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Subject: Re: What are your thoughts on death?  
Posted by [Starbuzz](#) on Mon, 02 Aug 2010 18:18:15 GMT  
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sorry to bump a dead thread on death.

snpr1101 wrote on Sun, 25 July 2010 05:17

What is your resolve or philosophy that keeps your head level on the subject? Why do you, or do you not fear death?

I was personally raised in a semi Christian family and was forced to go to church every Sunday until I was about 12. I hated going; and eventually rejected the Bible and the existence of a God.

And now, one cannot help but be consumed by thoughts of insignificance. I am but one person amongst billions of others. A tiny spec of existence in the Universe. When put into such perspective, I have to question whether I really matter. And if that is the case, what do you do when the most valuable thing that is you is insignificant. If I were to jump off a bridge after writing this post, it really would not matter would it? Sure my parents and friends would be distraught...for a while. But the Earth keeps spinning; people go on and live out their grossly short lives and after some time; all is forgotten.

Once you die; do you believe that eternal nothingness is the only reality we are to "endure" so to speak? Will I be laid into Earth and left to rot; out of sight, out of mind and forgotten like our predecessors before us? Is heaven an alternate reality we have conjured to distract and deal with the grim one we face?

I think I should apologise for such a depressing post. I don't mean to dampen anyone's mood or air out dirty laundry; so for that I am sorry. Yet it is open for discussion. What are you thoughts?

I guess it just so happens that whenever someone leaves the religion they were brought up in, they are going to have a void left to fill. Maybe they should have just left us alone while growing up so we can see for ourselves.

Anyway, eventhough I never worked as an EMT or at a morgue, for a 23 year old that never served in law enforcement or military, I had seen one too many gruesome deaths upclose and personal from just a few feet away.

I was only 5 years old back in 1991 when I went to the open casket funeral of my uncle. He was a town bus driver who had a terrible head-on collision with a lorry in the darkness of pre-dawn hours. Most people on the bus and everyone in the lorry died on the spot.

So there he lay in death inside his coffin, completely destroyed. Just imagine the scene with him lying there with his entire family crying without control. It shocks me even now as I write this as I imagine my aunt's face... utter despair. She didn't live too long after that herself.

But overall the most closest I got to death personally was just as recently back in December last year. Again I was in India and I was returning home in my friend's hatchback. The 4th car ahead

of us had a massive collision with a lorry. The car simply vanished into the right wheel well of the lorry and came back shooting out in an instant and came to rest in the side of the road.

here:

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/cities/Chennai/article64734.ece>

To think I was just a few car-lengths behind that really makes me speechless. My friend being a Hindu parked the car a bit up ahead of the road because he wanted to pay his respects to the dead. Some Hindu sects require that when you are around the recently dead, you stop and pay respects before leaving. So we both made our way back to the site on foot. We made it up to the tree and that tall bush you see in that pic. The sight was ghastly and there was almost twenty or so people already at the scene trying to tear open the wreckage to free the men. Paramedics had already arrived too since it was near the toll plaza.

There had been six men there but to me it looked like five men all crushed and lay dead or dying. Men were working feverishly to cut open the wreckage to free the fallen. The destruction of their bodies was gruesome.

As I stood there looking at the destroyed driver who was sitting in death, I wondered about his fate. I was thinking to myself and crying silently, "just 2 minutes ago this man had paid the toll at the plaza behind him with me just four cars behind...now he lies extinguished in front of me." I felt hit by an invisible wall of water and overwhelming sense of loss for my fellow "neighbours" who lay in death.

As we drove back home, we were philosophical about it. These things are clearly out of our hands. It's chance and circumstance having the final say about their fates.

When Princess Diana tragically died alongside her lover Dodi in that wretched Paris tunnel, someone in my immediate family I am ashamed to name told me that his god had "smitten her for adultery." Even as a child I didn't fully believe it. It was obvious to me that she was killed due to her being on the wrong spot at the wrong time. A bit less speed would have had them cover the tunnel safely without the Merc losing control like it did. The judeo-christian god had no part in it; it frustrates me that there are billions of people in the world that believe this drivel.

Once in India a hugely popular christian evangelist's daughter lost her life on the spot in an accident (it's India and fatal accidents happen every 2 seconds). The Hindus sent him so much hate mail asking him "where is your god now?" but most were philosophical about it and were genuinely curious as to why this tragedy will befall him.

The evangelist in typical fashion said that "it was a test" and that "christian life is full of trials and tribulation" and "my sister is now in heaven because god wanted her then" and "we cannot question god's plan for everyone...it's his will" and "the closer we are to god, the harder the troubles satan gives."

Typically unrealistic answers as can be expected, of course.

Here's the thing I have come to understand. People like this evangelist and indeed most christians are and say such similiar things in the face of such awful catatrophe just need to expect less from

such imaginary deities of theirs. Once we understand how much we take for granted everyday and the thin line of cause and effect that our very lives hang on each passing moment, it would be much more easier to face reality.

That's what I always think to myself when on the road or when I am starting the car. I could get killed by some raging drunk tonight. This flies in the face of the the now obsolete christian dogma that states we all have "a purpose" on earth. Very outdated indeed.

Anyway, it doesn't matter who we are, if we are in the wrong place at the wrong time, we are screwed. I think any rational person will agree with that. While it maybe a bleak statement, it gives us a sense of control over death.

So while we put ourselves in risk all the time, we do have certain control over it in the way we behave and conduct ourselves to live a bit longer...perhaps by driving defensively in the road, eating and keepit fit and healthy so there will be no risk in the future. But hey, risks are unavoidable. there's no telling when that roller coaster ride in the theme park will crash and get you killed. It has happened before and it will happen again. As long as the right variables line up perfectly to make a disaster happen, it does and whoever is unfortunate enough to be in the way dies. So no matter what we do, we will die and we either make it to our natural end after living a long life or getting snuffed out in untimely accidents.

I think our fates are also intertwined with who we are born for and into. If there is a history of any inherited diseases in the family, then there is chance we have the ill-fated genes too. I think about that 11 year old who had cancer and died shortly. If we are born to someone in a wartorn refugee camp or into a proverty-stricken family, we are really helpless to a huge extent. It will be very hard to move on from there.

Even the most powerful or the richest man, I don't care who he is, is left pondering his existence in the silence of the night. Had anyone been to a noisy party with friends in the evening? After returning home, the party and its noise is in your head but only silence surrounds you. During my christian days, I would just hit the bed and fall asleep.

Nowadays, I just go out for a little night stroll, look up at the starry sky. It beats some sense and perspective into me. All that partying for nothing...but hey look at the bright side, you had fun at the party and had fun with your friends...even if the beautiful but cold heartless universe above didn't give a shit about it. Life rolls on. I just am glad to exist. I return home much more upbeat!

I don't fear the dirtbed that awaits me. It's inevitable that one day, no matter how it comes, we will take our last breath and be mourned for and then be forgotten as our families pass away into unrecorded history too. Obviously this leads to the afterlife question.

There is something I didn't initially understand about the "soul." I was told when I was young, without any proof whatsoever, that I have a soul and birds don't. I found it hard to believe even at that age. The way I see it, this unscientific term "soul" is related with our memory and recollection of past events and our own identity. Then it becomes very simple to me; did I exist before I was conceived? The answer is absolutely not. Even after I was born did I exist? No again! Cos I don't remember a darn thing.

I didn't even exist to myself as a baby. I certainly existed to my parents and grandparents and all relatives and friends who showed up at the nursing home I was born in back in 1986. Did I have a "soul" then as a baby? I didn't have a "soul" to say yes then...so why should I say yes now?!

So why do people tell me that I have a soul? imo, we have it confused with our memory and hence our sense of identity. People mistake their own identity and self-awareness as being a "soul." That's what I think and is the most plausible explanation.

So in grand summary to me, death is the reversal of birth. Just as we didn't exist at one point but were conceived, born, developed to recall memory and have self identity and awareness, death will be the reverse. Our body begins to wear and tear, the organs begin to falter functionally and then begin to fail one by one. Death "kills" our memory and hence our self-identity and self awareness. The "spirit" dies when our brain shuts down. And "I am back to 1985."

That's my view as it stands now. I have examined countless accounts of Near Death Experiences. An interesting thing to note about NDE's is that people of different religions see their own respective deities. A christian may see a tunnel with light but a Hindu may hear the roar of the chariots of his gods. This has been confirmed by multiple scientists who conducted extensive surveys with people who claimed to have NDE's. While I believe more research can be good in this matter, this finding only correlates current scientific theories regarding the images of a lifetime flashing moments before the shut down of the human brain.

I find it hard to think that our memories will survive death in a spirit form. HOWEVER, there are several possibilities to go over and many of these ideas were examined very well in the remake of Battlestar Galactica.

In Battlestar Galactica, there are the enemy Cylons. Though they are robots, some of them have also evolved into humanoid versions with flesh and blood and consciousness. When a humanoid Cylon dies or its body destroyed, its "consciousness" is transferred to a Ressurrection Ship. It's a massive ship that carries hundreds of spare bodies that have not had a consciousness from a dead cylon "downloaded" into it.

So if I were a Cylon and I died, AND if a Ressurrection Ship was within range, my consciousness will be downloaded into one of the many physical copies of my body kept on the ship. BUT if a Ressurrection Ship is NOT within range, my "consciousness"...my signal is lost in deep space and I truly die.

It was an amazing concept explored in the show. Anyway, it just goes on to show how difficult it is to believe in any "spirit" forms of us surviving our physical destruction. When we look back and observe our birth, we see a correlation between our physical development and our growing "sense" of identity. So for me it makes absolute sense that if the physical body is destroyed, so is the sense of identity which by itself relies on a healthy functioning human body.

Earlier this year I went to Chicago and in the Field Museum stood starring at a mummified Gorilla. I make a thread about it on the spam section here comparing hands. Anyway, I just stood there starring deeply into its eyes. So like ours! But here I was, the superior being having won the evolution lottery by a thin thread...I smiled to myself and felt so happy to be alive. I was proud of who I was. Proud to exist and happy for it. I was proud that I was the living animal outside rather

than the dead animal inside.

The religious tell us how worthless we are. They tell us how we are "sinful" criminals when we are barely an innocent ten years old in sunday schools. They tell us that because of our "crimes" we owe our servitude to a mediocre cosmic tyrant. They force us to throw away our lives by telling us real life begins after we die! What a robbery...the magnitude of which has no equal! They tell us if we do not follow, we will not just die, but burn forever in pain and "gnashing of teeth." They tell us this earth will perish and that all our great achievements and progress and wisdom are fickle. They put down those who reason against them as "lost" and "part of the world" and "narrow minded!" In all their stunning glorified ignorance, they eagerly await the day when the "sky will roll away like a scroll" and giant catastrophes will strike the earth and interdimensional beings will ride down on giant white cosmic horses to judge and punish mankind.

How degrading and insulting to ourselves! I don't need to say anything more about this group.

Just be happy you are alive and that you have asked yourself this great important question. So many people don't ask themselves and live the way they are programmed to at childhood. As Herr Surth posted that quote, the stars have nothing on you or me or anyone. We are all unique in our own ways yet the same beings capable of great things. The sun will rise and set and the earth will continue to rotate AND this party will go on. And so I see no reason to despair about your life or any alleged insignificance because that is not the case! cheers!

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