



Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse

Literature, supporting the study (on Sunday, November **19**, 2023)
of the lecture of Joop Smits (on Sunday, November **12**, 2023)

Series: **Becoming familiar with the cycle of life and death**
Lecture: **Can we recognize the process of reincarnation?**

Gottfried de Purucker – ‘Arguments for Reincarnation’

Studies in Occult Philosophy, pp. 478-479

Free download of the original edition of the book:

<https://blavatskyhouse.org/reading/gottfried-de-purucker/golden-precepts/>

Arguments for Reincarnation

I was talking today to a clergyman on the subject of Reincarnation, which he did not believe in, of course. How could I convince him that I am right?

I don't know! In my own work, many people ask me questions and I have found that the best way to convince them that I am right is to make the questioner himself or herself think that he has given me a very difficult question. Then you can lead him on, at least I do so, to explain just what he means by that question. As, for instance, lead him on to explain what he means by his terms; and in a very little while he is tangled up in definitions and diffuseness or incoherent details; he then hardly knows what he himself means, and is less convinced than before and is more ready to listen to what you have to say. If you have truth to give, there is your opportunity to point out – that is, if you understand it yourself – that the questioner, in thus exposing his ignorance of the idea has not only helped himself to clarify his mind through analysis of his thoughts, but has also shown to himself that he has not understood the logical elements of his own question.

As a matter of fact, most people do not think clearly, and some don't seem to think at all. It is obvious that a Christian questioner you would have to treat in one way, and an agnostic in another way, and a Hindu yogi in a third way, etc. Success in answering all questions, I believe, arises from first making the questioner think for himself, and secondly and coincidentally giving him new points of view to think about.

What are some good clinching arguments for Reincarnation?

Many, to my mind. Each argument should be according to the questioner. What might not convince a Roman Catholic or a Methodist, might appeal to some one who is an Atheist. When that question is put to me, realizing the difficulty of giving a brief and lucid answer, I in my turn begin to ask questions after the Socratic method, and I say: What do you understand Reincarnation to be?, and then my questioner begins to define what he understands or misunderstands by the term. There is my chance to correct and to instruct. In other words, instead of answering directly, I often take a round-about way, a psychological method of treating the different minds that come to me with questions; and by questioning my questioner, I make my questioner think for himself, clarify his own ideas, until, little by little, after talking with him, he realizes that Reincarnation is at least interesting to think about, and that is the first step.

I do not think that there is any definite, brief, conclusive answer to the question: What is an absolute proof of Reincarnation? There are many perfectly true answers that might be given. For instance: Why are we here? By chance? Then rigidly pursue that line of thought. There is no chance. We are here because it is Nature's working which has put us here, Nature working always according to law and order. This means a chain of causation stretching far back into the past. If we are men now, we are so merely as the present end of a chain of causes and of effects; and the causes producing consequences, 'Karman' in other words – the Doctrine of Consequences – can produce only what is innate in that chain itself. I mean, if there be a chain of consequences which, if led to its successful conclusion, will culminate in an electric light, it is obvious that this identic chain of consequences if led to its successful conclusion will not culminate in anything else than an electric light. Follow along this line, and make your questioner think for himself. Then go on, as Socrates did, step by step; and in a little while he will begin to argue with you, and possibly will even show you, of his own instance, some excellently good proofs of reimpodiment or rebirth.

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