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In Light of Love: The Near-Death Experience and the Bible

by Scott D. Davidson

Abstract: The author explores love as found in the near-death experience (NDE) and love found in the Bible. A common trait found in NDE and shared by the Bible is the message that humankind should learn to love one another. This paper will establish the parallels of love found in the Bible and in the NDE and the possible implications of these parallels.

Introduction

Long after surviving Auschwitz and three other Nazi prison camps, notable neurologist, psychiatrist, and holocaust survivor Victor Frankl (1979/1985) felt mankind began to proceed past the point of fighting for daily survival and encountered a new problem. This is a problem with a less direct threat than the Nazis presented to Frankl and fellow holocaust survivors. Once freed from the distractions of the struggles for daily survival, many began to have the time to devote themselves to improving their socioeconomic situations in hopes that this would provide happiness. At the same time, they began to have time to think and devote themselves not just to surviving but also to identifying a purpose in their lives. Unfortunately, the improved socioeconomic situations did not provide the expected happiness. Frankl (1979/1985) explained: “The truth is that as the struggle for survival has subsided, the question has emerged: survival for what? Ever more people today have the means to live but no meaning to live for” (p. 21). Frankl argues a notable point, much of mankind is dying to live and unsure what to live for and improved socioeconomics has not made the drive for identifying existential meaning less desirable. While answering Frankl’s question is beyond the scope of this paper, the focus will be on subjects that claim to have an answer to Frankl’s question: “survival for what?”

This article deals with two subjects that respond to Frankl’s thesis: (1) the near-death experience (NDE) and (2) portions of the Bible. While on the surface two distinct things, both of these subjects indicate remarkable similarities between the details from NDEs and directives found in the Bible. Both claim to have an answer to the question: what is life’s purpose or in other words what is the highest goal to work towards while one is living?

Some view the NDE as evidence of life after mortal existence. The Bible is a source of moral guidance and knowledge for much of the Christian world (about one-third of the world’s population). A common belief of the NDE, and likewise accounts in the Bible, is the message that humankind should learn to love one another. Not only is this purpose of loving one another a common feature of both but it is also the pinnacle directive of both.

This text will establish the parallels of love found in the Bible and in the NDE. It will begin with (1) a brief explanation of the relevance of the NDE and the concept of love found in NDEs and near-death research, as well as the experience of this phenomenon of love as reported by many of those who return from a NDE. Then this text will (2) consider the Bible and its definition and charge of love. Finally, this text will (3) use non-rigid abductive reasoning to focus on the symbiotic relationship between NDEs and the Bible and their homology of love and will form a hypothesis. Abductive

reasoning begins when one examines a number of ostensibly unrelated or even possibly related facts with the perception that they are possibly associated. In abductive reasoning, consideration of the facts suggests the hypothesis, and it is the actual process of inference that produces a hypothesis as its end result. The hypothesis formed at the end of this text can later be tested by deduction and induction.

Shortcomings of This Article

First, this article will be of no use to those who will not consider the possibility of the NDE and are not open to the idea that the Bible could possibly be a text composed of divine direction.

Second, this article relies on what philosopher Richard Swinburne (1991) terms arguments from religious experience and from miracles. Briefly, arguments from religious experience claim that many have experienced God in some form and thus can testify to others about God's existence (Swinburne, R., p. 244). This paper relies on a view that many different people from many different cultures believe that they experienced a divine phenomenon. Furthermore, Swinburne (1991) suggests that these religious experiences are the most pointed argument for the existence of God because it is a claim of actually experiencing God. In this paper, there are many different people from many different cultures claiming similar supernatural experiences with a subject called God.

Arguments from miracles defy all that is known about the laws governing the physical world and are simply unlikely to happen without the direct intervention of God. A miracle occurs in direct violation of the natural laws governing the physical world (Swinburne, R., p. 233). There are many testimonies of miracles and these testimonies support the miracles. These unnatural occurrences called miracles can offer evidence of God because: "...it is evidence of the occurrence of events which natural processes do not have the power to produce" (Swinburne, R., p. 234). Both arguments from miracles and arguments from religious experience have their weaknesses and may be scrutinized by analyzing the person making the claim and the many factors that may have caused the experience, such as religious background, differing perceptions of reality, deception, visual sensations, lighting, hallucinations, the mental state of the person, the effects the experiences have on the person making the claim, and even alcohol or mind altering drugs. Furthermore, ignorance of the limits of natural laws makes it hard to know if miracles are in violation of natural laws.

Third, we must consider that NDE researchers have long since argued for the NDE to support a particular belief system. A few notables include Dr. Ken Vincent (2003) arguing for the validity of the Bible and Christian Universalism. Cardiologist and NDE researcher Michael Sabom (1995) in *Light & Death* argues that the NDE supports a more conservative Christian ideology. Also, the late notable near-death researcher Arvin Gibson (1992) in *Glimpses of Eternity* argued that the NDE is evidence of the authenticity of Mormonism. The quarrels of religious ideologies and the rush to claim the NDE has naturally carried on over a prolonged period of time. Such texts as Kenneth Ring's (2000): *Religious Wars in the NDE Movement: Some Personal Reflections on Michael Sabom's Light and Death*, and *Religious Wars or Healthy Competition in the*

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NDE Movement? by Arvin Gibson (2000)¹ recognize this. To deny this study is not weighted towards a certain theological system would be disingenuous.

Fourth, this article does not wish to expand nor repeat the history of the Bible but rather to briefly focus on the significant English version of the Bible, that being the KJV (King James Version). Extra Biblical texts and other similar texts such as Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Dead Sea Scrolls, Gnostic, Early Church Fathers writings, and other works are excluded from this study. These excluded texts should not be ignored and deserve attention in the arena of near-death studies. Likewise, love highlighted in faith movements that do not use the Bible as one of their authoritative texts should not be ignored. This includes the teachings of the importance of love found in other major world religions such as, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. All purport to some degree the importance of love, but these similarities in no way take away from the implications of the common theme and charge of love found in the NDE and the Bible. The scope of this paper is vast in ambitiously using the Bible as a whole, yet paradoxically narrow in terms of textual focus with the focus aimed only on the popular and well received KJV of the Bible and not on other versions of the Bible, extra Biblical texts, and other movements' works.

Relevance of the NDE

A significant Gallup and Proctor poll in 1982 surveyed U.S. adults, and found 5% of those surveyed had a NDE (Gallup and Proctor, 1982) and similarly in March of 1997, U.S. News and World Report surveyed and found that 15 million adults in the U.S. had a NDE. Surveys taken in the U.S., Australia, and Germany suggest that 4 to 15% of the population have had NDEs (Key Facts about Near-Death Experiences, 2009, p. 2).

Medical doctor and near-death researcher Peter Fenwick (2005) found in his own research that 10% of the survivors of cardiac arrest will report NDEs (p. 141). Dr. Bruce Greyson (2003) found the same results in his study (pp. 269-276). Some studies have found that cardiac arrest survivors reporting NDEs can be as high as 25% but on average it appears that research settles on a 10-20% range of cardiac arrest survivors reporting a NDE (Fenwick, 2005, 142 and van Lommel, van Wees, Meyers, & Elfferich, 2001, 2039-2045). So what is a near-death experience? A near-death experience can be defined as a profound psychological event that may occur near-death or in a situation of physical or emotional crisis. It includes mystical and transcendental attributes and is a powerful event of consciousness and is not a mental illness (Greyson, 2000, 315-352). Medical doctor Melvin Morse (1990) a NDE researcher declares in *Closer to the Light*:

The near-death experience is the first psychological experience to be located within the brain.... By locating the area for NDEs within the brain, we have anatomy to back up the psychological experience. We know *where the circuit board is*. I have reexamined a generation of scientific research into higher brain function and have found that the soul hypothesis explains many "unexplained" events. It explains out-of-body experiences, the sensation of leaving the body and accurately describing details outside of the body's field of view. Events such as floating out of the physical body and giving accurate details of one's own cardiac arrest -things a person couldn't see even if their eyes were open- are virtually impossible

¹ The Journal of Near-Death Studies features two issues focusing on the Religious Wars in the NDE research arena, Vol. 18 No. 4, Summer 2000 and Vol 19, No. 1, Fall 2000. The first is more direct in focus.

to explain if we do not believe in a consciousness separate from our bodies that could be called a soul. (p. 170)

Morse and other researchers have continued to support and mount evidence in support of the NDE, whereas, studies attempting to medically debunk the NDE have continuously failed to adequately address NDE apologetics.²

It has and can continue to be argued, the NDE is one of the best evidences available to us of the soul's survival beyond the death of the physical body. The NDE provides a purported glimpse into life after death something that very few phenomena can claim to do. Moreover, the NDE fails to discriminate against any individual with exclusive requirements found in faiths and other movements and rather the NDE provides a mystical encounter to a percentage of people who find themselves close to death's door. The only requirement of those who had or will have a NDE is that they need to be close to death or in a state of physical or emotional crisis. The trigger is obvious and the effects are radical.

Love as Found in the NDE

Strongly, NDErs report feeling overwhelming love during their NDE, a lack of fearing death, and a purpose for their existence discovered during their NDE. Much like a Biblical verse that states its interpretation of the purpose for all mankind in a matter of fact manner, the NDEr appears to exhibit the same confidence. Encountering an all-encompassing feeling of love during the NDE is one of the most common elements of the experience.

Near-death researcher George Ritchie (1995) recalls his own NDE involving a heavenly being he described as Jesus: "Far more even than power, what emanated from this Presence was unconditional love. An astonishing love. A love beyond my wildest imagining. This love knew every unlovable thing about me...and accepted and loved me just the same" (p. 49). In another encounter, NDEr Ann recollects, "Somehow I knew, inside of me, that the earth had been left behind. I had no idea where I was, and I didn't care. I felt a deep, profound peace...no, it was more than that. It was a world of peace and love" (Gibson, A., 1992, 238). NDEr Neddie Pitcher remembers in her own encounter:

"I don't remember being hit, but I do remember standing above my body and watching what was going on. [My husband] Vern had not seen the car hit me. He only heard the thud of my body hitting the car, and the headlight glass breaking...I remember trying to reach out to Vern to comfort him, but I couldn't do it. I left the scene of the accident at this point and traveled through a gray mist that became lighter as I traveled upward. Eventually the fog gave way to brilliant light as I entered a beautiful garden...more beautiful than anything I have seen on earth... "My daughter, what are you doing here?" asked a voice from behind. I turned and saw a man in white whose radiance and love astonished me...As he spoke, and as I felt the love and light that radiated from him, I believed he was my father in heaven." (Nelson, 1988, 123-124)

Shortly thereafter Neddie Pitcher returned to her body and she later revealed this revelation from her NDE:

Sometimes as we go through life we say and do things that hurt others, and we let those words or deeds build up and won't forget them...Hurt

² See Gregory Stone's full critique of Susan Blackmore's *Dying to Live* at www.nderf.org.

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feelings and hate become like cancer-eating away our hearts. I know now that with love we can conquer anything. With love we can forgive and be forgiven. (Nelson, L., p. 133)

In *Light and Death*, Michael Sabom (1998) records a NDE where the survivor encounters a heavenly being: "I began to weep, crying, feeling his love. Not sorrowfully, but just out of the feeling that I had never felt that kind of love before, ever" (p. 95). Similarly, another NDE survivor recalled: "I was filled with love and peace that I can only describe and can never do it justice. I was so loved and accepted. I had never felt so loved in all my life. The peace, serenity, joy, and no pain was unbelievable!" (Filled with Love and Peace, 2010). These recollections of love felt while near-death or after pronouncements of death are commonly reported when the survivor returns to life.

Twentieth century near-death researchers have found that love is central to the near-death experience, just as these NDErs have reported (Moody, R. 1979, p. 65 and p. 93; Ring, K. 1998, p. 187; Atwater, P.M.H 1989, p. 33). The Journal of Near-Death Studies states in their "Key Facts about Near-Death Experiences" that the most commonly reported type of NDE involves intense feelings of peace, joy, and love, and often an encounter with an unconditionally loving light (Key Facts about Near-Death Experiences, 2009, 1). A number of near-death researchers specifically focused on the phenomena of love found in the NDE.

Peter Fenwick (2005) wrote that love and light are absolutely fundamental to the dying experience (pp. 151 & 153). Light is another element reported by people having a NDE. Ken Vincent (2003) wrote: "the overwhelming amount of data leaves no doubt that the Light experienced by the NDEr radiates love" (p. 63). Liz Dale (2007) broke ground when she wrote of gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender individuals and their NDEs, including the overwhelming feelings of love that they felt (pp. 173-174, & 177). This research further supports an argument for the possibility of an all loving creator. Michael Sabom (1998) found in his studies that overwhelmingly NDErs felt love and a need to increase love for others (p. 227). NDE researcher Jody Long (2010) found in her own research, "Typically, love is the one emotion that is mentioned as the overriding message of the entire NDE" (p. 9).

The feeling of love is a central attribute of the NDE. Love felt during the NDE is thoroughly established by substantial near-death researchers. The near-death research field is full of accounts that support the claim that love is one of the most commonly reported emotions described after a NDE and often the most notable of feelings. Just as Kenneth Ring (1998) states: "...of all the lessons of the NDE, none is greater than the importance, indeed the primacy, of love. And what the NDE teaches about love is that everything is love, and is made of love, and comes from love" (p. 187).

After going through a NDE and feeling this overwhelming sense of love, many individuals feel a transformation and a need for reevaluation of their purpose and values. Survivors of NDEs not only have a story to tell but they also have an answer to give Victor Frankl (1979/1985) and those who search for purpose and meaning to life. NDErs report finding an existential purpose based on the phenomenon of love. As one NDEr recalled:

I remember feeling angry and fearful about going back - after being in all of this light - to have to go back to darkness. And then I felt the presence of Jesus Christ all around me. The feeling of love was completely

overwhelming...I asked him, “Do I really have to go back?” And his answer was that I was part of God’s divine plan, as is every person, and that my ultimate purpose is to love and serve God and all sentient beings. (Dale, 2001, pp. 35-36)

Peggy Holladay, another NDEr, states: “One thing I [learned] was that we are ALL here to do an ‘assignment of love” (Ring, 1998, p. 47). Likewise, another NDEr recalled: “We are here to love each other and learn. That’s the message. I want everyone to know that it is real there, more real than here...” (Love Each Other and Learn, 2010).

Raymond Moody (1979) deduced from his landmark book, *Life After Life*, that we are to learn to love others and that our purpose while on earth is to love one another (pp. 41 & 45). Likewise, he also penned in *The Light Beyond*, “Love is why we are here, it’s the most important thing in life” (Moody, 1989, p. 41). In Moody’s important (1979) study of the 150 or so people he interviewed he found most become more loving.

William J. Serdahely learned from his near-death studies: “...NDErs...say that what they learned during their NDEs was the importance of love and loving others, often phrased as unconditional love; and helping others often said to be a mission or a purpose yet to be fulfilled” (Serdahely, 1992, p. 182). Also, in *The Near-Death Experience: A Reader* (1996) it states that the NDE teaches the survivor that they are to learn how to “give love” (Bailey and Yates, p. 326). Michael Sabom wrote that research displayed a consistent overall increase in the capacity and desire to love after a NDE (Sabom, 1998, p. 93). Arvin Gibson wrote in *Glimpses of Eternity* that he discovered in his research: “Upon returning to this life they [NDEr’s] felt that the most important message they brought back with them was that we should all love everybody else—all the children of God—with an unconditional love” (Arvin Gibson, 1992, p. 263).

Much of the credible scholarship in the field of near-death studies and also the accounts of NDEr’s support the claim that learning to love and loving one another is often reported as a purpose if not the highest purpose of life for these NDE survivors. If NDErs continually report the utmost importance of love, then how does this line up with the teachings of religions, specifically Christianity? Particularly, how do the teachings found in the widely held sacred religious text, the Bible, hold up against the claims from NDErs that learning to love one another is the highest of purposes in life?

Biblical Love

The subject of Love is something familiar to those who have delved into the Bible. There are several versions of the Bible with the King James Version (KJV) often the most preferred. The KJV is composed of the Old and the New Testament and is the central text of Christianity. Woven throughout this version of the Bible are hundreds of statements regarding love. These statements use love as a verb, noun, abstract state, and a charge to action.

The KJV defines love as charitable, patient, kind, non-envious, non-boastful, not proud, not rude, not easily provoked, rejoicing in righteousness, rejoicing in truth, enduring, hopeful, positive, unwavering, never failing (1 Corinthians 13), being kind towards neighbors (Ephesians 4: 31) being law abiding (Romans 13:10), and commandment keeping (2 John 1:6). The KJV was translated primarily from Greek and published in 1611. In the Greek language there are four words for love. *Storge* refers to the natural affection parents have for their children. *Eros* is romantic or passionate love.

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Filia is friendship. *Agape* is unconditional love. When the KJV uses the word love, it is often *agape*. *Agape* is the best fit for the unconditional love found throughout the KJV.

Often in the Bible, these appeals to love spawn from divine direction with splendor and depth. We find statements such as “let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is Love” (1 John 4:7-8). In Deuteronomy and Matthew we find that: “thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deuteronomy 6:5 and Matthew 22:36). In Romans 13:10 we find that love is law, “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” 2 John 1:6 asserts: “And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.” This suggests that love is a commandment.

The collection of 66 books composing the KJV of the Bible, written by many authors in several languages contains the history, prophecy, and direction of a people. This compiled book contains texts central to Judaism and Christianity and is a compass to those who hold it sacred. The direction given from this compass reaches its apex for Christians when the Pharisee lawyer in an instigating tone queries Jesus, “which is the greatest commandment in the law?” and Jesus replies:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22: 36-40)

The obligation of love is reiterated in other areas of the New Testament as well. In John 13 we find Jesus stating to his disciples: “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13: 34-35). Paul restates this commandment in Ephesians (Eph. 4:2), Galatians (Gal. 5:13), and Thessalonians (1 Thes. 3:12 and 1 Thes. 4:9). We find additional direction in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, “I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5: 44). To the Bible, love arguably is the most important action a person can do and declarations of the essentiality of love within human existence pour over the pages.

The Symbiotic Relationship of the NDE and the Bible

The late religious philosopher and literature professor Eugene England stated: “If I am marooned on a desert island, absolutely dependent on finding another human being to comfort and perhaps save me, the one little swale where I find a single fresh human footprint is more important, more true, than the other hundreds of square miles where I find nothing” (Eugene England, 2007, p. 119). It can be argued in later research that a footprint of divinity and life after death may be found with the established commonalities of love found in the NDE and in the Bible. What is argued is that a symbiotic relationship does exist and that it is an absolutely mutually beneficial relationship that lends credence to each other’s claims based on homologous similarities which point towards common descent. Therefore, if one believes in the Bible then one needs to also

consider the truthfulness of the NDE and likewise if one believes in the NDE then one needs to also consider the truthfulness of the Bible.

The Bible commands that there are no greater tasks than to love God and to love one another. These are deemed the greatest commandments and are no different than what NDErs report as the highest purpose of life. The Bible also purports that God is love. In fact, the very essence and composition of God is love. This is made very clear with the repetitive statements to this affect found throughout the Bible. Is this love described in the Bible the same unconditional love found in the NDE?

From the NDE we find that the average NDEr reports learning of the same necessity to learn to love one another as is found in many descriptions of love in the Bible. Is this charge the very same charge declared by Jesus in the Bible, to love God and one another? Additionally, the average NDEr recalls the unconditional love that is experienced. Is this unconditional love from God or is it God manifesting himself to them? Numerous possibilities are available for further consideration.

To ignore the commonalities of the NDE and the Bible and the possible implications would be disingenuous. So what are the implications that can be birthed from this symbiotic relationship?

Using non-rigid abductive reasoning a hypothesis emerges. A brief description of abduction is as follows, "Abduction is an intellectual tool, specifically suited for dealing with incomplete evidence under high uncertainty in complex real-life situations or in ill-structured disciplinary fields of knowledge" (Patakorpi, 2009, p. 118). The father of abduction, Charles S. Peirce, believed that abduction is reasoning to obtain the best explanation. Abduction is an appeal to instinct. "The abductive suggestion comes to us like a flash. It is an act of insight albeit extremely fallible insight" (Pence, 1997, p. 157). The theory of abduction, using hypothesis generation is not hampered by non-naturalistic explanations. Thus abduction is suited for working with theological and metaphysical discussions.

Surely, arguing for the existence of non-naturalistic explanations concerning the NDE and the Bible offers little directly observable evidence and thus little empirical base for non-experiencers but the exceptional should not be bound by the traditional methods of deduction and induction. Thus abduction serves best in this paper. For this paper, abduction in the strictest sense is a tool used to generate a hypothesis. Pierce suggested:

Abduction is, after all, nothing but guessing. We are therefore bound to hope that, although the possible explanation of our facts may be strictly innumerable, yet our mind will be able, in some finite number of guesses, to guess the sole true explanation of them...Animated by that hope, we are to proceed to the construction of a hypothesis. (Peirce, C.S., 1901)

In this paper, as termed by Swinburne, there are arguments from religious experience and arguments from miracles both arguing for the hypothesis that the NDE is a valid experience signaling life after death and that the Bible is a divine text speaking of human purpose and love. The Bible states that God is love and claims that loving one another is the greatest commandment. The NDE is an event where the majority of NDErs felt love and received the impression that the purpose of life is to love one another. Therefore, the NDE is in accordance with the Bible, and vice versa.

It has and can be argued; the closest one can come to experiencing life after death is the near-death experience. If the near-death experience verifies the claims of the Bible,

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then one must consider that this direction found in the Bible may be correct. In this paper what has been attempted is to establish the following: the NDE occurs and the NDEr more often than not reports a feeling of overwhelming love and returns with a perspective that loving one another is the ultimate purpose of life. The Bible reports that God is love and defines loving one another as the ultimate purpose of life. The NDE is full of unconditional love and directions stating that humankind's purpose is to love one another. Therefore, as suggested above, the NDE is in accordance with the Bible and likewise the latter is in accordance with the former. Hence if either one is true, there is reason to suspect that the other is also true. This hypothesis is accepted on probation in accordance with the key component of abduction which merely suggests that something may be and requires no reason, for it merely offers suggestions (Peirce, 1903, p. 189).

With the NDE validating the Bible and the Bible validating the NDE then it is necessary for those who believe in either phenomenon to notice the commonalities. This common element of love and the magnitude of love's importance in both the NDE and the Bible are much to established to discount.

Conclusion

Much like a complicated piece of art, the NDE is open to interpretation. Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera* comes to mind as an example of an art piece with substantially different understandings. Some find *Primavera* to be a political expression. Many have found it filled with mythological symbolism. Still others have found it to be an illustration of the Garden of Eden. Just as different interpretations are commonplace in art, the NDE is a mystical experience open to vast interpretations. To deny the NDE different meanings for different individuals is to deny diversity. But to deny the importance and implications of the common feature of love and its importance as defined and found in the NDE and the Bible is naive.

At the beginning of this paper Victor Frankl posed this statement: "Ever more people today have the means to live but no meaning to live for" (Frankl, 1979/1985). Frankl knew the answer to his statement. He found his answer many years before he posed the question in the most difficult and tragic of life's situations. As the Nazi guards ushered Jewish prisoner Victor Frankl, and his fellow prisoners, over rough terrain and misery shouting and assaulting Frankl and the innocent company. Under the worst of life experiences, Victor Frankl found his meaning as he gazed into the sky and saw his wife (who he did not know had already died in a different camp at the hands of the genocidal German soldiers). He recalled:

...for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth -- that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of man is through love and in love. (Frankl, 1946/1992, pp. 48-49)

Frankl's conclusion is the same one that the Bible and the NDErs purport: that one is here to love.

Within the growing field of near-death studies it is difficult to ignore the copious numbers of NDErs who repetitively record the feelings of love and the need to return to mortal existence on a mission to love others. Likewise, it is also hard to ignore the commonalities of love found in the NDE and the writings found throughout the Bible

dealing with love. This overwhelming central message of love and the implications of this common theme must be considered.

This article began with inferences and ends in a hypothesis. With the established parallel of love found in the NDE and the Bible, the pinnacle directive of learning to love, and the proclamation of the necessity to love one another, then an argument for validity and even common descent can be made. Both claim the same common ancestor, God, and both claim the same common purpose: to love one another. This homology lends credence to one another.

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