

Chapter 16 Reincarnation: Here We Go Again

1. Evolution of the Soul

The doctrine of reincarnation states that beings live many lives in their quest to reach divinity. Through successive births and deaths even the lowliest creatures evolve into beings of love and wisdom. Through all the stages of evolution, creatures climb the ladder to divinity.

Man is a pilgrim set on a long journey: he has started from the stone, moved on to the vegetable and animal, and has now come to the human stage. He has still a long way to go to reach the divine, and so he should not tarry. Every moment is precious; every step must take him further and nearer.

Sathya Sai Speaks 8, p.163

Through the accumulation of good actions, we have earned human birth. Only through human birth can we consciously reach upward to divinity, and so human birth must be used for the greatest benefit. We must fill our lives with aspiration and good deeds.

You have earned this human body by the accumulated merit of many lives as inferior beings, and it is indeed very foolish to fritter away this precious opportunity in activities that are natural only to those inferior beings.

Sathya Sai Speaks 5, p.14

If we behave in a harmful and low manner, it is possible that we could return to lower levels of evolution. However, it would be unusual to regress so far. The process of development is so slow and steady that such a backward fall would be uncommon.

JH (Jack Hislop): Is degrading possible? Is there a rebirth back to the animal?

Sai: The possibility is not denied, but it is only rarely that such a thing happens. The degrading of human life due to lack of virtue will normally result in rebirth as a lower grade of human. The total process is always present.

My Baba and I, p.188

第十六章 轮回转世：事情又发生了

1. 灵魂的演进

轮回转世说宣称生命体为了明心见性的探求而轮回许多世。通过连续不断的生生死死，即便最低级的生物也会演进为爱与智慧的生命体。通过所有演进过程，生物朝向圣灵的阶梯一级一级往上爬。

人是一个决心步上漫长旅程的朝圣者；他从石头开始，进入植物与动物然后达到了现今的人类阶段。他还有一段很长的路途才能抵达神，所以，他不应该滞留，耽搁。每一刻都很宝贵；每一步都必须把他带到更前更近。

《沙迪亚赛说》第8章163面

通过良好行为（善业）的累积，我们赢得了人身。只有通过人身，我们才能有意识地超凡入圣，所以要善加利用此人身啊！我们必须注入崇高的志向和良好的行为于我们的生命。

你已凭借劣等生命体的许多前世所累积的功德而赢得人身，而糟蹋这人身难得的机会于劣等生命体的行为，委实愚不可及。

《沙迪亚赛说》第5章14面

如果我们行为不检点，做出伤天害理的事，我们有可能回到较为低下的演进层次。然而，到目前为止，倒退还是罕见的。发展的过程是如此的缓慢和稳定以致这样的倒退是不常有的。

希斯乐普博士 (Dr. John Hislop)：降级有可能吗？人类会转世为畜牲吗？

赛：这种可能性不容否定，但不常发生而已。由于缺乏美德，人类会轮回转世为较为低下等级的人。总的变化过程往往是存在的。

《赛峇峇与我》188面

2. Karma, Cause and Consequence

The concept of reincarnation is closely tied to the doctrine of karma. Karma is the law of cause and effect, of spiritual opportunity. Whatever actions we perform have natural consequences. If we do evil actions, we reap evil results. If we perform good actions, we reap good results. The results of actions are not always seen: the consequences may manifest much later. However, results do return at the appropriate time, whether in this lifetime or the next. But all karma provides us with the spiritual opportunities to learn what is required to achieve liberation.

You do not see the foundations of a multi-storied skyscraper. Can you, therefore, argue that it simply sits on the ground? The foundations of this life are laid deep in the past, in lives already lived by you. This structure has been shaped by the ground plan of those lives. The unseen decides the bends and the ends: the number of floors, the height, and weight.

Sathya Sai Speaks 7, p.46

Divine justice subtly rules our world. We reap the circumstances of our birth and life. The critical events of our lives are not random strokes of fortune or disaster. We earn both our “good” and “bad” circumstances. Through many lifetimes we learn our lessons and evolve toward spiritual maturity.

The process is long, encompassing hundreds or thousands of births. Arjuna, the hero of the Bhagavad Gita, previously lived as a king named Vijaya during the Threta Yuga, a very spiritual era. His ambition was to conquer many kingdoms, a goal not possible in that age of righteousness. To accomplish his goal, he had to be reborn in the following age, when conditions allowed such conquests.

Over the course of many births, each of us also has opportunities to fulfill our desires and thus transcend them. We develop talents and abilities beyond what we could accomplish in one lifetime.

2. 业，因和果

轮回的观念与业（Karma）的理论是息息相关的。业是因果律，是灵性的机会。不论我们执行的是什么行动，果报是不可避免的。善有善报，恶有恶报。行动的结果不常立竿见影：其结果或许会在相当的时日之后才出现。然而，结果肯定在适当时刻到来，可能在今世也可能在来世。但所有的业都提供我们以灵性的机会去学习我们获得解脱所必备的一切。

你看不到一幢高楼大厦的地基。你因此能争辩说大厦仅仅坐落在地面上吗？我们这一生的地基已在诸多前世中深深地奠定。这结构已被那些前世的初步计划所拟订。看不到的地基决定转角和终止：楼数，高度和重量。

《沙迪亚赛说》第7章46面

神圣的公正统理着我们的世界。种瓜得瓜，种豆得豆。我们生命的关键事件不是祸福的任意触抚和敲击。‘好’‘坏’的情况都是我们自取的。经过许多世，我们学得教训并朝向灵性完善的方向演进。

过程是漫长的，涵盖数以千计的轮回转世。《梵歌》（Bhagavad Gita）中的英雄人物，阿周那（Arjuna），其前世是一个名叫维贾耶（Vijaya）的国王，那时正值三分期（Threta Yuga），一个非常灵性的时代。他的野心是征服许多王国而这目标在正义时代是不可能完成的。为了完成他的目标，他必须在下一个时代转世，以配合当时的客观条件来完成他的征服。

经过许多世的转世过程，我们每一个人也有机会满足我们的欲望并因此而跨越它们。我们培育起超越仅仅一世所能达致的才华和能力。

What is it that gives each individual this special ability? Is it not what he is carrying with him from his previous birth? You may argue that it is the effort that the individual puts in that is responsible for his becoming either a poet or a singer. This is not the case. You will have to think how, without any special training, these individuals are sometimes exhibiting such special skills.

Summer Showers 1973, p.37

3. Is the Concept of Reincarnation Something New?

Belief in reincarnation is as old as civilization's earliest memories. The Indian Vedas, as well as the early Greek teachers, were familiar with the doctrine. The concept is central to both Hindu and Buddhist thought. It was also accepted by a considerable body of early Christians and Hasidic Jews. The distinguished third-century Church theologian, Origen (A.D. 185-254), was an early proponent of the teaching. Only in the year 553 A.D. did the Fifth Ecumenical Council, meeting in Constantinople, expunge the doctrine from Church dogma during an unofficial session.

The New Testament contains many references which indicate understanding and belief in reincarnation. Many of the early Jews believed Jesus to be a reincarnation of one of the prophets of the Old Testament. In the New Testament Gospel of Matthew (16:13-14) we read:

When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elija, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Although the teaching is not central to some religious systems, reincarnation forms an esoteric component. The concept is an important foundation of spiritual understanding. In fact, reincarnation and its inseparable relationship to karma is one of the major components of the ageless wisdom, the Sanathana Dharma.

提供每一个人这特别能力的是什么？这难道不是他从前世中继承过来的吗？你或争辩说，那是你努力所达致的，使你成为一个诗人或一个歌唱家。事实并非如此。你必须想一想，在没有任何特别训练之下，这些个人有时则展示那样的特别技巧，这该怎么解释！

《夏季浸濡1973》37面

3. 轮回是一种新的理念吗？

相信轮回的存在与文明的最早记忆一样的古老。印度的吠陀经（Vedas）和古希腊的导师们都非常熟悉这学说。这理念乃印度教与佛教的中心思想。它也受到早期基督教与哈西德派犹太教（Hasidic Jews）主流的接受。三世纪卓越的教会神学家，奥利金（Origen, 185-254 A.D.）是这教导的支持者。只有在公元553年，第五届主教特别会议在君士坦丁（Constantinople）召开时才在一个非官方的集会中把这种学说从教会教条中除去。

新约中包含许多参考章节，明示对轮回的理解和信仰。早期很多犹太人相信耶稣是旧约里的其中一个先知的化身。新约马太福音16章13-14节这么说：

耶稣来到了菲利皮的凯撒勒雅境内，就问他的门徒说，“人们说人子是谁？”他们说，“有人说是施洗者约翰；有人说是以利亚；也有人说是耶利米亚，或其中一位先知。”

虽然这教导对一些宗教体系而言并不构成中心思想，但是轮回转世仍形成一种秘传的成分。这理念是理解灵性的一个重要基础。其实，轮回和其业的不可分割的关系是永恒之智慧，永恒之法（Sanathana Dharma）的主要成分。

It is only in the Sanathana Dharma that the importance of karma in shaping the destiny of man, the fact of the individual undergoing many births in his progress towards birthlessness, and the mighty grace of God's coming as a man among men to gather them around him in holy companionship for saving them and saving the world through them, is so strongly and clearly laid down. If you doubt any of these great truths, you are certain to suffer and sorrow.

Sathya Sai Speaks 5, pp.244-245

4. Why Do We Not Remember Past Lives?

Some people do remember past lives. A number of volumes record such experiences. Throughout the world a small but irrefutable number of people have been born with memories of former lifetimes. They have demonstrated knowledge of people and places that they could not have otherwise known.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba relates a wealth of information about his previous incarnation in west central India as Shirdi Sai Baba. He has shown knowledge of that incarnation that he could not have known in any other manner. It is, of course, rare for most people to remember previous lives. The memories of former lifetimes are lost to new experiences and new concerns – and so God's compassion prevents a probable, overwhelming compounding of our problems.

You know only the present, what is happening before your eyes; you do not know the present is related to the past and is preparing the course for the future. It is like the headlines and titles of a film on the screen: as the letters gleam one after the other, you read them and pass on to the next that comes to view. Each new letter or word wipes out the one already before your eye, just as each birth wipes out the memory of the one already experienced.

Sathya Sai Speaks 3, p.161

只有在‘永恒之法’ (*Sanathana Dharma*) 里，塑造人之命运的业，其重要性是那么的强烈和清晰的规定；而这命运其实就是，人必须轮回许多世以便不再轮回，而神的化身降世，在人之中活动，相伴，救渡他们并通过他们来救渡世界，就是赐予人的莫大恩典。如果你怀疑任何这些伟大的真理或真相，你肯定受苦。

《沙迪亚赛说》第5章244-245面

4. 我们为何记不得过去世？

有一些人记得过去世。对这样的体验一些书籍也有记载。就整个世界而言，无可辩驳的是有一小撮的人一生下来就对前世有所记忆。他们展示对人物与地方的认识，那是他们无从知道的事。

斯里沙迪亚赛峇峇详述有关他的前世，诞生于中西印度的舍尔地赛峇峇，的大量事迹。他展示那不为人所知的，也不可能以其他方式得知的化身事迹。当然，记得过去世的人数极为稀少。过去世的记忆因新的体验和新的关切而消失——这是神的仁慈，制止我们的问题可能遭受势不可挡的复杂化。

你只知道今世发生于你眼前的一切；你不知道今世与前世的关系及今世为来世路程所作的准备。它就像是一出电影荧幕上的标题和提示；当字幕一个一个地过去，你也跟着读完它们。每一个新的字洗掉出现于你眼前的字，就如每一世洗掉你所体验的那一个记忆一样。

《沙迪亚赛说》第3章161面

The extent of our interest in events also determines how much we remember. We have little cause to remember much of this present life, much less past lives. Our senses and minds are attached to present objects and future ambitions.

You may not remember the incidents of a particular day ten years ago, but that does not mean that you were not alive that day. So, too, you may not recall what happened in the previous life or in the life previous to that, but there is no doubt that you had those lives.

Sathya Sai Speaks 4, p.147

5. Why Escape Rebirth?

Why escape a burning house? We are occupants of a house on fire. The fires of desire, anger, and greed rage throughout our lives. Our lungs fill with the acrid smoke of illusion and ignorance. Like sleepers oblivious to the fire, we do not realize the seriousness of our situation. Only when we reach the safety of the outside can we look back and marvel at our ignorant contentment with that sad state.

Three primary factors result in rebirth: sin, wrong desire, and ignorance. If these are overcome, we can attain release from the cycle of bondage. They are the weights which pull us down into the mire of rebirth.

There are three reasons for man to be born. One is sin, the second is an unfulfilled desire for some experience, the third is lack of knowledge, or ignorance. The feeling that he has not fulfilled a desire and his wanting to take birth again to fulfill such a desire is one main reason. Man does several bad things and commits a sin; he has to be reborn to experience the consequences. Ignorance makes you seek a rebirth under these circumstances. These three constitute the basis for our rebirth.

Summer Showers 1974, p.243

我们对发生之事件所感到的兴趣程度也取决于我们记忆的多寡。我们没什么理由去记忆很多这一生的事，甭说前世了。我们的意识和心念黏附在目前的物质和未来的愿望。

你或许不记得十年前某个特别的日子偶发的事件，但那并不意味着你在那天并不存活。所以，你一样也不会忆起过去世或前世所发生之事，但毫无疑问的，你曾经拥有那些生命。

《沙迪亚赛说》第4章147面

5. 为何逃避轮回？

为何逃避一间燃烧的屋子？我们是一间起火屋子的住户。欲望，嗔怒和贪婪之火正在我们生命中狂烧。我们的肺部充满着虚幻与无知的辛酸烟气。一如睡着者忘了燃烧的火，我们不认清我们所处之情况的严峻。只有在我们离开现场，达到安全时，我们才能回头看而惊讶我们竟然无知地满足于那悲惨的境地。

轮回转世有三大因素：罪孽，错误的欲望及无知。如果它们受到克制，我们即可摆脱生死轮回的束缚。它们是把我们将拖下轮回泥泞的重力。

人的轮回转世有三大因素。第一个是罪孽，第二个是尚未实现的欲望，对某种体验而言，第三个是无知。欲望尚未圆满的感觉，而要转世来实现这个欲望，是一个主因。人做一些坏事，犯一项罪行；他就得转世来体验果报。在这些情况下，无知使你寻求轮回。这三者构成我们转世的基础。

《夏季浸濡1974》243面

At rebirth we forget all that has happened in past lives. Parents, husbands and wives, children – all are forgotten. Time and again we eat the same meal of attachment, joy, and grief. After each lifetime it is all lost. All of our cherished possessions go to people we cannot now even remember.

Throughout the dramas of our many lives, only God remains as our closest friend. He watches our progress and patiently waits for us to turn toward him. He watches and provides us with opportunities to develop love and wisdom. He encourages us to cast off desire and attachment to fleeting objects. He alone is our lasting treasure; all other possessions are like the wealth of a dream. We find no true rest until we return to him.

Man is on a long pilgrimage towards God. He moves from one life to another to the goal of splendor. On the way he has to take shelter in many caravanserais, or rest houses, but however attractive these may be, he cannot strike root but has to remind himself of the journey's end!

Sathya Sai Speaks 6, p.123

Our efforts of each lifetime gradually build toward our liberation. No progress is ever lost. It is particularly important for us to advance while circumstances are favorable. A fair wind is used by the wise sailor to full advantage. With the help of the avatar, we may bypass many lifetimes of effort in reaching our goal. If we do not now sail with the fair wind, when will another such opportunity arise?

If God, the goal, is not cherished in the memory, one has to wander through many births and arrive home late.

Sathya Sai Speaks 3, p.175

Questions for Study Circle:

1. Why is reincarnation not widely accepted in the West?
2. Why do we not remember past lives?
3. What does reincarnation imply about the way we live?
4. Is it possible for us to know reincarnation as a fact?

在重生时，我们忘掉前世所发生的一切。父母，夫妻，孩子，一切都忘得一干二净。我们屡次吃下执著，喜悦和哀伤的同样的菜肴。死后一切都消失无踪。我们所拥有的贵重之物悉归我们现在记不起的人们。

在我们许多世的人生舞台上，只有神一直是我们的最亲近的朋友。祂看着我们进步并耐心等着我们归向祂。祂监视并提供我们机会以便我们培育起爱和智慧。祂鼓励我们放弃对转瞬即逝的物质所持的欲望与执著。只有祂才是我们的宝藏；其他一切拥有物有如梦幻的财富。不归向祂，我们得不到真正的平静。

人处在归向神的一条漫长的朝圣之旅。他从一个生命跳到另一个生命以达致荣耀的目标。在途中，他必须进住于许多旅馆，然而，不论旅馆有多么舒适，他都不能在那儿生根而必须提醒自己，非抵达旅程的终点不可！

《沙迪亚赛说》第6章123面

我们在每一世所做出的努力逐渐使我们朝向超脱迈进。没有停滞不前。当情况对我们有利时，我们的进展尤为迅速。有智慧的航行者能善加利用和风丽日来尽力航行。有了神化身的协助，我们或可绕过许多世的轮回以抵达目标。如果我们现在不航行于和风丽日之下，什么时候再遇到这样的机会？

如果不在记忆中珍惜和怀念着目标 - 神，你就必须在许多世中徘徊，很晚才回到家。

《沙迪亚赛说》第3章175面

学习圈的问题：

1. 为何轮回转世不广泛地被西方所接受？
2. 为何我们不记得前世？
3. 有关我们的生活方式，转世有何提示？
4. 我们可能认识转世为一事实吗？

5. Why should we believe in reincarnation?
6. Is movement only made upward on the evolutionary ladder?
7. Are the circumstances of our births and lives due to chance?
8. How do we conquer the cycle of births and deaths?
9. Why conquer the birth / death cycle?

References for Further Study

1. Gita Vahini, p.28 (Memory is a function of the intellect, not the atma).
2. My Baba And I, p.188.
3. Sathya Sai Speaks 2, p.115.
4. Sathya Sai Speaks 4, p.4.
5. Summer Showers 1973, p. 98 (Wealth in this life is the result of actions in previous lives).
6. Summer Showers 1977, pp.178-179.
7. Summer Showers 1978, p.169 (People are reborn as a result of karma).
8. Summer Roses on the Blue Mountains, p.14 (Rebirth is determined by the manner of death).

5. 我们为何应该相信轮回转世？
6. 在演进的阶梯上，只有往上爬吗？
7. 生死是偶然的吗？
8. 如何征服生死轮回？
9. 为何要征服生死轮回？