

## PRO-AFTERLIFE FALLACIES

### DEATH – BIRTH TO A NEW LIFE?

**BELIEVER:** Any system, even if it be atheistic, if it seeks to be the most successful and beloved form of philosophy, has to have the doctrine of life after death.

Philosophy must offer satisfaction and not just cold facts. The good thing about the afterlife concept is that it can make people feel good. Most if not all believers in the afterlife do so for they sense that the loved one who dies is still with them.

**REPLY:** In fact if Jesus was right to say there was an eternal punishment of eternal fire made for the Devil and his angels and that those who neglect one of the least of his brethren would go there too and if Muhammad was right to say that there is a Hell of eternal fire, then it is better for there to be no life after death at all than for one person to go to suffer that for all eternity. It is odd by the way how Christianity can worship a man who clearly admitted that he will send you to eternal punishment in fire just because you could visit somebody in prison and didn't. Lots of adorable people do that. Revering Christianity or Islam as holy religions approved by God is morally unjustifiable. You might say that it is okay when several people will enjoy eternal happiness even if it means one will not but will endure eternal punishment. But surely it is better for billions to have a mediocre life with some happiness and to pass out of existence at death than for there to be an afterlife and risk one person being damned forever? Just before I would move on, I want to say that the Bible actually teaches that a tiny minority will evade eternal torment.

Could it be that Christianity has invented Hell in order to make you so grateful for Jesus saving you from it that you will serve the Church with utter devotion?

Is it really right to prefer a pie in the sky to doing the right thing? Say a person will survive death in an afterlife and know she will. She gives her life to save a child. Is she as good as the man in a hypothetical universe who knows he will cease to exist totally and permanently and who saves the child? The person who gives away his existence is the best person and needs the most praise. If you really care about good and want to be as good as possible, you will not want to believe in a life after death. You will not want it to be true at least for you so that you may create the ultimate sacrifice for another should the opportunity arise. Using the notion of an afterlife like a carrot presented to a rabbit is disgraceful and is setting out to stop us being potentially and supremely self-sacrificing. It wants us to take comfort in the thought of the pleasure we will have rather than in the thought that we must be prepared to make a total sacrifice for good just in case we get the chance. Pleasure is preferred to doing the right thing and being the right person.

Most who say they believe in an afterlife have not thought much about the topic or researched it. They feel they might be okay after death and that is all. Even an atheist can manage that!

Many of those who deny life after death feel life means more to them because it will end. We can all be like them. If we cannot, there is something wrong with us. If we are not then we need to grow up. Even if you believe in a life after death you have no evidence or proof of it. You then should still fear death - assuming death is to be feared rather than accepted. So what difference does it make? You may as well deny life after death as assume that it is true.

The truth is that it does no good to derive comfort from a belief if that belief is not true and especially when the belief is harmful which the afterlife doctrine is. Fear of what is real is a sign of maladjustment and weakness. Weakness is a form of maladjustment. Weakness and maladjustment corrupts and cracks and insecurities will appear and wreck any happiness you get from your weakness. Maladjustment is as good a word for a power that corrupts as you will get.

If we should use the pipe-dream of an afterlife to make ourselves happy, then why not pretend that the suffering of an innocent child is an illusion or something to prevent it disturbing our peace of mind? That is what we are implicitly legitimising. The belief in the afterlife pipe-dream is implicitly nasty.

Expecting all to have a good eternal life after death would be a pipe-dream. If it is not then nothing is. And also, it is better for us all to really die and cease to exist than for us all to live on while some suffer some punishment for all eternity. It would be kinder to hope there is no afterlife if this punishment is part of the equation.

If you love people you will not want them to die physically. You will want them to be alive so that you can be with them and they with you. To use the idea of the afterlife to feel that they are beside you invisibly and perhaps guiding you is implying you are closer to them now that they are dead. As faith should not risk hurting a person or degrading them or

denying the truth about them, it follows that you need a person to be with you without having died. That is what love is. Why bother loving if you are going to end up caring little if they die and its belief in the afterlife that is responsible?

**BELIEVER:** There is rational and scientific evidence that death is a new beginning. Though we may believe in a being higher than us who has power over us to destroy us if we live on after death we have no reason to believe it will kill us totally at death. Why would it kill us and put us out of existence when it lets us live now?

**REPLY:** Why wouldn't the being let us pass out of existence when it lets us die? You are assuming that it has a purpose for us to live on for. But what if its purpose is taken care of if we live for a while? There is as little reason to believe in life after death as there is for a being that could destroy us if we do survive death. The being lets children go through the most horrendous of torments so we ought not to have much faith in it. Even we have faith, in it it does not follow that we should assume it will preserve our life even in death.

**BELIEVER:** All things in the universe have obviously been designed by intelligent powers. Even the most shapeless rock is full of design though it does not look like a work of art to us. We see plainly that all could not have been made by a series of chances. No amount of Atheist prejudice or self-deceit can shut your eyes to the improbability of the hypothesis that luck and chance got us to where we are today with our brilliant magical bodies. Some intelligent power that wants us to live made us and that power will not let death be the end of us. The power may have a strange way of making sure we will live on when it does not give us immortal bodies but that does not negate the value of the power and the faith we can have in it. It does not refute the power's existence.

**REPLY:** Chance created the forces that give us life but it does not direct these forces. It would be absurd to say that chemicals came to life by chance and made the first cell and by chance the cell grew into an amoeba and by chance the amoeba became something more advanced and so on with an infinity of chances until we are where we are today. But we are only saying a few chances set the wheels in motion for life to appear not that chance directed and controlled the whole process. The intelligent power if it exists lets innocent babies suffer terribly. It clearly cannot be trusted so nobody should assume things about what it might or might or might not do. Even if the things it does are not random they look random to us. We have to respect ourselves by going by appearances. If we refuse to see evil as random injustice then we fail to see evil at all.

Whatever we came from existed just by pure chance for there might just have been nothing and so by chance there was not just nothing. We cannot be called religious when we claim chance as our origin and not the work of a God who made us for a purpose. Besides even God exists by chance so why not life?

If chance exists, then it follows that God does not create all things. God making all things means that what seems to be chance is arranged by him and is not chance. We need to believe in chance more than we do God. Chance could have made all things EVEN IF THERE IS A GOD!

The argument, "I am too magical and wonderful to really pass away" ignores the fact that your magical and wonderful body will pass away. If it does then your mind or soul may pass away as well.

**BELIEVER:** There are powers and forces that we cannot understand. We do not understand much about ourselves or how we are able to be aware of things.

**REPLY:** If we do not understand these things we should not be saying that they help us believe in an afterlife. The strange ability to be aware of things has nothing to do with proving we have souls that survive death. Inexplicable is not the same as supernatural.

**BELIEVER:** The mind is separate from the body and brain and so it survives when the body dies. Zen Buddhists meditate on contradictions like the sound of one hand clapping and get into a state of awareness in which the contradiction is experientially reconciled. Matter cannot do this so it is something different from matter as we know it that can. The mind is not the brain. It is important that the believer learn this for themselves by experience. We put experience before the testimony of others and first-hand evidence before second-hand. We will not evolve outside the body which is why we will become a body after death for self-development must be the reason for evolution. The Zen experience reconciles the contradiction by making the mind think two opposing thoughts at the one time when it normally can only hold one. But this reconciliation is not real. The two thoughts are still contradictory. It is just that the experience has changed. The mind then is not matter as we know it but something of another dimension independent of the kind of matter that surrounds us so its survival beyond death is possible

We can only concentrate on one thing at a time. The Zen experience is performed by simply fusing the experience of A with the separate experience of non-A. It can fuse two separate moments of consciousness. They are separate for one moment is taken up with one experience and the next with one that contradicts it. You cannot be aware of two incompatible things as

true at the one time. So how are Zen practitioners able to do it? That they can do it indicates that the mind has power over time. They are able to fuse two separate and disparate moments. This has to be what happens for there is nothing that can make A the same as non-A so time is being fused. It is possible to fuse time thus for all time is as one in the timeless state called eternity. Death can be defined as the end of our perception of time so we cease to exist. The power to fuse is the key to life after death. We will use it to hold on to life when we pass on. We have the power to become eternal or to have an eternal experience.

REPLY: The two contradictory experiences are supposed to become one experience. That thought is an absurdity so its temporary insanity those people are experiencing. They think they can hear the sound of one hand clapping. The two experiences or thoughts or memories of what a clap is like and a hand by itself that can't clap are separate. Only a mind that is tricked into feeling that it senses and realises the two are one and the same can achieve the union. It's all a mental trick. The two are misperceived as one. It is not two contradictory experiences contained in two separate moments that is being fused but just two memories of what a hand and a clap is like. Two moments of time are not being fused but two ideas in the mind.

If two contradictory things can be reconciled then perhaps though the experience tells us we will live forever it is wrong though it is absurd for it to be wrong!

BELIEVER: Why could there not have just been nothing? There could have been nothing so there should have been nothing. It is easier for nothing to be than something. When it is simpler for there to have been nothing, there should have been nothing. This suggests that everything that exists contains psychic power or supernatural power. It is made of it and it is biased towards good though evil happens because non-existence is inferior to existence and it is pro-existence. This gives us confidence that we will live forever. The zenith of existence is being conscious and so we are the least likely of beings to cease existing. Whatever force makes us is more concerned with our life than our happiness. It is up to us to make ourselves happy and nobody else is going to do it for us and we should not assume that they will.

REPLY: There could have been nothing but that does not mean there should have been nothing or that it is impossible for anything to exist. By chance, there is more than just nothing and there always was. It's not supernatural that things exist. It's just lucky! The argument that existing things contradicts the way things should have been with nothing existing at all suggests that supernatural powers are illogical and incoherent. That argument if valid and true would forbid reliance on miracles and religious experience.

BELIEVER: Motion is magical. We cannot explain it – we just take it for granted for we see it so much and do not notice how strange and incomprehensible it is. Motion is life. Consciousness is the movement of information into the mind which moves and perceives it. The mind is magical therefore it can survive death.

REPLY: You could imagine magic in anything. If nothing at all existed nobody would be able to explain why. Some would say it would still be magic then! The believer's argument mistakes what is inexplicable for what is magical. Of course I am not saying there would be people around if there was nothing. It's just an illustration to make a point.

None of the arguments given make it sensible to surmise that there is life after death.

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BIBLE QUOTATIONS FROM:

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