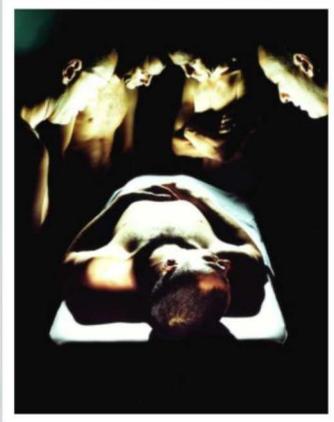


DEATH

A Reminder of Eternal Life



One of life's greatest mysteries - death. What is death? Why does it exist? Is death the end of life or could it be the beginning of life at another dimension? Death implies that all our plans are forever frustrated and the basis for all those plans - the material body - is also permanently destroyed. This ultimate defeat in the form of death is just not acceptable for our minds, filled as they are with dreams and schemes for enjoyment. Consequently despite periodic reminders of death through disasters, accidents and attacks, we live primarily by the denial of death.

Actually death is an indirect reminder of eternal life, just as pain is an indirect reminder of good health. When a sick person denies his pain and sickness, he deprives himself of good health that would be his if he took the right medicine. Similarly when we conditioned souls deny the misery and death of this world, we deprive





ourselves of spiritual happiness in the eternal world that would be ours if we took the medicine of devotional service. If good health was not a possibility at all for the patient, then denial of disease might be the best way to live. Similarly if eternal life were not a possibility at all, then denial of death might make sense. But the possibility - indeed the reality - of eternal life is confirmed from many sources. All

the time-tested sacred scriptures assert it and all the great saintly persons throughout history reiterate it. Even modern science is discovering that life can exist independent of the body (as seen in out-of-body experiences) as well as beyond the body (as seen in past life memories).

Actually death is an illusion because the soul never dies and the body never lives. So the fear and pain associated with death is primarily due to losing all that is dear to us - people, positions and possessions. But if we make God, Krishna, our dearest object before death, then death will not separate, but unite, us with our heart's love. The process of bhakti - centered on chanting of the holy names - is the scientific process to transfer our love from material objects to Krishna and thus conquer death...

