

Faith

Part 1

Life after death and the soul

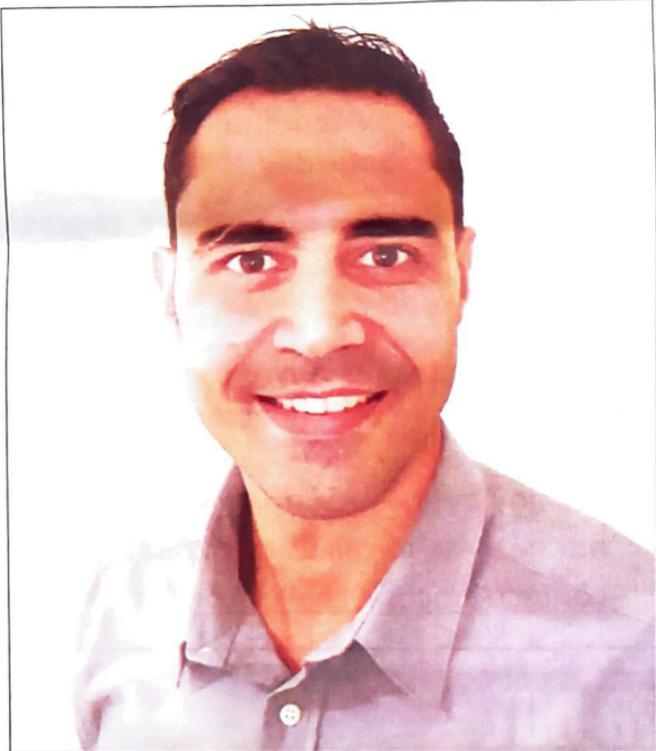
“For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you,” may be an indication of heaven or that a separate reality lies within the confines of our minds and can be accessed.

by A. Laporte

Paradise, Heaven, Nirvana, Valhalla, Swarga Loka, Elysium, are just a few names, according to different religions and beliefs, given to where the good and righteous go after life on earth. TODAY in Seychelles published a poll on social media asking whether or not people believed in life-after-death, this includes notions of heaven, hell and/or reincarnation. Seychelles remains, for the most part, a country of citizens who affiliate themselves to a form of religion or spirituality. Though it does seem that atheism is slightly on the rise, (as it is universally) 63% of social media users answered yes to the question at hand. This still leaves 37% who do not believe in such things.

TODAY interviewed Charlotte Hoareau, a lady who admits, “I am quite fluid in my beliefs. I believe for sure in reincarnation. I believe there are two parts to the whole heaven and hell concept. One, they can both exist whilst someone is still alive, as in, it is a state of mind. Depending on what our thoughts and actions have been in the recent to historical past, this is the kind of circumstance that we can put ourselves in; whereas the heaven and hell that people wish to believe exist once a person passes away, I don’t believe anyone can confirm for sure except for accounts of a near-death-experience (NDE) and the similarities people tend to talk about during that experience.

On that note, TODAY visited Jonathan Matile, energy therapist and clinical and developmental psychologist. He admits that it has yet to be proven scientifically that there is life after death but, “there exist numerous scientists who focus on out of body experiences (OBE). Multiple people have testified seeing specific activities happen on the other side of a wall (example, a woman reading a red book), and after coming back to their bodies they checked and indeed, this was true.” The contemporary philosophical and scientific ap-



Jonathan Matile

proach would be to ask if we possess the consciousness that can leave our body. On the theological spectrum, one could ask: do we have a soul? “We have people today all over the world who can leave their physical bodies, travel and investigate. Once they return to their bodies they can verify what they have witnessed and experienced. It remains, however, a taboo scientific question.”

Matile has spent many years studying and conducting research on patients who have been through an NDE. Matile states that research shows that up to 15% of experiencers went through this in a deep state of fear, that can only be described as “going through hell”. However, the overwhelming majority describe it as pure love, “there is no word to describe the intensity of this love.” He proposes that it may be possible that the notions of heaven and hell could have been invented as a result of these experiences, “you find it in every culture on Earth, regardless of being religious or not. This

happens to millions of people around the world, not only when someone’s heart stops but also during meditation or sleep.” He adds that if we do indeed have a soul (consciousness) that can survive outside of the body, it means that we are immortal.

Luke 17:20-21 - ‘And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.’

Taking this passage of the Bible, one can look at an NDE experiencer and find a connection. Maybe it is possible that heaven is not necessarily above the stars, but within and around us. Scientific evidence seems to point in that direction.

In part 2 of this article, TODAY will talk to the religious and spiritual community to dive deeper into the enigma of life outside of our bodies, or after death.



Out of body experi...