

Mysteries of death, after-life and soul's return.

by Gilbert N. Holloway.

Midway through the 20th century, author and philosopher Gilbert N. Holloway wrote many monographs, about esoteric subjects of great interest to many of his loyal readers.

Today, we are happy to reproduce his typed manuscripts, in ebook format, for readers across the universe.

=====

In more recent times, Holloway's cosmic realm theory has been developed much further, giving us some PRACTICAL knowledge, about the "Harmony of the Spheres."

Such insight includes, the development of accurate timing tools for events in our daily lives, like trading the stockmarket or commodities markets.

To learn more about astrotrading tools, just go to:

<http://authorsden.com/ae/mytitles.asp?AuthorID=11344>

Enjoy the monograph.

paul yogi nipperess

<http://easy-trading-tools.00cd.com>

MYSTERIES OF DEATH, THE AFTER-LIFE AND THE SOUL'S RETURN

INCLUDING

1. IDEAS OF IMMORTALITY
2. REINCARNATION and KARMA
3. ORIGIN OF SELF
4. CYCLES OF REBIRTH
5. THE ULTIMATE GOAL
6. OUR CELLULAR UNIVERSE
7. THE COSMIC REALM
8. LIFE AFTER DEATH
9. SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS
10. DOES DEATH CHANGE US?
11. EVOLUTION OF SELFHOOD
12. REUNION WITH GOD

by

GILBERT N. HOLLOWAY

MYSTERIES OF DEATH, THE AFTER-LIFE AND THE SOUL'S RETURN

It was Socrates who stated that the contemplation of death and its mysteries is the beginning of wisdom. For the materialist death is a great enemy and a supreme tragedy, for it seems to end or disperse that marvellous flowering of selfhood which we term the human personality.

For the idealist or mystic, death holds no terrors, since it is recognized as a gateway to a realm of reality and truth far superior to the material grossness of our earthly sphere. Many centuries ago Plato advanced his celebrated doctrine of the Two Worlds -- the lesser, earthly world being the realm of effects, of finite limitations and endless illusions while the superior and causative world is the realm of Divine Ideas, of beauty, truth and goodness, all flowing from the ineffable fount of God. What we call death is a bridge between these two worlds, although it is possible for the spiritually developed individual to perceive higher truths and reality while still resident in a mortal body.

Acceptance of some conception of the continued existence of the self following death is very common among students of philosophy, metaphysics and religion. In fact, it is unusual to find a truly sensitive and idealistic person who does not hold some concept, however personal, of immortality. The interesting points of inquiry develop when one seeks to know just what beliefs of eternal existence are held.

Ideas of Immortality

A great many religionists believe very sincerely that their soul was created for the special use and vitalization of this physical body, and that at death the soul is liberated to dwell in a wonderful heavenly place, awaiting an ultimate judgment by the Supreme Being or by a Great Master. Entrance into heaven presupposes a reasonably moral life, including consistent efforts to know and obey the will of God. Many Christian sects make the entrance into heaven and the final life with God entirely dependent upon acceptance of Jesus as a personal savior. According to some of these orthodox beliefs the souls who fail to listen to spiritual admonitions and who languish in a carnal earthly life are doomed to everlasting punishment, to a hellish condition of moral poverty and extreme remorse.

Many devout worshippers couple their hope for immortality with the expectation of a second coming or personal return of the Master Jesus. Prophetic interpretations of Biblical passages are advanced to show that this is the final age of tribulation, that the terrible conflict of Armageddon will be followed by Christ's return to claim His own and to lead them rapturously into Heaven with Him.

There are many other firm believers in the immortality of the soul who lay particular emphasis upon the state of being and general awareness of the personality that has passed into the spiritual world. Spiritualists believe that personalities or "spirits" in the disembodied state are anxious to communicate with those who are left behind in mortal bodies, and that these communications can either help the distraught and perplexed spirit or often give valuable advice and instruction to those still on earth. Presumably, the "spirits" remain in varying degrees of darkness or slowly increasing divine illumination until at last they reach the Heavenly Light and dwell in bliss forever. There are endless variants of both the orthodox Christian views and the beliefs of spiritism. The above thoughts are only suggestive of these beliefs and not intended as complete or summary interpretations.

Reincarnation and Karma

Another great focus of belief and doctrine concerning the eternal existence of the selfhood and the deeper meaning of life is the central concept of reincarnation with its companion law of Karma or divine compensation. Reincarnation is one of the oldest metaphysical ideas known to man. Centuries before Christ it was taught in the esoteric schools of Egypt and India. There is evidence that these basic ideas came from still older civilizations now lost and historically almost unknown. The mystical brotherhoods and arcane schools of both East and West have presented their interpretations of the great law of rebirth of personality. Today in the illuminating literature of Hermetism, Theosophy, esoteric Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism the central truths of reincarnation and Karma are variously expounded.

During the past fifty years so many personal ideas and involved presentations of reincarnation have entered the public mind that one must be wary of ridiculous and preposterous concepts parading in the guise of reincarnation. Persons will open a philosophic conversation with the comment, "Yes, I find much that is attractive in the reincarnationist point of view, except that I simply cannot accept the possibility of returning as an animal, a bird or even a reptile if my sins are too great!"

This ancient and erroneous idea of the transmigration of souls should be dismissed from the mind as a definite falsehood. No matter how sinful they are or may become, men are evolving within their own species and cannot return in lesser forms of other species of evolving life. However great the crimes of an individual, according to the reincarnationist doctrines he must return in human form to redress his wrongs and learn the fundamental spiritual lessons which the law of evolution requires.

Origin of Self

Metaphysical Philosophy teaches that there is a self, a spiritual monad, an entity or definite being which is the real part of man. It is the basic "I Am" reality asserted by Descartes in his meditative discourses, and recognized by all introspective thinkers as the ultimate factor of personality.

This entity or selfhood was created by God, the Supreme Intelligence, Power and Will of the universe. In the act of Creation these entities were emanated from the central Divine Source of all existence. In the great historical body of mystical literature is the frequent theme that these human entities did not originally exist within the confines and limitations of physical bodies. In fact, they dwelt in a much more glorious spiritual form, nearer the Source and with exalted powers over nature and lesser aspects of creation.

In this spiritual state Mankind also possessed, as a gift of the Supreme Being, the power of choice or what we call freewill. At some early time in the exercise of this freedom Man chose to defy the Will of God, to turn aside from the perfect harmonies of the divine creation and to seek lesser knowledge. This first great error, a misuse or prevarication of the will, brought as its necessary consequence or Karma the precipitation of Mankind into material form, and the earthly experience of our species was begun. Broadly speaking, this was the celebrated "Fall of Man" from his earliest state of spiritual innocence and glory to the limitations, miseries and darkness of the earthly sphere.

You and I were personally involved in this historic moral catastrophe. Our selfhoods were then in existence, and we share the Karma of this descent into matter. If it were otherwise, we would be receiving punishment for the errors or sins of others, which would be incompatible with the Absolute Justice of our Divine Universe.

The plunge into materiality began the long course of the evolution of humanity. We might pause here to say that while the evidence for the physical evolution of man's body from lesser forms and creatures is quite formidable, still the self or spiritual being of man has never been anything but human. Of all creatures man alone was fashioned in the spiritual image of Deity.

We have been evolving, then, for many ages and epochs from the very primitive, darkened state following the descent into matter. Spiritual Philosophy, which embraces here the broad and historic truths of reincarnation, states that our personalities have been evolving through many cycles of physical existence, and that between each expression of the self or monad on earth there is a phase or interval of expression in the spiritual world.

Cycles of Rebirth

Consider the cycle of birth and rebirth, with the cyclic phases in the material and spiritual worlds. The material phase begins with the moment of birth, with the coming of the Breath of Life, and lasts until the moment of death, or the final and complete separation of the self from the physical form. At death the spiritual monad, the indwelling personality, is "born," so to speak, into the higher world. For many years the self remains or is manifested in the spiritual realm awaiting the time for its rebirth and next cyclic expression in the body of a newly born infant.

The periodicity of this cycle, or the time from birth to birth, is an issue of great interest to metaphysicians. There are the two extremes, with many intermediate positions. Some writers and lecturers declare that the personality is reborn just as soon after death as it can find another vehicle, another infant body that is being born and will receive it. Figuratively, according to this view, the self rushes frantically about seeking an immediate re-embodiment in material form lest some time be lost in its progressive development!

The other extreme is the view that the personality remains in the spiritual realm for a very great period of time between incarnations. I have heard and read estimates ranging from a thousand to a hundred thousand years as the phase of Cosmic existence while awaiting a new birth in an earthly body.

Our Philosophy teaches that the cycle from birth to birth averages at least one hundred years, and that the phase in the spiritual world is usually at least fifty years and often considerably more. As a very wise mystic of the Orient once taught, the precise time and moment for the personality's rebirth will depend entirely on its needs and possibilities for experience in evolution. Most of us have five to eight earthly embodiments in each millenium or thousand year period. There can be significant alterations in the cycle depending upon the Karma of the evolving self and the type of experience it needs for spiritual education.

The Supreme Intelligence or Cosmic Mind governs our comings and goings from this earthly realm with infinite wisdom and justice. Undoubtedly the conditions of entrance into each life are fixed by the perfect wisdom of God's laws, taking into account our needs, desires, efforts and just deserts.

The Ultimate Goal

Some who object to the logic of reincarnation will say, "Is there no end to this colossal treadmill of existence? Do we go around and around on this endless wheel of rebirth forever?" No, there is a definite, logical and necessary goal. Perhaps it is best expressed by a famous quotation of the Spanish adept and mystic, Martinez de Pasqually: "In the End all will come back to the Beginning."

Man's origin, goal and happiness are all found in God, in the ineffable, inscrutable, infinitely wise and loving Power which created and governs all manifestation. The ultimate goal of all human evolutionary striving is complete and final oneness with God, a wonderful return into the Absolute Being which is the mystery of all Mysteries.

One might say, "Why should there be any delay to this blissful reunion? Can I not lift my consciousness to the Mind and Heart of God this very minute, and thus escape all the toils and sufferings of so many mortal lives?"

Friends, while it is true that the privilege of divine attunement exists for us at all times, and God is ever closer than breathing and nearer than hands and feet, still these moments of felicity in prayer and meditation are usually short-lived and cannot be sustained indefinitely. The ultimate bliss of true reunion with God is a permanent and everlasting condition, and cannot be reached so easily. It must be earned and deserved, by the evolution which we progressively attain, by the service to humanity we are able to give, and by the unfoldment of the higher powers of self we are able to achieve.

Our Cellular Universe

To understand properly the spiritual goal of all existence, and the logical ground for the reincarnationist teachings, we must grasp the fundamental nature of the divine, spherical, cellular universe. Our view of the Cosmos must support our view of the origin, evolution and destiny of mankind.

Plato, that great fountain-head of Western idealistic thought, taught that the universe consists of a central point or condition, the seat of the presiding Deity, surrounded by concentric spheres of mingled light and darkness and bounded by a sphere of fire.

The cosmology of Mystical Science begins with the Source, the Center of the universe, whence emanates all power, all energy and all intelligent direction. This may be called the God-Head, the Celestial Throne, the Heart of God or whatever name will please and inspire the individual thinker. All things proceed from the Source.

As Plotinus taught in his renowned writings, the greater the distance of any manifestation from the Source or central point of Emanation, the grosser it is and the relatively less spiritual and divine. Reality does proceed in a series of concentric spheres from the Source outward, with the earthly sphere as an outer one -- gross, material, physical and dense. It may well be, as Plato's intuition suggests, that the earthly sphere is bounded by yet another sphere of fire, but this is difficult to determine.

Speaking in more modern language, the universe is a great electro-magnetic cell, maintained in perfect equilibrium of energy. The center of the cell is fundamentally positive in polarity while the periphery or cell-wall is fundamentally negative, but there is a perfect balance of forces at all times.

Of basic interest to the subject of this essay is the nature of the spiritual realm -- all that exists between the earth and the Source, and the status of souls therein during the after-life and before the return to earth for another material expression.

The Cosmic Realm

The Cosmic realm or space is a hierarchy or ordered series of spheres, all concentric with the Source. It will possibly help the reader to visualize a hollow rubber ball as an analogy, with the center of the ball as the Source and

the rubber shell or periphery as the earthly sphere. Following the same analogy, the space on the inside from the inner surface of the rubber to the center of the ball is the Cosmic realm!

Ancient philosophers divided the heavens into three greater divisions or spheres -- the lower, middle and upper firmaments. The lower firmament comprises an immaterial sphere, concentric with the Source, extending through one-third of the space between the earth's surface and the central Source. The middle firmament comprises the next one-third of space in the heavenly realm, and the upper firmament is the last one-third, reaching the Source.

Various occult writers have further divided the three fundamental heavenly zones into additional spheres -- all Cosmic spheres, I repeat, concentric with the Source. Mystical Science teaches that there are twenty-one spheres, or divisions of space, in the Cosmic realm between the earth's surface and the Source. Each of the three firmaments may be divided into seven sub-spheres, making twenty-one Cosmic spheres in the heavenly realm.

Life After Death

The relevance of this description of the heavenly spheres to our subject will now be made apparent. Following death, or transition, the self is magnetically attracted to that sphere of the higher realm which corresponds with the degree of spiritual development which it has attained. The greater the spiritual unfoldment and development of all the higher qualities of self, the nearer to the Source is its status between periods of earthly existence. Conversely, the more darkened, bestial and insensitive the personality, the closer will it be to the gross earthly sphere in the after-life.

The first, second, third and other lesser spheres of the spiritual world, counting from the earth upward, are the abode in the after-life of all those who, regardless of wealth, power or station among men, have made little spiritual and moral progress. They were insensitive to spiritual values during life, and after death cannot vibrate harmoniously in the higher realms of spirituality. All of us correspond in our development to some sphere of the divine realm, and following our inevitable demise we shall manifest there while awaiting the propitious moment for our next incarnation.

The degree of consciousness of the individual monad in the after-life corresponds again to one's spiritual development. In other words, the more developed personalities will know more and learn more while in the Cosmic realm than the less awakened entities. Cosmic consciousness is, in some respects, a progressive state of Divine awareness. The more advanced in Cosmic status, the more extended will be the consciousness of the evolving personality. One who has attained the awareness of an Adept or Master has encompassed in consciousness all the spheres of the Cosmic realm and is wholly one with God.

After a very considerable number of lifetimes the self is nearing the goal of Mastership, which means liberation from the law of rebirth. In the divine plan we are all destined for this higher development, but it will require many aeons for all the struggling monads to achieve this true freedom.

Spiritual Communications

This conception of the spiritual world and conditions of the after-life sheds light on certain problems of communication or rapport with disembodied entities. Many occult students who have attended spiritual gatherings, seances and similar conclaves have been distressed by some of the unpleasant manifestations they have witnessed. Indecorous language, curses, lies, threats and other

unpleasant and unspiritual utterances have been communicated presumably from entities wholly psychic and non-material in existence. Accepting the fact that some of these communications were genuine, their mendacious and unmoral character is explained by the fact that these entities dwelt wholly in the lowest spheres of the Cosmic world. Since the real purposes of some so-called spiritual gatherings are worldly, commercial or entirely personal it is inevitable that only entities of the lowest spheres of consciousness would be attracted.

Does Death Change Us?

A very essential point in understanding our status and possibilities in the after-life is in relation to the opportunities of development while in the purely spiritual condition. There are many who believe that death is a great purgation, that somehow the casting off of the material, finite body provides a wonderful cleansing for the soul, and that all the faults and weaknesses of the personality are figuratively washed away by the awesome experience of death. Their view is that death in some mysterious way provides a kind of Cosmic washing-rack, and as the self passes through the portal of death it is scrubbed and cleaned until most of the sin is washed away and the individual is greatly purified, spiritualized and even illuminated.

What strange things might follow if this were really true! If death were the great cleanser of sin and moral weakness, if it could purify us and provide the higher illumination we all so ardently seek, then logically we should all invite death with a most powerful desire! If this teaching were to become popular there would be a wave of suicides and self-destruction such as the world has never seen! Fortunately, the intuitive wisdom of mankind governs most of us and while we do not regard death as any final enemy, still we realize that we must struggle with and seek to master the experiences of life until our transition is decreed by a Power wiser than ourselves.

The plain truth is that we are very much the same in character and personality following death as we were while still manifested on this sphere. Stewart Edward White makes this point admirably in his last book, "With Folded Wings," in counsel received from a highly evolved intelligence.

While manifested in the Cosmic realm between incarnations we obtain a certain perspective of our Karmic pattern of development; we consider the virtues and errors of the life recently closed, and the requirements that will be exacted of us in the future. As said before, the greater the unfoldment of the monad, the more inclusive is this perspective in the Cosmic interval between earthly expressions. Undoubtedly we are conscious of loved ones and others whose vibratory note of personality harmonizes with our own. We cannot be fully conscious of the spheres above us; we must attain their awareness through loving service and mystical development.

Here, then, is another strong logical argument for the necessity of rebirth. It is profoundly untrue that after one brief life on earth of some sixty or seventy years, all future unfoldment and spiritual progress can be made solely in the Cosmic realm. The Esoteric Tradition of wisdom resounds to the note that earthly lessons cannot be learned in the divine realm, and that earthly obligations and Karma must be paid here. This is why we return to the earthly sphere of privation and frequent suffering, time after time, until we have learned all the lessons which this stern school requires. Then and then only are we prepared to be "graduated." Then have we arrived at the blessed pinnacle of Mastership. Eventually we shall all attain this marvellous freedom of development; until that time, we come under the law of rebirth and Karma.

Evolution of Selfhood

Let us complete the picture and survey the goal. We are developing and unfolding the spiritual powers of self, and not the soul. Our concept of the soul is comparable to the Over-soul of the Emersonian writing. Soul is the vitalizing, life-giving extension of the divine nature; it is everywhere, and gives life to all creatures, to the entire living universe and everything in it. The whole Cosmos is ensouled by the indwelling essence and power of God.

We are evolving the inner self, the most real and the only eternal part of our beings. Accepting the logic of reincarnation, we have had many physical bodies, and shall doubtless have quite a few more. Yet the same selfhood has manifested through all these expressions, the same eternal YOU. The self exists and grows in the ground of soul just as a seed planted in the soil will grow and develop under favorable conditions.

Our evolution is, in a sense, a long homeward journey. We are prodigal children whose loving Father-Mother Principle is patiently and tolerantly waiting to receive us. Amid all the uncertainties of life, especially in this perilous atomic age now opening before us, there is one fixed destiny: we are slowly evolving toward Mastership and divine illumination. The spiritualization of humanity, yes, and of nature and all creatures, is the inner purpose of the entire evolutionary scheme. It cannot be hurried; we have all time and eternity in which to painfully and gloriously work our way forward.

Those who have attained Mastership no longer are bound strictly by the law of rebirth. They may choose to assume material bodies for periods of time in which to serve mankind, but it is also their privilege to inspire and uplift entirely from the spiritual world. Our evolution will not cease when earth's ties have been left behind. Then we must rise up the spiral of consciousness, round by round, until at long last we shall be wholly reintegrated with the ineffable Source.

Some will protest this last phase of evolution. They fear the loss of their precious individualities, that somehow all they have worked to achieve will be lost or simply swept away. The Mind of the Absolute, of God, is analogous to the pure white light which, when passed through a prism, shows all the beautiful colors of the spectrum.

Surely the Cosmic Mind is sufficiently inclusive and omniscient to encompass all that each monad is able to develop in the way of distinctive character and individuality! It is the seeming paradox of divine captivity and perfect freedom. The pure light of Infinite Mind will contain all the beautiful shadings of color that individualities may provide, but still it will be absolutely perfect and harmonious.

Reunion with God

Can any more suitable or permanent goal for mankind be visualized, than to be forever united with the All-Wise, All-Loving and All-Powerful Deity?

Nearly all spiritually-minded persons, whatever their particular beliefs, will accept this final goal for humanity in principle. Mystical Science, through its teachings of rebirth of personality and Karma, supports the hopes and arguments for immortality with logical points of doctrine which appeal to the intuitive senses of mankind. Reincarnation teaches that we can and will live eternally, but that we must earn and deserve this blessed prospect.

I hope the thoughts of this essay will reveal to our readers that death is a not unfamiliar gateway to the Higher World and its spheres which comprise the avenue of our ascent to the Source; that our status in the after-life is directly related to the life we have led here, and the spiritual unfoldment we have attained through loving service, study, meditation and our good works; that we have returned many times before and shall do so again to this mundane school of experience, but that our ultimate goal is grounded in the Absolute Power and Love of God which long ago sent us forth and to which most definitely we shall return.

* * *

A Publication of
THE HOLLOWAY SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY