

# **The Scientific Proof of Reincarnation and More, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism**

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## **TO AWAKENING, PART 1**

### **Why Does Shakyamuni Buddha Manifested as A Buddha in India?**

Many people, after experiencing the genuine benefits of Buddhist teachings, such as inner peace, deeper spiritual enlightenment, and beyond, have asked, “Since Buddhism is phenomenally beneficial, why did Shakyamuni manifest as a Buddha in India to benefit Indian people instead of appearing in other areas like Europe, America, or China?”

You may ask, “Who was Shakyamuni Buddha?” Shakyamuni is Sanskrit for “Sage of the Shakya.” Siddhartha Gautama, a royal prince of the Shakya Clan, was born in the sixth century BC in India, near modern Nepal. He is now called Shakyamuni Buddha after becoming enlightened. He became a philosopher and spiritual leader whose teachings are now known as Buddhism.

Buddhism is considered a spiritual education rather than a religion, focusing on ethical practices, meditation, and reciting Amitabha with mindfulness etc. Its teachings include reincarnation—being reborn in subsequent lifetimes—as a path toward ultimate enlightenment. Now, let’s go back to the question; why did Shakyamuni Buddha incarnate in India instead of other regions?

The contemporary mentor of the Pure Land School of Buddhism, Master Chin Kung, has unveiled the answer for us. In ancient India, there were ninety-six religions, and meditation was a prevailing practice among them. Many of the practitioners, through deep meditation, could see different worlds and different dimensions. From the highest dimension of the “heaven of neither perception nor non-perception”\* (\*Skt. devā naivasamjñā-nāsamjñāyatanaṅpagāḥ) to the lowest dimension of “avīci hell”\* (\*Skt., the hell of incessant suffering), they saw all of the six realms.

Many of them asked: Why are there six realms of reincarnation? Why is there so much suffering in them? Are there any other worlds beyond these six realms? Can we transcend the suffering of these six realms? Well, when there is an entreaty, there will be a response. Shakyamuni therefore manifested as a Buddha in India to help them understand the truth of life and the universe.

Since most of the practitioners had seen the six realms during their deep meditation, they easily accepted His teachings. Let's think about it this way, would people in Europe, America, or China who had not practiced meditation and had not seen the six realms believe His teachings? Of course not! That's why it makes perfect sense that Shakyamuni Buddha manifested in India.

## **Six Realms of Samsara**

Six realms (or six paths) are the realms between birth and death, including the paths of hell, hungry ghost, animal, human, asura, and heaven. They are decided by the state of one's mind. It is extremely difficult to see all six realms through meditation, yet understanding reincarnation is the key for us to transcend the suffering sea of samsara.

Samsara is a fundamental belief of most Indian religions—the concept of the cycle of death and rebirth. Without understanding and believing in this fact, we will submerge ourselves in the wheel of being deluded, making karma, and then receiving the suffering of retribution. Luckily, modern science has been studying reincarnation since the mid-twentieth century. Thanks to Dr. Zhong Maosen, who spent almost a decade's worth of effort collecting many scientific studies in this area. Not only did he compile these scientific studies into an informative report—which saves a great deal of time for people who are interested in learning—but he even offered a method of transcending this suffering sea of endless birth and death. This is phenomenal!

The topic of causal reincarnation is indeed a very important sage education. In the past, Great Master Yin Guang, the 13th patriarch of Chinese Pure Land School, emphasized causality education above even Buddhist scriptures. Now let us start Dr. Zhong's speech.

## **Refined Energy Turns Into Matter While Drifting Soul Is Changed by Conditions**

Humans are born, and thus they must die. Ever since humans have known of birth and death, they have started to explore some more profound issues. For example, Why do people experience birth and death? Can we escape from birth and death? These questions actually have been explored for thousands of years throughout human history. Many religious and traditional cultures offer an abundance of answers.

For example, more than two thousand years ago, the Chinese sage Confucius had an annotation in The Book of Changes, also known as I Ching, "Refined energy turns into matter, and a drifting soul is changed by conditions."

“Refined energy turns into matter” refers to the situation after birth, while “a drifting soul” indicates the condition before birth. Throughout his lifelong teaching, Confucius never accentuated his teaching on death but encouraged us to focus on current life cultivation. He said, “Without knowing birth, how can one know death?” However, in his annotation above, he had essentially revealed to us the truth of birth and death.

In the same era as Confucius, there was a Western sage, Plato. Among his works, there is one book titled *The Republic* where he also mentioned the experiences of a soul leaving a body. In addition, the sage of Buddhism, Shakyamuni Buddha, gave very detailed explanations about the six paths of reincarnation as well.

## Historical Records of Reincarnation

In fact, there is a lot of recorded information regarding reincarnation within both Eastern and Western history, including quite a few examples in the official history. Let me cite some examples here. These are recorded in Chinese “official history,” which means these stories are recognized by the nation.

A poet in the Tang Dynasty, Li Bai—also known as the “Immortal Poet”—was reincarnated in the Song Dynasty as Guo Xiangzheng. This is recorded in the 10th post, 3rd volume, 444th chapter of *The History of the Song Dynasty*. The former life of Emperor Yuan of Liang, in the Southern and Northern Dynasties, was as a monk named Miaomu Seng.

Observing from history, we can see that emperors and people with great fortune and power were usually practitioners in the past. This record is an excerpt from the 1st post, 3rd volume, 8th chapter, in Liang’s *Annals of Southern History*.

The record also includes instances of the reincarnation of heavenly beings. For instance, in the history of the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Daizong was reincarnated from a deity. This is recorded in the 3rd post, 7th volume, 27th chapter, in *The Book of Tang*.

Of course, animals are also mentioned; that is, people have reincarnated as animals. The most famous example is from the Spring-Autumn and Warring States periods. A general of the Qin state, Bai Qi, led his army to fight against the Zhao state. General Zhao Kuo of the Zhao state only understood military tactics on paper and didn’t understand how to use military force, so he lost. As a result, four hundred thousand soldiers of the Zhao Army were captured by the Qin general Bai Qi, and Bai Qi had the four hundred thousand prisoners buried alive. In doing so, he committed a deep sin.

This history was recorded in a famous history book, *The Chronicles of the Eastern Zhou Kingdoms*. Its original words were this: At the end of the Tang Dynasty, an ox was struck dead by lightning. On the belly of this ox was written the words “Bai Qi.” The critics said that Bai Qi had killed too many people, therefore he received the retribution of being reborn as an animal

and struck by lightning for hundreds of years. According to the legend, many people, when slaughtering pigs, saw the words “Bai Qi” after the pig hair was removed. This implies that Bai Qi was reincarnated life after life to receive his retribution.

We can only mention a few of the many records in ancient history because our focus today is on scientific cases. Due to so many records in “official history,” the ancients had no doubts at all about the truth of causal reincarnation.

## **The Grievance Between Science and Religion Exemplifies Cause and Effect**

However, science has progressed today, and people have begun to believe in science with strong faith. Many think that science offers facts and evidence, so they no longer believe in causal reincarnation. They consider reincarnation a religious concept. Some use science to criticize religion and claim that reincarnation in religion is anti-science. Why would this be? It's likely because science and religion have had grievances for hundreds of years.

In the 17th century, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei proposed that the Earth was not the center of the universe. At that time, the religious believers, who were Catholics, embraced the idea that the Earth was the center of the universe and had been created by God. As a result, Galileo was persecuted by the clergy. They rebuked his scientific discoveries as heresy and imprisoned him for life. Many scientists were also persecuted at the time, including Italian monk and philosopher Giordano Bruno, who was burned at the stake.

In the past, people used religion against science, causing the grievances between science and religion, so today people use science to discredit religion. This is called “an eye for an eye” or causal retribution.