

Q: How would a truly illumined soul die? Would they make an ascension? (1-20-18)¹

A: Well, it depends on what you mean by ascension. Do you mean, "Would they not leave a body behind them?" There have been very few in history who have gone and not left a body behind—at least left what appears to our sense to be a body. An illumined individual doesn't die. Virtually, they walk out of their bodies. They come to a place where they decide, "I've gone far enough in this experience, and I'm ready for the next." If you'll remember the experience of Buddha, he just called his disciples in one afternoon and said, "I'm leaving you tonight." And that night he talked with them, laid down, said goodbye, and went. To their sense, he left a body for cremation, and they had a cremation as is usual in India.

In the same way, Brown Landone in Florida was ninety-seven years and nine months of age, and he was in the prime of health. He was in as fine a health as any one of us here, and in appearance he was as young. As a matter of fact, many times he was taken for my younger brother. Firstly, while he was bald on top, what hair he had was brown, not gray, and he had all of his own faculties and no artificial ones. He had a very trim, young figure. He was able to swim, play golf, and ride his airplane right smack up to the day of his going, and he was able to continue working. He averaged one hour and fifty minutes sleep out of every twenty-four hours, and the rest of the time he worked.

When you called his office for an appointment and were told it would be two o'clock, you were also told whether it was 2:00 p.m. or 2:00 a.m., because it could have been either. You had no choice about it if you wanted to see Brown. If he said 2:00 a.m., you got there at 2:00 a.m., or there was no appointment. His appointments went all the way through to five in the morning, and at five in the morning he quit and slept, usually until about seven o'clock. His average was only an hour and fifty minutes per day for twenty-four hours. He only ate one meal in twenty-four hours—at three o'clock in the morning he had a good healthy, hearty meal. The rest of the time he merely had tomato juice, orange juice, or black coffee.

That man put in more work than any dozen of us men in this room put together. I'm sure he wrote a whole magazine every month. He wrote never less than six, eight, nine books a year. He kept a healing practice of usually around three thousand patients all the time, and he had a correspondence that took three secretaries working three eight-hour shifts in the day, while he dictated to keep those three secretaries busy. And at ninety-seven years and nine months of age, he didn't have an ache or a pain in his body. One afternoon, he called in his secretary and said, "I am leaving. I have some work to do and I'm leaving." And the secretary, not understanding him, said, "Well, you're not going any place that I don't go with you." "Oh," he said, "you can't go where I'm going now." He said,

"I'm off on a mission. I've been called, and you are to take over and complete this work here." And Brown sat down on his sofa, leaned back, and that was that. He walked out. He also, to our sense, left a body to be cremated.

Now, this is the answer of how an illumined soul leaves: Either they decide when it's time to go and they go—Jesus said, "*I can lay down my life or pick it up*"—or they come to a point where they are called, and they obey the call, and they go. That's the way an illumined soul goes.

Now then, as for the second part, whether or not they leave a body, I would have to answer you truthfully: No, they don't. The fact that their students and disciples have seen a body doesn't change the answer at all. They never left a body. And I'm going to tell you something further—nobody in the history of the world has ever left a body here for burial or for cremation. There is no such thing in the history of the world as a body left behind by anybody for burial or for cremation. That which we see at the funeral is our **concept** of our friend or relative. **It is not their body.** That is the image of them that we are carrying around. I could put it this way and say, "You think you see me up here, and you don't. You don't see me at all. You don't know what I look like." The only way you could ever know what I look like is if you were in treatment or meditation and caught a spiritual glimpse of me. But what you're seeing up here is the human mind's concept—a very limited and false concept—of the **I** that I am. You may be assured of this: **I** am not in a body, nor are you. Please understand that anything I'm saying of myself, I'm saying of you. I'm not setting myself aside, and I'm not even setting Jesus Christ aside. God is no respecter of persons, and if anything is true of one, it's true of all.

We are not **in** these bodies. We have done this—perhaps it would be well if we do it here, because after all, this little experiment is partly responsible for our whole Infinite Way demonstration. I'm going to ask you to follow me in this. Will you look down at your feet, and will you ask yourself this question: "Is that me down there, or are those feet mine?" And now travel up to the knee and ask yourself, "Is that me down there, or is that mine?" And now go right on up to the waist and ask yourself, "Is that me or is that mine?" And keep right on up to the neck and find out whether that is me there or whether that is mine. Go right up to the top of the head, to the topmost hair of your head, and ask yourself, "Is that me, or is that mine?"

And what is the answer? Is it me at any point of that body? Could you find yourself in that body? No, of course not. That's all mine. That's all yours. There isn't a single place between your toenails and the topmost hair of your head where you could find yourself, because you are not there, and you never were there, and you never will be there. This is

just as much of a vehicle as your automobile, and just as you are never **in** your automobile—you occupy your automobile, but you're not **in** an automobile—neither are you **in** this body.

You can search this body, and do this experiment from head to foot, and do it over and over and over again, and go to surgical colleges and ask them if they ever found John Jones in a body or Mary Smith. I'm sure they'll tell you they've never found anybody in a body, and they never will, because there isn't anybody in a body, and there never was. No. You are invisible because you are consciousness. You are life eternal. You are soul. You are spirit. You are the way, the truth, and the life. You are life eternal. You are soul. You are the resurrection. You are the power itself. You are infinite being. You are God made manifest. You can't confine God in a skull bone. You can't confine God in a human body. You can't even confine Christ in a human body, and Jesus told you that if you destroy *this temple*—he didn't say if you destroy *me*; he knew you couldn't destroy me—if you destroy *this temple*, I will raise it up again. He didn't say, "I will be raised up." "I will raise this temple if you destroy it." This *I* isn't in a temple. This *I* isn't the temple, and the temple isn't *I*, but if you destroy this temple, *I* will raise it up.

That's why a practitioner can heal you or me. Because no matter what happens to your temple, the right spiritual awareness on the part of the practitioner will restore it, and don't ever doubt for a moment that there have been practitioners in our age who have even restored those who have passed on. It has been done just as it was done in the days of Jesus. It has been done in modern days, probably not to the extent that it was formerly done; not to the extent that we should be doing it; but it has been done. Why? Because the consciousness of an individual is God. It isn't man. It isn't body. It isn't limitation. It isn't finiteness. The consciousness, the spiritually developed consciousness, of an individual is God, and God is not confined to body.

Now then, is God, Spirit, Soul, walking around using a material body? No. No. This temple of the living God is *spiritual*. This body is spiritual, and the only thing about this body that is material is our *concept* of it. The body itself is *spiritual*. The *concept* we entertain of it is material, just as if you were to entertain the belief that that ring is silver. It wouldn't make anything silver about the ring at all. It's platinum, and the only silver about it would be the false concept of it that you entertain. And so it is, this body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. This body is the temple of God. This body is infinite, immortal, and eternal, but we have accepted the world's concept of it, and we call it material. And as long as we entertain that concept of it, we will bury our concept. We'll never bury our body. We will bury our concept, and so as long as you think this is me up here, it is possible that you will accept the belief that you can bury me. Or even if you accept the belief that this is my body that you're seeing, you may accept the belief that you are

watching it be buried. But this isn't my body. My body is here, but you can't see it.

You are right now entertaining your *concept* of body—the concept of body. I think that's why some of us say, "This girl is beautiful," and another one says "That girl is beautiful; I don't see how you can say that one is beautiful." I don't think we're seeing the beauty of the girl. We're seeing our *concept* of beauty, because if the girl were beautiful, everyone would agree on it. The girl isn't beautiful. It's our concept that's either beautiful or not beautiful. No, no.

Let us understand this now. The principle of life is this: that God is the causative Principle. Do you believe that God made something to decay, to rot, to fall away, to be diseased? No! God never did that. All of that goes on in our false concept of existence, that Jesus was buried in the tomb. They were all there at the funeral—very happy, too, to be there and watch that burial. I bet it gave them a great source of satisfaction to say, "That fellow's out of the way now, and we've watched him be put away, and we've put that stone there so that he can't get through." Oh, there must have been a great deal of satisfaction about that. And you know as well as I do that they agreed that he was dead, and that he was buried. They saw it. You can't have better proof than that, can you? The only trouble with it was that he was seen walking the earth after the burial.

And now, we come to a question of theology. How about the thousands of people that saw the death and the burial of Jesus and saw him sealed into the tomb? Will we take their word—the thousands of people—or will we take the word of five hundred people who saw him walk the earth after the funeral? Now, that's a very serious question, because there were many more who saw him dead and buried than ever saw him walk the earth after the resurrection. Will we believe the thousands or the few hundred?

Well, it all depends on which way you look at it. If you're satisfied to take the opinion of human sight, then Jesus was not resurrected, and he's still in that tomb, or what's left of him. If you take the word of people who, through their development, were known to have been spiritual in their approach to life; people who caught the vision of that which cannot be seen; then you would say, "I'd rather take the word of one of them than of ten thousand of the others."

So it is with us. If you take the word of the undertakers, then bodies have been left for burial and for cremation, and those bodies don't come to earth any more. But if you take the word of the few who have sometimes attended funerals and seen the very individual being buried actually standing up there laughing at the whole performance; if you want to take the word of that one as against the hundreds of others who are witnessing the funeral; then you would have been one of that five hundred that witnessed the

resurrection, because that is the truth of being.

The truth of being is this: In spiritual illumination you are able to see those whom, to human sense, have died and been buried. Again, some of you, I'm sure, have had the experience, and I can tell you that I have. I can tell you that I have. My own wife passed on, and came back to me three times in three days, and each time with a specific message. And I'm not a spiritualist, and I'm not a believer in the dead returning to life, nor have I ever delved into occultism or spiritualism. But I had the actual experience of witnessing, six hours after her passing, witnessing her standing by my side talking to me.

I had the actual experience twelve hours later when going through terrible pains of headaches through the excitement and stress of what I'd been through with her, and fighting myself, arguing, "I can help other people; I just couldn't help my own wife, or myself. Where is this God that I'm preaching about and talking about?" and having all the rest of these arguments that you've probably had yourself at times. Instantaneously, she was standing by my side and said, "Oh, Joel why don't you stop that battle! The battle isn't yours, but God's. The battle takes place in your consciousness. Your consciousness is the arena between that which we call God, which is good, and a nonexistent, a supposititious thing called evil. It isn't even real, and if you'll just leave it alone and don't enter into the battle, that good will dissolve the illusion of the evil." And that quickly I was healed.

The third time was the next morning when I awakened and realized that because of the peculiar circumstance, I was without funds, and I thought, "My, what am I going to do now?" That quickly, she was back there and took me over to my bookcase and pointed to a book, and told me the page to open to, and when I opened to that page it said, "In your new consciousness you will have health and wealth—health to enjoy wealth, and wealth to enjoy health." And I don't mind telling you that within twenty-four hours, that new consciousness started to build up the temple of my finances again. ...

Take my word for it that I have been 23 years in this healing work, and I've seen enough people healed of one disease or another, one condition or another, to know that there is nothing dream-like about this work. It's actual and it's practical. I've seen people raised from sickness just as I was raised from death twice. It's practical. There's nothing dreamy about it, and when I say to you that we don't die, and the body doesn't die, and it doesn't get buried or cremated, I really mean it in an intentionally practical way; in the same way that Jesus meant it when he said: "Look, flesh and blood. It's the same wounds. It's the same skin. Don't you see it's the same body? Why, I'll even eat and drink with you to prove to you it's the same body that was crucified."

They don't bury bodies or cremate them. They walk the earth again, only they're invisible to material sense. But they're not invisible to spiritual sense. Now, never think that you're going to be a healer if you judge by material sense. If you're going to judge materially, then your friends, relatives, or patient have sick material bodies, and there isn't anything you can do about it. It is only through spiritual sense that you can look at that appearance of disease, that body, and still see the body of God in its complete integrity, in its complete spiritual nature, and thus bring out healing. ...

Never think that with the human eyes you're going to see the bodies of those who have passed on. You're going to have to develop the same spiritual sense that enabled you to be a healer, and if you develop that, you will witness those who have—to our sense of things—passed on. That's how an illumined soul dies. That's how everybody else dies too, only they don't know it. The unillumined get kicked out of their sense of life by sin and disease, and the illumined walk out.

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