)

The above Bible verse states how God knew his chosen people before the world was created. This implies that these chosen people existed before the world began. Someone may object to this interpretation by stating that these chosen people existed only as a thought in the Mind of God. But even if these chosen people existed only as a thought in the Mind of God it does not negate pre-existence. After all, there may be no difference between being a thought in the Mind of God and pre-existing as a soul. They are probably the same thing.

Another Bible passage supporting pre-existence can be found in the Book of Jeremiah. The author of this book uses the metaphor of a potter (God) and clay (flesh) to describe how God creates, destroys and recreates (reincarnation) better pots (people). This perfection process that humans undergo is an excellent description pre-existence and reincarnation. The purpose for reincarnation is instruction and perfection. The following is the passage in Jeremiah:

"This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, 'Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message.'

"So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me, 'O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?' declares the Lord."
(Jeremiah 18:1-6)

For those skeptics who doubt this interpretation refers to reincarnation, Paul uses this same metaphor to describe how God is like a potter who can prefer one pot of clay over another - even before they were created:

"Just as it is written: 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.' What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: 'I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the Earth.'"

"Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. One of you will say to me: 'Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?' But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'"

"Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use? What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath - prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory." (Romans 9:13-24)

By comparing the sovereignty of God over humans with the sovereignty that a potter has with clay, Paul is affirming the pre-existence of Jacob and Esau. The central point Paul is making is that God created Esau as an object of wrath because of his so-called "hatred" for him before he was even born. This is also a good analogy when it is applied to the divine justice of God. God "hated" Esau because of a past incarnation that displeased God which would explain why God had him reincarnated as an object of wrath. The reverse of this is the case of Jacob. Because he led a previous life that pleased God he was reincarnated as an object of his mercy. Therefore this metaphor is rich with hidden knowledge concerning divine justice, the sovereignty of God, pre-existence, reincarnation, predestination, election, and free will. The following is another Bible verse supporting pre-existence.

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" (John 8:58)

The above Bible verse shows Jesus telling his critics that he existed before Abraham was even born. This would be impossible unless Jesus pre-existed before he was born. And because Jesus had a human nature along with a divine nature, it does not take a leap of faith to believe that all humans pre-existed. The fact that Jesus taught reincarnation is reason enough to assume that all humans pre-existed.

But if a person assumes that pre-existence and reincarnation are false doctrines then they must explain why there is such an incredible amount of inequities and injustices in life. We can see all over the world how some people are born into rich families with excellent health, provided the best education, live in palatial estates, and many other favorable conditions. On the other hand, some people are born in extreme poverty, with severe handicaps, uneducated, destitute, and many other unfavorable conditions. Without pre-existence and reincarnation this apparent inequity and injustice between people might make a person conclude that God is extremely unjust. Without pre-existence and reincarnation how are we to explain this? This very question was asked of Jesus by his disciples in the Bible passage below:

"And as he was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who has sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?'

"Jesus answered, 'Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents, but the works of God were to be made manifest in him.' (John 9:1-3)

The disciples asked Jesus if the man committed a sin that caused him to be born blind. Given the fact that the man was blind since birth, this is an unusual question to ask unless pre-existence and reincarnation were a fact. How can a man sin before he is even born? The only conceivable answer to this question is a sin that was committed in a past life. And although Jesus stated that the reason the man was born blind was to manifest the works of God and not because of sin, this does not logically imply that everyone who is born in unfavorable circumstances are not born that way because of sin from a past life; unless you believe that all people who are born blind are born that way for the purpose of manifesting the work of God. Just the fact that this blind man and his circumstances are described in the Bible may be what Jesus was referring to concerning his manifesting the works of God.

When this same blind man was brought before the Pharisees, they rejected the blind man's testimony because they believed he sinned before he was even born:

"You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" (John 9:34 NAS)

This shows that even the Pharisees believed it is possible to sin before you are born and this implies pre-existence and reincarnation.

It should also be pointed out that Jesus did nothing to dispel or correct the idea that the disciples (and the Pharisees) believed in the possibility of sinning before being born. And because Jesus did not correct the implication of pre-existent sin, we can assume that pre-existence is certainly a possibility.

The following Bible verse also supports pre-existence:

"Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." (Psalm 51:5)

Unless pre-existence and reincarnation are true, the above Bible verse is completely absurd.

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7. Divine Justice Implies Reincarnation

According to the Bible, divine justice demands that sinners pay for their own sins. Jesus taught this when he declared:

"All who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:52)

"If anyone slays with the sword, with the sword must he be slain." (Revelation 13:10)

Common sense should tell us that everyone who lives by the sword (a life of crime for example) do not always die by the sword. A vast multitude of people throughout history have gotten away with their crimes. In fact, this is another apparent injustice that some people even use to deny the very existence of God. This statement from Jesus is completely absurd and ignorant unless reincarnation is true. For the divine justice that Jesus refers to as being true, people who don't pay for their sins in their life must pay for them in a future life. This fact also applies to the man born blind.

Jesus also taught this law of divine justice in his parables:

"In anger his master turned him over to the jailers until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart." (Matthew 18: 34-35)

This law of divine justice was also taught by Paul:

"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A person reaps what he sows."
(Galatians 6:7)

This is the law of divine justice is also found in the Old Testament:

"Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise." (Exodus 21:24-25)

This law of divine justice is practically a universal religious concept. In eastern religions, this law of div justice is known as [karma](#). This law of divine justice is equal to the concept of reincarnation. This law of living by the sword and dying by the sword is the principle of reincarnation. In other words, this law of divine justice is the law of reincarnation.

Only reincarnation can satisfy the divine justice of reaping what we sow, an eye for an eye, live by the sword and die by the sword. This universal law of God explains why some people are born under favorable conditions and others are born under unfavorable conditions. It is the very mechanics of birth and rebirth. Reincarnation is the missing link - the long lost doctrine - the key to understanding the secret and mystical teachings of Jesus.

This law of God is the key to the following parable of Jesus:

"Again, it [the kingdom of heaven] will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability."
(Matthew 25:14-15)

This idea that God gives people varying amounts of abilities at birth - each according to his ability - is the heart of reincarnation and the law of divine justice. The great Church Father Origen used this very parable to teach pre-existence and reincarnation.

"The soul has neither beginning nor end ... [They] come into this world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of their previous lives." (Origen, De Principiis)

When Origen used the parable of the talents to refer to reincarnation and pre-existence he was not introducing some foreign religious concept into the Christian religion. He was merely expressing what is described throughout the Bible and believed by early Christians to be one of the secret teachings of Jesus.

Some early Christian sects not only believed that Jesus paid the debt of divine justice for Adam's original sin, they also believed that Adam was one of many reincarnations of Jesus. These early Christian sects were called the [Ebionites](#), the [Elkasaites](#) and the [Nazarites](#). Even the concept of Jesus paying the debt from Adam's sin makes more sense if reincarnation is assumed to be true.

This law of divine justice is so universal that it even applies to science. It is Isaac Newton's law of cause and effect. It is also known as a law in physics: For every action there is an equal and opposing reaction and what goes up must come down. In fact, this law of divine justice is the very law of nature. Breaking the law of divine justice is very similar to breaking the law of gravity. The result is impersonal. Both are a transgression of the law of nature. Because of this we cannot blame God for the apparent injustices that happen to us. Like the law of gravity, if we go against this law of divine justice it is completely our fault and due to our ignorance of divine justice.

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8. The Dead Will Inherit the Earth

In the [Sermon on the Mount](#) Jesus taught the following principle:

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the Earth." (Matthew 5:5)

This principle begs the question: When will the meek inherit the Earth? For millions of years it has been the aggressive and the strong who have ruled the Earth. In this world the law of evolution (another principle of reincarnation) applies and only the fittest and aggressive survive - certainly not those who are meek. This promise that the meek will inherit the Earth can only be fulfilled in future reincarnation. It means the meek will eventually rule the world when they reincarnate into meek rulers of the world - a promise that can only be fulfilled at another time.

The following Bible passage is a promise that Jesus makes to those who have forsaken everything to follow him:

"No one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or wife or children or land for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age - homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields ... and in the age to come, eternal life." (Mark 10:29-30)

Without reincarnation and pre-existence, this promise of Jesus is completely ludicrous because it would be impossible to happen. For example, it would mean that those who leave their parents for the sake of Christ will receive even more parents in the age to come. And those who leave their children for the sake of Christ will receive even more children in the age to come. It is evident that this promise by Jesus intends to be fulfilled in a future life on Earth.

In the Book of Revelation there is a verse that only makes sense if reincarnation is a fact:

"Look he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him." (Revelation 1:7)

The above Bible verse reveals an astonishing fact about the second coming of Jesus. The people who killed Jesus will be alive and living on Earth when Jesus returns. Given the fact that the people who killed Jesus have been dead for thousands of years, the only possible way that this prophecy can be fulfilled is through the killers reincarnating before Jesus returns.

Jesus gave another prophecy about the second coming that can be fulfilled only if reincarnation is a fact. The prophecy concerns those people who were present when Jesus gave this prophecy and refers to the signs heralding the return of Jesus.

"I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened." (Matthew 24:34)

Jesus told the followers around him that they would be alive on Earth when all the signs of the times have been fulfilled. Without reincarnation this prophecy would be a false prophecy. In fact, this prophecy was responsible for some followers of Jesus to believe that the second coming would occur in their lifetime or that it had already happened. The historical evidence shows how disappointing it was for some of people when the apostles died off and the hopes for an imminent return of Christ was dashed.

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9. A Spiritual Resurrection

One of the most controversial passages of scripture dealing with the doctrine of reincarnation is the conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus, a Pharisee who followed Jesus. The controversy with Nicodemus had to do with Jesus' teachings of becoming "born again of the Spirit" and what this new concept means. Jesus used this phrase to explain the difference between bodily "resurrection" and his new teaching of spiritual "resurrection." Jesus explains to Nicodemus:

"I tell you a truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." (John 3:3)

Jesus teaches Nicodemus how the way to the kingdom of God within is through the spiritual regeneration of the Holy Spirit. As a Pharisee, Nicodemus was aware that people are reborn into the world through reincarnation; but he couldn't understand how people are born into the kingdom of God through spiritual rebirth. This confusion becomes apparent with Nicodemus' next statement:

"How can a person be born when he is old? Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" (John 3:4)

Jesus then explains to Nicodemus the difference between bodily rebirth (i.e., being "born of water," reincarnation) and spiritual rebirth (i.e., being "born of the Spirit," the true resurrection):

"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again." The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John 3:5-8)

Here Jesus uses the metaphor of the "wind" to teach Nicodemus the nature of the Holy Spirit and how people are "born of water" and "born of the Spirit." Jesus affirms how nobody can see the Holy Spirit, comes it from or where it goes.

The Bible contains many references to "resurrection" not as a physical event but as a spiritual event. Here are some of them:

"This is why it is said: 'Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.'" (Ephesians 5:14)

Paul uses the concept of resurrection to describe spiritual rebirth - not physical rebirth.

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:22-24)

Here, Paul is even more explicit when using the concept of resurrection to describe spiritual rebirth and not physical rebirth. The same is true for the following verses:

"In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."
(Romans 6:11)

"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved."
(Ephesians 2:4-5)

"In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ." (Colossians 2:11-13)

"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin - because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."
(Romans 6:3-11)

The writers of the Bible not only use bodily death as a metaphor for spiritual rebirth, they also use bodily birth as a metaphor for spiritual rebirth. Here are some examples:

"I tell you a truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." (John 3:3)

"He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created." (James 1:18)

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ..." (1 Peter 1:3)

"If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him." (1 John 2:29)

"Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7)

"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death." (1 John 3:14)

"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31)

So now we have these three definitions of bodily transformation:

1. Resuscitation: The restoration of life to a physically dead body
2. Resurrection: The giving of spiritual life to a spiritually dead but physically alive person
3. Reincarnation: The rebirth of the spirit of a dead person into the body of a fetus

As previously mentioned, reincarnation was an established belief in the days of Jesus. The Persian concept of resurrection, while held by some Jews, was considered a foreign doctrine to the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. When Jesus began resurrecting people from the dead (as modern physicians do today) this created quite a stir in Israel as the gospels testify. This becomes evident during an event in the gospels when Jesus performed one of his greatest miracles - the bodily resurrection of Lazarus. Here is the passage:

"Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'

"Martha answered, 'I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.'

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'" (John 11:23-26)

In this passage, Jesus told Martha that Lazarus will "rise again" - a reference to the rebirth of the spirit in a new body (i.e., reincarnation). Martha then expressed the confusion in those days of believing that "rising again at the last day" refers to corpses coming out of their graves on Judgment Day. Jesus corrected her by revealing to her the real meaning of "resurrection" - that it doesn't involve the dead, but rather the living. By stating, "I am the resurrection and the life" Jesus was telling her that he is the living example of the true resurrection which is of the spirit - not the body. He was teaching them that they don't have to wait until after death or until "Judgment Day" to have this new life. To emphasize his point, he raised Lazarus from bodily death.

Throughout the gospels, Jesus teaches about the spiritual resurrection of the living and the spiritual reincarnation of the dead. In Luke 20:27-38, the Sadducees, who did not believe in either one, tested Jesus by posing a hypothetical which they believed disproved the concept of an afterlife. Jesus answered their hypothetical by refuting their assumption that resurrection meant "soul sleep" until Judgment Day. He did this by telling them about the resurrection of the spirit of the living. The passage is as follows:

"Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.

"'Teacher,' they said, 'Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife

but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. The second and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. Finally, the woman died too. Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?'

"Jesus replied, 'The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection. But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.'" (Luke 20:27-38)

The Sadducees wanted to know which brother would be married to the woman when their corpses are resurrected at the Last Judgment. The Sadducees argument assumes the Persian form of resurrection. Jesus corrected them by telling them that bodily death means becoming like the angels. In other words, they are alive - not asleep or non-existent. Jesus' association of death with becoming "like the angels" is a good way to refute the Sadducees who didn't even believe in angels. Death means the soul leaves the corpse and returns to heaven with the possibility of returning.

Jesus also said, "They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection." This is a good description of how the soul returns to heaven after death with the possibility of reincarnating and becoming a child again. Jesus then corrected the Sadducees' misunderstanding of the afterlife by telling them that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. These words of Jesus are the key to his teachings. People do not have to wait until after death or wait for a revival after death to attain liberation from death. It can be attained in life. In fact, as we will see later, it must be attained in physical life - this spiritual "resurrection" - or the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth will continue. In the gospels, Jesus expressed a special interest for children. Jesus' reference to the "children of the resurrection" may be better understood when comparing it with the following passage:

"And he said: 'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.'" (Matthew 18:3-5)

"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven." (Matthew 18:10)

As for children having "angels in heaven," the word "angels" is a good metaphor for "souls" in general and how children are "closer to the Source" than are adults.

When Jesus taught this principle of human beings having "angels in heaven," he may have been expressing a concept that was well-known in his day - a concept found in the he Book of Enoch.

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the Earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." (Genesis 28:12)

This vision of a passageway from Earth to heaven appears in many near-death experiences and has been described as a tunnel, a cylinder, a funnel, a tube, a vortex, and other descriptions. In near-death experiences, it is the souls of humans that can be seen ascending and descending through this passageway. Here is an example:

"I saw spirits going to and from the Earth and the city [in the heavens]. I could tell the development of the spirits going to and from by the energy they emanated. I could see that animals came to and from Earth just like humans do. I could see many spirits leave Earth with guides and could see spirits returning to Earth without guides. The being told me that some of the spirits passing were the ones that were doing the work with humans on Earth. I could make out the type of spirits that were doing the work and the spirits that were coming to the great city to become replenished to eventually go back to Earth to experience and further evolve. I could feel the emotions of the ones coming back for replenishment. I could feel that some of them were sad, beaten and scared, much like I felt before my being came to me." ([David Oakford](#))

In both Jacob's dream and David Oakford's near-death experience, spirits can be seen ascending up the ladder and then descending the ladder for reincarnation. Because the traditional concept of resurrection involves the soul sleeping until the time of the end and not being active, the conclusion is that bodily resurrection is false because it is refuted by the Book of Enoch, Jacob's dream of a passageway where souls return and leave heaven, the teachings of Jesus, and the multitude of near-death experiences that prove the soul journeys to heaven and returns to incarnate.

This concept is even found in the Book of Revelation. Jesus told the believers of the Church of Philadelphia that when they overcome the world they will never again have to leave heaven.

"He who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it." (Revelation 3:12)

This is a clear statement affirming the pre-existence of the soul and its corresponding concept - reincarnation. The assumption here is that people who do not overcome the world will have to leave this heavenly temple and return to Earth.

Believing in the concept of bodily resurrection can be dangerous. One particular well-known near-death experience revealed exactly how dangerous it is to believe in "[soul sleep](#)." The following is a portion from the account of Dr. George Ritchie's near-death experience when he was given a guided tour of the afterlife by Jesus:

"One of the places we observed seemed to be a receiving station. Beings would arrive here oftentimes in a deep hypnotic sleep. I call it hypnotic because I realized they had put themselves in this state by their beliefs. Here were what I would call angels working with them trying to arouse them and help them realize God is truly a God of the living and that they did not have to lie around sleeping until Gabriel or someone came along blowing on a horn." ([Dr. George Ritchie](#))

The dangers of believing in sleeping in graves until the resurrection is also affirmed by others near-death experiencers:

"Things change little in the hereafter. Suppose we have the fixed idea that we'll sleep till the resurrection of the body. Then suppose there isn't a resurrection of the body. We might sleep a very long time." ([Arthur Yensen](#))

"Those that died believing they would sleep until awakened by Gabriel, reported a black darkness, a feeling of being trapped and alone, stranded. What I've finally come to realize is we truly and most literally create our own realities. When we die, the reality we created is where we will live and what we will become." ([P.M.H. Atwater](#))

"If you don't believe in God or an afterlife, you will probably be kept in a sleep state for the first two to three day period. You will wake up in a beautiful meadow or some other calm and peaceful place where you can reconcile the transition from the death state to the continuous life. You are given teachings in the hope that you do not refuse to believe that you are dead." ([Betty Bethards](#))

"He expects to find nothing when he passes through the door called "death", and for a long time that is usually what he finds - nothing. He is in a state like unto death for a goodly while, until at last something arouses him." ([Ruth Montgomery](#))

Concerning entering and leaving heaven, Jesus gave an interesting insight when he rebuked the Pharisees for rejecting the message of John the Baptist while the prostitutes and tax collectors did not:

"Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did.'" (Matthew 21:32)

In this passage Jesus described two different groups of people entering heaven at different times. This statement is a clear refutation of the resurrection of souls at the end of time. Resurrection assumes that everyone will enter heaven at the same time. Reincarnation assumes that everyone enters heaven at the moment of death. For this reason, the only way for these tax collectors and prostitutes can enter heaven before the Pharisees is through the process of reincarnation.

Some Bible verses do appear to suggest that corpses are resurrected at the end of time. Here is one of them:

"And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:39-44)

By raising several people from the dead and teaching the correct concept of resurrection, Jesus demonstrated that there is no final resurrection of corpses at the end of time. So when Jesus referred to people being "raised up at the last day" he must be using it in a spiritual sense rather than a literal sense. For example, it is very common in near-death experiences for Jesus to appear and help people rise to heaven. The idea of a literal 24 hour time period when Jesus will judge the dead can be refuted with the following Bible verses:

"With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day." (2 Peter 3:8-9)

Using the above definition, it is possible that we may already be living in the "day of Judgment." Perhaps this is the correct interpretation of the following passage:

"In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Whether the "day of salvation," the "day of judgment," the "day of the Lord," the "end of days," and the "day of death" are all references to the same day is anyone's guess. Nevertheless, near-death experiences and early Christian and Buddhist writings suggest that "Judgment Day" is the day of death. The following passage refers to this time of judgment:

"For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous ... This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ." (Romans 2:12-16)

Because many people in the Bible were declared righteous during their life and did not have to wait until the end of days, the conclusion is that people don't have to wait until the end of days for judgment.

"For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'" (Romans 1:17)

Also, the Bible describes many instances where God judged entire nations. There are also many instances in the Bible where people do not wait until a Judgment Day to enter heaven. And finally, the fact that multitudes of people who had a near-death experience describes being judged by God after death is strong testimony that "Judgment Day" when the dead are "raised" is actually the day of death.

Concerning other Bible verses that refer to reincarnation, the following passage is a clear statement:

"All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on Earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country - a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them." (Hebrews 11:13-16)

The above passage describes people who had an opportunity to return to Earth after death. This could only come about through reincarnation. Continuing on:

"Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection." (Hebrews 11:32-35)

The above passage describes women receiving their dead through reincarnation which is the only method this can happen. Bodily resurrection can only happen through a miracle or at the end of time on Judgment Day according to the Persian concept of resurrection. But because this passage refers to an event in the past, then this cannot be a reference to a future "Judgment Day" when corpses crawl out of graves. The passage also mentions people refusing to die so they can live longer to do good works and obtain more favorable conditions in the next life.

The verse below from the Book of James is one of the clearest references to reincarnation in the Bible:

"And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell." (James 3:6, ASV)

The phrase "wheel of nature" is mistranslated in other versions of the Bible as "the whole course of life." But James actually uses the phrase "trochos tes geneleos" which had a special meaning in those days. It literally means the "wheel of nature." By using this phrase, James gave this statement a specific technical reference to reincarnation (full references in the commentaries of Mayor and W. Bauer). The revolution of the wheel symbolizes the cycle of successive lives. The comparison of life to a wheel and the symbol of the wheel itself was and is a common symbol in many religions and civilizations referring to reincarnation. According to Flavius Josephus, the Jewish temple at Jerusalem had the wheel of the zodiac inlaid in its floor. The wheel of the zodiac is mentioned in the Talmud and even in the Bible ([Job 38:32](#)) (See Hebrew translation of "[constellation](#)"). The wheel is also related to the mystical wheel of fortune which is another reference to reincarnation. For thousands of years, orthodox Jews have been believers in reincarnation and their scriptures, the Zohar, is a book of great authority among orthodox Jews. It states the following:

"All souls come in reincarnation (literally "wheeling") and humans don't know the ways of the Lord and how the Scales stand and how people are judged every day and time. How the souls are judged before entering this world and how they are judged after leaving it" (Zohar, Mishpatim 32)

The verse in James referring to the "wheel of nature" is stating how harsh the consequences can be when words are used inappropriately. While on the cycle of life, peoples' own words can condemn them. It can set their whole life on fire. It can cause them to cycle through the fire of hell. It can have consequences in their next cycle of life as well.

Another Old Testament verse describes this cycle of nature:

"Generations come and generations go, but the Earth remains forever. The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again ... What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:4-9)

The [Jewish Kabbalists](#) interpreted this verse to mean a generation dies and subsequently returns through reincarnation.

Continuing on in this passage from Ecclesiastes, the writer makes a reference to the reincarnation concept of a "veil" that causes people to not remember their past lives.

"Is there anything of which one can say, 'Look! This is something new?' It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time. There is no remembrance of men of old, and even those who are yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow." (Ecclesiastes 1:7-11)

A passage in Isaiah uses the metaphor of Jerusalem as a mother feeding her babies which can be interpreted as people returning to Jerusalem as infants:

"Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her. For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts; you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance." (Isaiah 66:9-11)

The following verse in Lamentations destroys the concept of eternal damnation. Because of this, the idea of people having only one chance at salvation (i.e., one lifetime), as in the concept of resurrection, can be discarded. The only logical meaning is reincarnation.

"For men are not cast off by the Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love." (Lamentations. 3:31-32)

In the Book of Amos, an excellent reference to reincarnation can be found. It describes God taking the dead to heaven then bringing them back to Earth.

"Though they dig down to the depths of the grave, from there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to the heavens, from there I will bring them down." (Amos 9:2)

In the Book of Job, Job wonders if he will live again after death:

"If a person dies will he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait for my renewal to come." (Job 14:14)

Job asks if there is life after death. He answers his own question by stating that he will live again when he is renewed. According to the Hebrew dictionary, the word translated "renewal" is chaliyphah (khal-ee-faw). Its meaning is: (1) a change, change of garments, replacement (2) changing, varying course of life (3) relays (4) relief from death. In my opinion, this definition fits the concept of reincarnation than it does resurrection.

In the Book of Psalm, David rejoices that he will be rescued after death:

"Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." (Psalm 16:9-11)

The word "grave" in the above passage is an English mistranslation of the Hebrew word "Sheol," the Hebrew abode of the dead - a shadowy non-world beyond hope, beyond feeling, and beyond the presence of God. The Hebrews spoke of going to Sheol with dread. This passage refers to David being rescued from Sheol.

The next passage refers to prisoners in chains and in the darkness which is another reference to Sheol. This same idea can be found in 1 Peter 3:18-20 which is also provided below. The Psalm passage refers to prisoners being freed in the past tense which rules out the resurrection at the end of time. For this reason it is suggestive of reincarnation.

"Some sat in darkness and the deepest gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains, for they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High. So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He brought them out of darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains." (Psalm 107:10-14)

"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago..." (1 Peter 3:18-20)

The reference to imprisoned spirits whom Jesus freed from the "prison" of Sheol is incompatible with a resurrection at the end of time but is a good reference to reincarnation. This liberation of spirits from Sheol is mentioned several times in the Bible:

"When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."
(Ephesians 4:8)

In another letter by Peter, he referred again to these imprisoned spirits:

"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) - if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment." (2 Peter 2:4-9)

Peter is referring to angels and souls who were held in "prison" until the Judgment Day. These verses by David, Peter and Paul, all refer to the same event: human souls being liberated from hell. And because this freeing of souls is past tense in the Ephesians verse, this means it has already occurred. The conclusion is that Judgment Day for these souls already occurred. This too is incompatible with resurrection. Going a step further, the concept of human souls leaving heaven and being put in "prison" is a Christian Gnostic reference to the soul being incarnated into the flesh.

Here is another passage concerning being freed from prison coming from a parable of Jesus that is suggestive of reincarnation:

"Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may

hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny." (Matthew 5:25-26)

Concerning this passage, the interesting aspect to it is that it states a person will not get out of prison until the debt has been paid. In the parables of Christ, Jesus uses the word "prison" as a metaphor for "Sheol" or "hell." This reference of getting out of prison suggests that people are able to get out of hell when their debt has been paid. Since people are able to get out of hell, one wonders where they would go. It would be reasonable to assume that they would be raised to life through the process of reincarnation. Being able to get out of hell is also a good case against eternal damnation.

The author of the Book of Jude also refers to these souls in "prison" who were freed by Jesus:

"And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home - these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great day." (Jude 6)

The writer of the Book of Jude incorporates heavy Christian Gnostic concepts which show the writer was a Christian Gnostic. Gnostics viewed the human soul as being pre-existent, incarnating into a "prison" of flesh, and being subject to reincarnation. Gnostics believed humans were identical to angels and whose origin was heaven. This becomes even more apparent later in the Book of Jude when the writer actually quotes from a Gnostic book called the Book of Enoch - a Hebrew book about the heavenly origin of the soul:

"Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men, 'See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.'" (Jude 14-15)

The Book of Enoch was a part of Hebrew scripture which was accepted as canon in Jesus' day. It is very likely that, as a rabbi, Jesus himself was familiar with this book. The fate of this book as canon came hundreds of years later when a group of bishops decided the book was heretical. For this reason it wasn't included in the New Testament even though the New Testament itself quotes from it.

The idea of Jesus going to hell to free souls can be found in another Bible passage:

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of

Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth." (Matthew 12:40)

Jesus' crucifixion is compared to the Hebrew myth of Jonah. According to the myth, Jonah was swallowed by a whale and lived in its belly for three days until being spit out. Because it is impossible for such a thing to happen, like other Hebrew myths, there is a higher spiritual interpretation to it. This myth was also not limited to the Hebrews and has astrological and spiritual meaning. The Semitic translation for the name "Jonah" is "sun". This international myth refers to the sun as it "dies" for three days on December 22nd, the winter solstice, when it stops in its movement south, to be "born again" or "resurrected" on December 25th, when it resumes its movement north. Because Jesus himself referred to this myth when referring to his coming afterlife journey (see the previous passage), it is worth examining the myth as described in the Book of Jonah:

"From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God.

"He said: 'In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry. You hurled me into the deep, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. I said, 'I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.'"

"The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the Earth beneath barred me in forever. But you brought my life up from the pit [Sheol], O Lord my God."
(Jonah 2:1-6)

We can also understand how the myth of Jonah is a metaphor for the spirit rising to heaven after death as the sun rises after the winter solstice. This cannot be a reference to resurrection and "soul sleep" until resurrection day. It can only correspond with reincarnation.

A passage in Matthew involves Jesus explaining why an old ritual is not performed by his disciples:

"Then John's disciples came and asked him, 'How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?'

"Jesus answered, 'How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast. No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.'" (Matthew 9:14-17)

The disciples of John the Baptist asked Jesus why his disciples don't practice the ritual of fasting. Jesus answered with a metaphor of pouring new wine in old wineskins. Jesus is using his disciples as a metaphor for "new wine" which shouldn't be put into "old wineskins" (i.e., the old practice the ritual of fasting). Although these words of Jesus were used to describe the practice of fasting, they can also be applied to resurrection. Resurrection is like putting "new wine" (i.e., the spirit) into "old wineskins" (i.e., the corpse). It is not a good idea.

And finally, the verse below is often used to refute reincarnation.

"Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:27)

This verse is used to show that humans die only once, thereby supporting resurrection and refuting reincarnation. But if this verse affirms people are only allowed a single death, then this itself excludes many people of the Bible. All of the people in the Bible who were "raised from the dead" experienced death more than once (with the exception of Jesus). Other people in the Bible such as Enoch, Elijah and Melchizedek did not even die at all. But most convincing of all, the apostle Paul himself died more than one as recorded in his second letter to the Corinthians:

"I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know - God knows. And I know that this person - whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows - was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that humans are not permitted to tell." (2 Corinthians 12:1-4)

Paul uses the Greek idiom "I know a person" which means that he was humbly speaking about himself. He explained that he didn't know if he was taken up in his body or in his spirit, but he was in paradise ("the third heaven") one of the many Christian Gnostic heavens in the afterlife hierarchy. This near-death experience that Paul had cannot positively be identified with a recorded event in Paul's career because his letters describe many times he may have died. It is probable that Paul had his death experience when he was stoned and left for dead (Acts

14:19,20). The reason that Paul related this incident to the Corinthians was to establish his authority as an apostle to them.

This verse in James does affirm a one body/one death reality. But because resurrection and near-death experiences are defined as the reanimation of the same body, then this subjects the person to another death including the so-called "second death" as described in Revelation 2:11.

Reincarnation is defined as the permanent death of the body and the soul incarnating into a different body. This satisfies the one body/one death requirement of this verse in James. For this reason, Heb. 9:27 refutes resurrection and not reincarnation.

Due to the [condemnation of pre-existence \(and reincarnation\) by church authorities](#) in 553 A.D., reincarnation became an enemy concept to the Judeo-Christian West. The reason reincarnation was declared heresy was given by Gregory, the Bishop of Nyssa. The five reasons he gave were:

1. It seems to minimize Christian salvation.
2. It is in conflict with the resurrection of the body.
3. It creates an unnatural separation between body and soul.
4. It is built on a much too speculative use of Christian scriptures.
5. There is no recollection of previous lives.

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10. Conclusion

This defense of the doctrine of reincarnation as an important part of the Judeo-Christian religion leads to the following conclusions:

1. The religious concept of a massive worldwide reanimation of corpses at the end of time is a foreign concept originating from ancient Persia.
2. A massive worldwide reanimation of corpses seems bizarre, unnatural, and repulsive.
3. The few instances recorded in the Bible where corpses were reanimated were miracles. Doctors today bring people back from the dead with modern technology.
4. Reincarnation was widely believed by the people of Israel in the days of Jesus and by people all around the world.

5. All Hebrew and Christian scriptures support reincarnation: the Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Christian Gnostic gospels, the Torah, the Hebrew Bible, the Apocrypha, the Kabbalah and Zohar.
6. Many of the Biblical references to "resurrection" refer to spiritual regeneration while already physically alive instead of the reanimation of corpses on the so-called "Last Day."
7. Reincarnation is the rebirth of a person's spirit into a new body to be born again as an infant. Resurrection is the "spiritual awakening" of a living person's spirit by the power of the Holy Spirit.
8. The Bible records Jesus himself teaching reincarnation to his followers.
9. Early Christians in Jerusalem believed in reincarnation and taught it until it was declared a heresy by the Church of Rome.
10. Reincarnation has been a tenet in Orthodox Judaism for thousands of years and continues to this day.
11. The concept of reincarnation is supported by many near-death experiences including those where Jesus appears.
12. Reincarnation is a doctrine which can be accepted by every follower of Christ and should be a part of orthodox Christian doctrine.