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THE IDEA OF REINCARNATION

Rio de Janeiro, April 17, 1935

J. Krishnamurti

An Authentic Report Of Twenty-Five Talks Given By Krishnamurti In Latin America, The Star Publishing Trust, 1936

Question: Do you believe in reincarnation? Is it a fact? Can you give us proofs from your personal experience?

Krishnamurti: The idea of reincarnation is as old as the hills; the idea that man, through many rebirths, going through innumerable experiences, will come at last to perfection, to truth, to God. Now what is it that is reborn, what is it that continues? To me, that thing which is supposed to continue is nothing but a series of layers of memory, of certain qualities, certain incompleting actions which have been conditioned, hindered by fear born of self-protection. Now that incomplete consciousness is what we call the ego, the "I". As I explained at the beginning in my brief introductory talk, individuality is the accumulation of the results of various actions which have been impeded, hindered by certain

inherited and acquired values, limitations. I hope I am not making it very complicated and philosophical, I will try to make it simple.

When you talk of the “I”, you mean by that a name, a form, certain ideas, certain prejudices, certain class distinctions, qualities, religious prejudices, and so on, which have been developed through the desire for self-protection, security, comfort. So, to me, the “I”. based on an illusion, has no reality. Therefore the question is not whether there is reincarnation, whether there is a possibility of future growth, but whether the mind and heart can free themselves from this limitation of the “I”, the “mine”.

You ask me whether I believe in reincarnation or not because you hope that through my assurance you can postpone understanding and action in the present, and that you will eventually come to realize the ecstasy of life or immortality. You want to know whether, being forced to live in a conditioned environment with limited opportunities, you will

through this misery and conflict ever come to realize that ecstasy of life, immortality. As it is getting late I have to put it briefly, and I hope you will think it over.

Now I say there is immortality, to me it is a personal experience; but it can be realized only when the mind is not looking to a future in which it shall live more perfectly, more completely, more richly. Immortality is the infinite present. To understand the present with its full, rich significance, mind must free itself from the habit of self-protective acquisition: when it is utterly naked, then only is there immortality.