

Review: Dr Maurice Rawlings, *Beyond Death's Door*, Bantam Books, NY, 1978 (1979 edn.)

Pages: 149

Things Worse Than Death

Hairraising accounts of hell NDEs from a lukewarm cardiologist who eventually became converted as a result. These are detailed and corroborate New Testament descriptions, especially Revelation 20, however, depending on one's theology they may be accepted as real or 'fraudulent' (although the Devil would have little reason to fabricate these, moreso the 'positive' ones).

Given his profession, he also includes a lot of practical material on CPR and biology, which almost makes it a first aid course as well.

Introduction (pp. xi-)

"One evening in 1977 I was resuscitating a terrified patient who told me he was actually in hell. He begged me to get him out of hell and not to let him die. When I fully realized how genuinely and extremely frightened he was, I too became frightened." [ppxii-xiii]

Only 20% of survivors volunteer an NDE experience.

"Man still refuses to accept the inevitability of death, He is displeased with this threat to his assumed immortality." [pxiv]

I) To Hell and Back (pp. 1-8)

The pulse may be felt alongside the Adam's apple.

A pacemaker wire is injected into a large vein under the collarbone leading directly to the heart.

“Each time he regained heartbeat ... the patient screamed, ‘I am in hell!’ ... I am in hell. Each time you quit I go back to hell! Don’t let me go back to hell!’ ... He was in a panic like I had never seen .. After several death episodes he finally asked me, ‘How d I stay out of hell?’ I told him I guessed ... Jesus Christ would be the one whom you would ask to save you. Then he said, ‘I don;t know how. Pray for me.’ ... The patient’s condition finally stabilized ... I went home, dusted off the Bible ... I had to find out ... what hell was supposed to be like. I had always dealt with death as a routine occurrence ,, an extinction with no need for remorse or apprehension ... The man ... has stayed ‘on the hook’. He is now a strong Christian ... He does .. remember the prayer we said ... he does recall standing in the back of the room and watching us work on his body there in the floor.” [pp3-5]

Coronary catheterisation: examines the heart vessels; leg BVs must sometimes be taken from the legs and implanted on the heart surface above and below the obstructed arteries (“bypass” grafts).

“ ‘Isn’t that interesting’, one doctor said ... But that doesn’t actually concern me too much. If there is a hell, I don’t need to worry. I’ve led a respectable life ... If there is a heaven, I’ll get there ... another doctor. ‘I don’t believe there is any life after death ... I was in seminary for three years before .. medical school. I left seminary because I couldn’t being myself to believe that there is life after death.’ ” [p7]

II) Bring’em Back Alive (pp. 9-18)

Modern CPR can bring back 50% of patients: closing the nostrils causes, mouth removal causes automatic air exhalation via elastic recall of the patients chest; the cycle is interrupted every 15 compressions for 2 quick breaths; chest-opening surgery is no longer required to perform open-heart massage; survival is 98% if CPR is given with 1 minute (this drops to 11% by 6 minutes).

Bronchoscope: hollow tube passed down the windpipe capable of extracting material with forceps.

Waiting for an ambulance only works 18% of the time; the brain can survive 4 minutes without blood delivery from the heart.

Ventricular fibrillation: silent twitching.

Nine hours is the average wait between coronary symptom onset and hospital admission.

III) How Will You Die? (pp. 19-26)

Charles was the 48-yr-old mailman who made the hell visit above.

“You’re as old as your arteries.”

Thrombosis: clot occlusion; when tissue dies this becomes an infarction. There may be kidney, eye, myocardial, and cerebral infarctions.

The heart has its own pencil-sized network of supply arteries covering its surface (its ‘corona’).

Most heart attacks occur at rest.

Coronary catheterisation is done to diagnose chest pain cause.

IV) Concepts of Death (pp. 27-42)

Pericles held that personal sacrifice for the State bestowed a deathlessness upon the soldier; the good of the State was the meaning of life.

V) Strange Encounters of the Last Kind (pp. 42-60)

“Negative encounters profoundly affect their [patients’] future life ... ‘*I have not seen one such person remain agnostic or atheistic!*’ ” [p46]

“In 1889, on Dr Wiltse of Skiddy, Kansas, went four hours without a pulse and thirty minutes without respiration due to typhoid fever (*St. Louis Medical and Surgical Journal*): ‘I seemed to be a translucent ... bluish cast ...how well I felt, I thought.’”

Dwight Moody came back from death after seeing his deceased children.

IV NaHCO₃ and epinephrine are given to restart the heart if electric shock fails.

Hallucinatory sedatives or drugs are *less* likely to cause NDEs.

During an NDE, “no Christian ever saw a Hindu deity and no Hindu saw Jesus.”

VI) Ascending to ‘Heaven’ (pp. 61-103)

“The experience of meeting a ‘loving’ or ‘searching’ being of light ... Confessed atheists ... say, proves there is no hell and that God, if He exists, loves everyone.” [pp69-70]

“Jesus had ordered her back to talk to others.”

“A man ... clothed in a robe ... dazzling ... looking down into a big book ... this beautiful, brilliantly lit city ... with domes and steeples ... streets were shining .. It looked like a football stadium ... They said, ‘In there is God’.

Thomas Welch: “I went out on the trestle to straighten out some timbers ... Suddenly I fell off ... I landed on my head ... thirty feet down ... The next thing I knew I was standing near a shoreline of a great ocean of fire ... what the Bible says it is in Revelation 21.8 ‘ ... the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone ... this burning, turbulent, rolling mass of blue fire ... There was nobody in it ... I saw other people whom I had known .. Their expressions were those of bewilderment and confusion ... There is no way to escape, no way out. You don’t even try to look for one.” [p86-7]

An average Christian and churchgoer dying of heart attack: “The next thing I remember was entering this gloomy room where I saw in one of the windows this huge giant with a grotesque face that was watching me. Running around the window sill were little imps or elves.” [pp90-1]

Dr George Richie, 1943, OBE: “The world of the damned ... a vast plain ... on the surface of the earth where depraved spirits were at constant warfare with one another. Locked in personal combat, they punched and gouged at one another. Sexual abuses and howls of frustration were everywhere, and loathsome thoughts of anyone were universal.” [p91]

Lady, Aytal barbiturate suicide: “being jostled up and down on a blanket held between two satanic beings ... in a huge foreboding cave. The beings had tails and slanted eyes.” [pp96-7]

VII) Dealing With the Dying (pp. 104-117)

VIII) What’s it All About? (pp. 118-132)

IX) Making Sure (pp. 133-144)