

# THE WORD

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MOMENTS WITH FRIENDS.

*Can a man live through, finish the tasks of, and die to more than one life during his allotted span of years on this earth?*

Yes; he can. The fact of reincarnation is of course granted in the question. Reincarnation—as a teaching, that man, considered as a mind, comes into a physical body of flesh to learn certain things and to do certain work in the world in that life, and then leaves his body which thereupon dies, and that after a time he takes on another physical body, and then another and still others until his work is finished, knowledge is gained in and he graduates from the school of life—reincarnation is invariably accepted by those who have grasped the teaching and applied it in explanation of the inequalities in every respect of children of the same parents, and of the men and women they know who hold different positions in life and are different in development of character, irrespective of their heredity, environments and opportunities.

Although once known, yet for many centuries the doctrine of reincarnation has been foreign to the civilization and teachings of the West. As the mind becomes more familiar with the subject it will not only grasp reincarnation as a proposition, but will understand it as a fact, which understanding then opens up new views and problems of life. The question is asked from a different viewpoint than are those usually put. It is usually understood that when the mind has another physical body prepared for it, and incarnates, it just takes up that body and goes on with its work and experiences where the mind left off in the last life, as a bricklayer adds other bricks to those he had laid on the job of the day before, or as an accountant carries over his debits and credits on the set of books with which he is engaged. This applies to the majority, probably, of those who live. They come into life with their burdens and drudge through it sullenly, like donkeys with their loads, or they resist and kick at duties and everything in general, and refuse to accept and bear responsibilities, like mules which balk at and throw and kick their loads and anything that comes their way.

The minds incarnated in the West are of a different order from

those of the East, as is shown by the intensity of civilization, the inventions, improvements, constantly changing methods and activities of the day, in the West. The strain and stress may be greater now than in the past; but because of the very intensity of things more can be done now than could be done in the past.

Times and environments may set limits to man's work, but a man can use times and environments for his work. A man may pass through life automatically, or he may rise from obscurity and be a prominent actor in world history and give long employment to his biographers. The history of a man may be written on his tombstone as: "Here lies the body of Henry Jinks. He was born in this township in 1854. He grew up, got married, was the father of two children, bought and sold merchandise, and died," or the history may be of a different order, such as that of Isaac Newton or Abraham Lincoln. One who is self-moved, and who does not wait for so-called circumstances to move him, will have no limits set him. If a man wills to do so, he may pass out of one phase of life and into another, and work through that phase and into another, as Lincoln did; and if he continues to work, bent on doing something in the world and guided by right motive, he will have some great work entrusted to him, by doing which he will do not only the work of many lives for himself but will perform a work for the world; and in that case the world will in his future lives be an aid instead of a hindrance to him and his work. This applies to every public character who has done the work of and passed from one station of life to another.

But there are men who, irrespective of the place of their birth or station in life, live an interior life. This interior life of a man seldom goes on public record, and is seldom known to intimate acquaintances. As a man may go through many stations in public life, the attainment of any one of which may be the life's work of another man, so the man who lives an interior life may in one physical life learn not only those lessons and do that work which it was intended that he should in that life, but he may learn and do the work which it would have taken him other reincarnations to accomplish, if he had refused or failed to do his first allotted work.

It depends on the man, and what he is willing to do. Usually the man's position or environment changes with the finishing up of one work and with the readiness to begin another, though this is not always the case. Each change of work or character may symbolize a different life, though it may not always be equal to the work of an entire incarnation. One may be born in a family of thieves and be

compelled to work with them. Later he may see the wrong of thievery and leave it for an honest trade. He may leave the trade to fight in a war. He may at its conclusion enter business, but aspire to attainments not connected with his business; and he may realize much he aspires to. The changes in his life may appear to have resulted from conditions into which he was thrown, and these to have been brought about by accidental happenings. But they were not. Each change in such a life was made possible by his attitude of mind. His attitude of mind created or opened the way for the desire, and so was brought about the opportunity to make the change. Attitude of mind brings about or allows man's changes of conditions in life. By the attitude of his mind a man can in one life do the work of many lives.

A FRIEND [H. W. Percival]



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