

## AN ARGUMENT FOR NOT WORRYING ABOUT DEATH

Those who fear death fear not the loss of the future but the loss of the present and the past. But they have them and nothing can change that. Alive or dead you always have your past.

Those who fear death fear what they call the unknown. But sleep is the unknown and we do not fear it. Fearing the unknown implies that there is a huge chance of something terrible waiting for us after we die.

If you believe you are immortal then you can never ever give your life for others for you will still exist even when you die. That is not really death but apparent death or partial death. Try to remember that if death is the end, at least you can really give your life for others and they could do it for you. You would be insulting the principle by believing in life after death. If a hypothetical person existed who knew that death was the end and gave her life for you you would be insulting her. It is hypothetical but you are still insulting.

People can argue that death is not evil for we will just slip out of existence and feel nothing then. But it and this argument are evil for it is better to exist. Better to believe that old age and sickness and death are inevitable and to accept them as such. Some atheists say we must have an attitude of cheerful despair. Despair is not cheerful. Better to say we must face them as inevitable and try and learn how to make ourselves happy with what we have got.

One way to achieve the correct attitude is to see how many sick and dying people are happy though they hold firmly that when they die they will not survive.

People may say that life would be boring if you lived too long and that they are happy enough to go at the age of eighty or ninety. But maybe that is why we have such imperfect memories. We remember only a little of the past and that prevents boredom and also every event is unique so there is no room for boredom.

It seems there is nothing wrong with a person not being bothered about death for it is painless and inevitable. It seems that before birth you did not exist and it did not bother you so why should death, the same thing, bother you? Believers reply, "But we had to have a beginning and there is no logical reason why we need to have an end. We could live on forever in another world. When we came into existence we gained, but when we lose that existence we fail and lose. So the argument is wrong for ceasing to exist is by no means as nice as not existing before you exist. The failure of the argument proves beyond doubt that humanism and atheism have to have the doctrine of life after death if they are to make people happy and to expand. They have no other argument that can help them. If death is evil it should bother us. Evil is supposed to bother us. People say it did not bother them that they never existed before birth and so it will not bother them if they cease to exist at death. But they gained existence after non-existence but death is losing the existence you have gained if it is the end. It has to bother you. If you have a cruel debilitating disease you will undergo needless emotional pain if you think death is the only thing you have to look forward to for we are sensuous creatures though you will consider it a blessing in many ways.

That reply insults terminally ill people in hospices and other places who are so happy though death is round the corner. Their lives are more precious to them than ever because death is near and they appreciate the love they get ten times more than a healthy person would. We can train ourselves not to fear death and we should for dreading it is not going to help us one little bit.

Religion says we are the only species that knows its going to die and therefore we look for answers as to why we are here and where we are going. The fact that animals can't ask that does not mean there is no purpose for them. If a religion says we are the only species that knows it will die so we SHOULD look for answers about what lies beyond the grave it is simply telling us.

The thought that all of us consent to our deaths in the sense that if we saw the bigger picture we would choose to "go" so that we can help those left behind in a new way seems a nice one. It seems useful.

And if it is true then why not legalise euthanasia and make it no big deal if the person has given no consent?

Some say "Belief in our immortality is essential to maximising our spiritual health. If we do not see that a part of us is indestructible and that even a murderer cannot take it from us we will be more afraid and more prone to failing to forgive. We will not have the power to die in love for those who hate us. If we do not see that our power to heal ourselves will always be with us, we will be more deeply subjected to the merciless power of fear. We will resist our power to pardon."

This is nonsense. People who are sure death is the end can exemplify acceptance and serenity even in their final days.

Is death no big deal then if we live on?

Believers say, "Life after death doesn't mean that death isn't too serious. Death is very serious. If we ever get the opportunity to live forever in a young and healthy body through science we must not refuse it. If we get the chance to live forever on earth we will take it instead of thinking about going to some heaven or paradise. This thought tells us to improve this world and let nothing stop us. It tells us that it is our business what the future holds and we must do something about the wrong in the world for we might have to endure it in a future life."

Death is degradation for the one who dies. The rule that religious faith must never come before humanity requires us to abhor death as if we were sure it is the end. Why? Because even if we have solid grounds for holding that death is not the end but we do not have absolute knowledge. We might as well not believe.

Some mystics say that you should not fear your death for you are used to it!

Death is only an outward appearance. The real person puts off the body in death and the body returns to the ground. Do remember, the truth about death. Are you twenty years old? No you are not. You are only a few months old for what comprises your body now didn't exist months ago. Your body has died and been totally rebuilt with a duplicate. You are dying all the time. There is nothing to fear. Yet you are the same person despite all these deaths and regenerations.

Your consciousness is the sense that you exist. The data that your other senses, sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell, picks up passes through it day by day. It is an immobile power that information passes through. What happens is that future events sweep through it into the past. Your brain comes apart every day and is replaced by new parts and your consciousness is still there. Something that is that immobile is linked to matter but is able to exist independently of it. Or is it? It is possible that your consciousness that makes you you is continuously maintained by matter though matter changes. The flame on one candle can be put on another candle when the candle dies out. There is no reason to think that the body dies but the consciousness does not.

In a sense we are dying and rising all the time. But it does not justify holding that we can survive death for in death there is no such thing as us being renovated and reconstituted.

We die every night in our beds so that we may come back fresh and willing to take on the world in the morning. Death is no worse than falling asleep! It brings pain to those whom the loved one leaves and they must be comforted and be supported.